Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku

Diplomski sveučilišni studij engleskog jezika i književnosti; smjer: nastavnički (dvopredmetni)

Tamara Vuković

Representation of Gender in "Modern Family"

Diplomski rad

Zadar, 2016.

Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku

Diplomski sveučilišni studij engleskog jezika i književnosti; smjer: nastavnički (dvopredmetni)

Representation of Gender in “Modern Family”

Diplomski rad

Student/ica:
Tamara Vuković

Mentor/ica:
izv. prof. dr. sc. Senka Božić-Vrbančić

Zadar, 2016.

Izjava o akademskoj čestitosti

Ja, **Tamara Vuković,** ovime izjavljujem da je moj **diplomski** rad pod naslovom **Representation of Gender in „Modern Family“** rezultat mojega vlastitog rada, da se temelji na mojim istraživanjima te da se oslanja na izvore i radove navedene u bilješkama i popisu literature. Ni jedan dio mojega rada nije napisan na nedopušten način, odnosno nije prepisan iz necitiranih radova i ne krši bilo čija autorska prava.

Izjavljujem da ni jedan dio ovoga rada nije iskorišten u kojem drugom radu pri bilo kojoj drugoj visokoškolskoj, znanstvenoj, obrazovnoj ili inoj ustanovi.

Sadržaj mojega rada u potpunosti odgovara sadržaju obranjenoga i nakon obrane uređenoga rada.

Zadar, 29. rujna 2016.

Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. Theoretical Background 3
2.2. Representation and Signifying Practices 3
2.3. Discourse, Power and the Subject 5
2.4. Discipline and Normalization 9
2.5. Representing difference 11
2.6. Fiction and reality 13
2.6.1. Situation Comedy 14
2.6.2. Real and Sitcom families 16
2.6.3. Sitcoms and stereotyping 20
3. Methodology 22
3.1. Specific field of research 22
3.2. Aims of research 22
3.3. Methods 22
4. *Modern Family* 23
4.1. Critical Reception 23
4.2. Representation of Gender in *Modern Family* 26
4.3. Discussion 55
5. Conclusion 60
6. Works cited 61

Representation of Gender in *Modern Family*

SUMMARY

Television reflects and shapes, or in Hall's terms, represents American culture to the audience, and sitcoms are one of the major instruments through which dominant ideologies about gender are circulated. The aim of this thesis is to analyze how a popular American ABC's sitcom, *Modern Family*, which apparently resists traditional gender portrayal, uses systems of representation to construct meanings and reproduce knowledge about gender, using mainly Stuart Hall's work of representation and Foucault's concepts of discourse, power, knowledge and normalization. The analysis shows that although *Modern Family* engages in social change, where characters and the way they interact do resist traditional gender discourses, the show still relies on stereotypes and patriarchic discourses of gender and family dynamics. Moreover, the normalizing power in *Modern family* is realized through stereotypical representations of difference, positioning as a butt of humor and subordinating everyone who does not fit to the norm, dividing between the normal and the abnormal, insiders and outsiders, which further reinforces and naturalizes traditional discourses of gender, sexuality and race.

KEY WORDS: representation, gender, sitcom, stereotypes, power/knowledge, normalization

1. Introduction

Television is often seen as an exact reflection of social reality and gender behaviour, which can be called into question if we think about Stuart Hall's notion of representation, which involves the use of language or images to create meaning about the world around us ("The Work of Representation" 1). It has been argued that systems of representation do not reflect the world as it is, the way it was previously thought, but through these systems, we construct the meaning around us (Ibid 25). Therefore, images of men and women, our sex and gender, are cultural signifiers which construct meanings about gender, rather than just reflecting them (Gledhill 346). The key issue about representation is that what is represented seems natural (Hall, "The Work of Representation" 21), serving as the means by which ideology of gender is constructed. This theory is important for the analysis of *Modern Family* since, like many other forms of media, sitcoms use images of men and women to maintain the belief about the nature of the masculine, feminine, sexuality, race, etc., which according to Gledhill (346), produces stereotypes, rather than reflects reality. Consequently, the viewers are presented with images which serve as a model of how a woman, a man, a heterosexual, a homosexual or a certain race should look like and behave. What is also important for this paper is Foucault's discourse analysis. Foucault's central idea is that "power" operates through the circulation and distribution of discursive knowledge (power-knowledge) which prescribes rules and normalizes our behaviour. Deviance is possible only where "the norms" exist (Foucault 182, 183, 191, 304), and this theory is important since gender is always defined though the polarization of "the norm" and the degree of deviation. Gender norms are deeply embedded in our culture, and people are rewarded or punished according to how close they resemble the dominant gender.

This paper will provide a theoretical background where the most important concepts about Stuart Hall's representation and signifying practices will be explained, as well as

Foucault's discursive approach to representation, which involves discourse, power and knowledge. Moreover, the paper will also provide an insight into Foucault's discipline and normalization and how it's related to gender. In order to enable a better understanding of the analysis, the paper will include a short review of the history of sitcoms and sitcom families, as well as the way in which fiction and sitcoms genre, specifically, interact with, i.e. represent reality, social change and meanings about gender. The majority of the paper will be based on the gender representation in a popular American sitcom, *Modern Family,* and the meaning it constructs for the audience, using mainly Stuart Hall's notion of representation and Foucault's discourse analysis. The focus will be on the analysis of the extent to which *Modern Family* fits into (or resist) the traditional representation of gender identities, and the extent to which characters who deviate from the "norm" are represented as inferior and subordinate in relation to those who are "normative".

2. Theoretical Background

2.2. Representation and Signifying Practices

The concept of representation occupies an important place in the study of culture. Representation connects meaning and language to culture. Does language (written words, sounds, images…) simply reflect a meaning that already exists in the world of objects, people and events, or is meaning constructed in and through the language? These are the questions Stuart Hall works on in his chapter "The Work of Representation" (15). According to Hall, representation is the production of meaning of the concepts in our mind through language. "It is the link between concepts and language which enable us to refer to either the "real" world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary world of fictional objects, people and events" (Ibid 17). Meaning always depends on the relationship between things in the world – people, objects and events (real or fictional), and the conceptual system which can operate as "mental representations" of them. But our conceptual maps have to be translated into a common language, so that we can connect our ideas with written words, spoken sounds or visual images, all together called "sings". "These signs stand for or represent the concepts and the conceptual relations between them, which we carry around in our heads and together they make up the meaning-system of our culture" (Ibid 18).

According to Hall there are three theories of representation. The first is the reflective, where meaning lies in the object, person or idea: language reflects the truth that is already fixed in the world. If language really reflected the already fixed truth, it would mean that category "women" would refer to all women and that all the women would recognize themselves in that. The second approach, the intentional one, says that it is the speaker who imposes his or her individual meaning on the world via language. However, our private meaning, no matter how personal to us, has to "enter into the rules, codes and conventions of language to be shared and

understood" ("The Work of Representation" 25). The third, constructionist approach, recognizes the social quality of language, where meaning does not lie in things nor individuals. Rather, we construct the meaning with the system of representation (concepts and signs). "The meaning depends, not only on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function. It is because a particular sound or word stands for, symbolizes or represents the concept that it can function in a language as a sign, and convey meaning – or, as the constructionists say – signify" (Ibid, 26). This constructionist view of representation implies that the images of men and women, our sex and gender, are cultural signifiers which construct, rather than reflect gender definitions, meanings and identities (Gledhill 346). Brooks and Hebert argue that how individuals construct social identities, what is means to be male, female, white, black, Latino/a, etc., is shaped by commodified texts produced by media for audiences that are segmented by the social constructions of race and gender. Media is, therefore, a central to what come to represent social realities (297). Media is a dominant means of ideological production (Hall, "The Whites of Their Eyes" 19), and sitcoms use images of men and women to maintain the belief of the nature of the masculine, feminine, race, etc., providing models of how a woman, man, heterosexual, homosexual should embody a certain subject position.

For Saussure language is a system of signs, which he analyzed into two further elements. Namely, according to Saussure, there is "the form (actual word, image, photo, etc.) and there was the idea or concept in your head with which the form was associated" (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 31). Saussure named the first one signifier, and the second, the corresponding concept in your head – the signified. The relationship between these two concepts is determined by cultural and linguistic codes – representation. In order to produce meaning, the signifiers have to be organized into a system of differences, because it is the difference between signifiers which signify (Ibid 32). Moreover, we can say that the signifier is denotative and signified connotative. Meaning includes denotation and connotation, and it is

at the connotative level of the sign that situational ideologies alter and transform signification (Hall, "Encoding, Decoding" 97). Codes are the means by which power and ideology are made to signify in particular discourses (Ibid, 98). If we are talking about gender, we can say that it is a group of signifiers related to male and female bodies, and the role of these signifiers is to separate social practices and to maintain the binary opposition between man and women, masculine and feminine. For example, wearing a tie signifies masculinity, while high heels signify femininity. One of the roles of western media, especially when we are talking about family sitcoms, such as *Modern Family*, is to maintain this binary opposition between male and female, masculine and feminine. So, if we take TV shows for example, we treat pictures on the screen as signifiers, the genre as a code, and discover how these images on television produce meaning (signified). Also, the relationship between the signifier and the signified is the result of social conventions specific to each society and each historical moment – they are always changing (Hall, "The Work of Representation" 32).

2.3. Discourse, Power and the Subject

Foucault's contribution to representation, according to Hall, is concerned with the production of knowledge, rather than meaning, through what he called "discourse", rather than just language. His aim was to analyze "how human beings understand themselves in our culture", and "how our knowledge about the social, the embodied individual and shared meanings" is produced in different historical periods. His attention were different disciplines of knowledge in the human and social sciences he called "subjectifying social sciences", which have an important role in modern culture, since they, like religion in earlier times, can give us the "truth about knowledge" (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 43). We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power without producing the truth in a society that demands that from us in order to function. In the end we are judged, classified and destined to a certain mode of living as a function of the true discourses, which

are barriers of the power (Foucault and Colin 93-94). Foucault's discursive approach to representation is based on his three major ideas: his concept of *discourse*, the issue of *power and knowledge* and the question of *the subject* (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 43).

Normally, discourse is a linguistic concept, but for Foucault, discourse (production of knowledge through language) is a system of representation. It is not exclusively a linguistic concept; it is about language and practice. For Foucault, discourse is a group of statements that provide a language for talking about – a way of representing a knowledge about a topic at a particular historical moment; it is the production of knowledge through language. Therefore, meaning and meaningful practices are constructed through discourse (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 44). For example, subjects like madness or sexuality can only exist meaningfully if there is a discourse about them. We have statements about madness and sexuality, rules which prescribe ways of talking about these subjects and exclude other ways, a certain kind of knowledge about them, we have subjects who personify the discourse (the madman, criminal, homosexual), the attributes we expect these subjects to have, and how this knowledge about the topic acquires authority, "the truth" about the matter at a historical moment. Foucault also includes the practices within institutions for these subjects (punishment regimes for criminals…), and the acknowledgement that these discourses change over time, new discourses with the power and authority, the truth which regulates social practices (Ibid 45-46). For Foucault, things are true only within a specific historical context, where in each period discourse produced different forms of knowledge, objects, subjects and practices of knowledge (Ibid 49). Therefore, related to gender, we can ask ourselves what is our knowledge of gender, what does it mean to be a woman, a man, a homosexual today, all of them including different concepts such as race and ethnicity, what do we expect from women, what are the practices within institutions for women, and how does the discourse around women change over time. According to Magnusson and Marecek, femininity and masculinity have to be explored

as cultural manifestations, conceptualized as normative ideas and cultural resources held in place through social and cultural negotiations, which are fairly stable over time (35). In this respect, femininity and masculinity involve a set of actions and characteristics that seem natural (Ibid).

Butler explains Foucault's work as refusing to search for the origin of gender or any form of authentic sexual identity, rather, his genealogy investigates how "origin" and "cause" (of gender) are in fact the effects of institutions, practices, discourses with multiple points of origin ("Gender Trouble" xxix). Therefore, Foucault's conception of the apparatus of punishment, which includes linguistic and non-linguistic discourses, institutions, architecture, laws, philosophy, scientific statements, morality, etc., is always in a play of power, but also linked to certain co-ordinates of knowledge. This apparatus is the key subject of investigation between knowledge, power and the body in modern society. This knowledge, provided by human and social science, is always entangled in power relations since it is applied to the social conduct in practice (to particular bodies). Therefore, this relationship between discourse, knowledge and power made a significant development in the constructionist approach to representation (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 47). According to Bem biological essentialism is a common belief that difference between men and women is biologically founded. It argues that men and women behave differently because they are different in their biological and emotional makeup. According to biological essentialism, women's hormones make them naturally more nurturing and gentle because they are built to nurture and take care of children. On the other hand, men are naturally more aggressive, intelligent and competitive due to testosterone, and that is why they are better for working outside the home (qtd. in Staricek 11). Essentialism normalizes the dominant ideologies of gender, and we believe that gender categories are natural. In *Gender Trouble* Butler's findings lie on Foucault's work on discursive knowledge, and she argues that gender is performative, so that our gendered identities do not

express an authentic essence, but are the dramatic effect (not the cause) of our performances ("Gender Trouble" 33, 177). Therefore, for Butler, gender is discursively constructed through repetitive performance of words, acts, gestures and desire, which means that our gender identities are produced by public and social discourses, i.e. by power (Ibid 173). Our consent to multiple intersecting networks of power occurs because we adopt the discourses that circulate throughout civil society; the media, schools, family, and as we take up ideological discourses, we become gendered and racialized subjects (Stoddart 222-223).

Knowledge connected to power "not only assumes the authority of "the truth" but has the power to make itself true" (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 49). All knowledge, once used to regulate the behavior of others, include constraint, regulation and disciplinary practices. For Foucault, power doesn't go from one direction, but it circulates, and all of us are, to some extent, caught up in this circulation – oppression and the oppressed. Every individual is simultaneously undertaking and exercising the power, serving as its vehicle (Foucault and Colin 98). So, power relations exist on all levels of social existence, from private spheres of the family and sexuality, to public spheres of politics, the economy and the law (Hall, "The Work of Representation" 50).

Discourse, entangled in power, produces knowledge. However, it is necessary that there is a "subject" (the king, the ruling class, the state…) for power-knowledge to operate (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 54). The discourse itself produces subjects, figures who personify certain forms of knowledge which discourse produces (such as the madman, homosexual, the hysterical woman, etc.), which are specific to specific discursive regimes and historical periods. Therefore, the discourses themselves construct the subject-positions from which they become meaningful and have effects. Individual may be different in terms of race, social class or gender, etc., but they will not be able to take meaning until they have identified within those positions constructed by the discourse, subjected themselves to its rules and,

therefore, become the subjects of its power-knowledge (qtd. in Hall, "The Work of Representation" 56).

2.4. Discipline and Normalization

In one of his major works, *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault portrays different forms of punishment throughout history, where the transformation from the early modern society and the modern society is that the modern one is more civilized - a form of punishment and discipline is based on the control within the individual, i.e. disciplined souls through institutions such as schools, hospitals and prisons (23-24).

Therefore, Foucault concentrates on punishment to explore how modern society disciplines subjects thorough normalization, institutions (like schools and hospitals) and the authority of professional judgment (intellectuals, doctors…), i.e. how power is constituted today (29-30). Magnusson and Marecek emphasize that today, disciplinary power often takes the guise of guidelines of how people should live, the guidelines which promise fulfillment, happiness and mental health, so that people willingly agree to comply with such standards. Normalization in contemporary society works through knowledge about what it means to be a human being which seems natural, and therefore people subject themselves to self-regulation in accordance with that knowledge (Magnusson, Marecek 26). In Butler's terms, performing gender properly is a strategy of survival in a society with punitive consequences, where "discrete genders are part of what "humanizes" individuals within contemporary culture", where, "we regularly punish those who fail to do their gender right" ("Gender Trouble" 178).

According to Foucault, "the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialties and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another" (184). Therefore, the power of the norm works within a system of formal equality, where within the rule of homogeneity, the

norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of measurement, all the degrees of individual differences (Ibid 184). Foucault points out that individual control functions according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding - mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal, and individual is subjected to the constant division between the normal and the abnormal (199). Norms encourage subjects to become highly efficient at performing a narrowly defined range of practice, where, when it comes to gender, subjects are divided into two mutually exclusive groups, so that "repeated gender behaviors become embedded to the point where they are perceived not as a particular set of prevailing norms, but instead simply as "normal" "inevitables"" (Taylor, 47). Foucault pinpoints the importance of judging as an important mechanism of always present discipline, where it has become one of the major functions of our society. He says that the judges of normality are present everywhere, and we live in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the "social worker"-judge; on which the normalization of all individuals is based; and each individual, wherever he or she is, subjects to normalization her or his body, gestures, behavior, aptitudes, achievements (304). Gender norms are very important in investigating the normality and normativity in modern culture, and Uecker et al. maintain that the concepts of normality are used to exclude, stigmatize and oppress individuals on the basis of gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, etc. (2).

Therefore, Foucault's central idea is the idea of "power" as something which is made through the circulation and distribution of knowledge, discursive in nature, which makes rules for all of us - power-knowledge. Power-knowledge is the power that enforces as a circulation of knowledge which imposes its effects on us, our behavior, the way we are, or at least the way we think we are, i.e. normalizing our behavior. The idea of deviance is possible only where "the norms" exist. For Foucault, norms are concepts that are constantly used to evaluate and control us, which stigmatize, classify, subordinate and exclude those who do not conform (182; 183;

191). If we use this to analyze gender in sitcoms, we can see how we use this concept of normalization to determine which characters of the show fit mostly to the norm of masculine and feminine discourse and how these characters are represented as superior to those who don't.

2.5.Representing difference

Representation is complex, especially when dealing with difference (Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 226). It involves feelings, attitudes, emotions and it mobilizes fears and anxieties in the viewer. People who are significantly different then the majority, "them", rather than "us", are represented through binary extremes – good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because-difference/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic, etc. However, they are often required to be both at the same time (Ibid 229). Moreover, with the representation of difference, race, cannot exist without gender and sexuality. Very often, images of Hispanic or black people signify all three dimensions. In representation, one sort of difference seems to attract the other, creating the spectacle of otherness (Ibid 231). Just as gender is a social construct through which a society defines what it means to be masculine or feminine, race also is a social construction, where signs such as hair and skin color serve as signifiers of race (Brooks and Hebert 297). "The racial categories we use to differentiate human difference have been created and changed to meet the dynamic social, political, and economic needs of our society" (Ibid).

However, Hall continues, difference cannot be analyzed just in terms of extremes (black/white, masculine/feminine). Pure binary oppositions are over-simplified, and, according to Derrida, there is always a relation of power between the poles of the binary opposition (qtd. in Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 235). Moreover, culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to a different position to a classificatory system. Binary positions are crucial for classification, since we have to establish a clear difference between things in order to

classify them. When someone does not fit to a certain category, negative feelings and practices can rise (Ibid 326). Therefore, according to Babock, marking difference enables us to close ranks, stigmatize and expel everything which is impure, abnormal (qtd. in Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 237). If we bear all this mind, we can understand the complex roles played by social institutions, such as media, which shapes increasingly gendered and racialized media culture (Brooks and Hebert 298).

Another signifying practice essential to representation of difference are stereotypes, which "get hold of the few simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized characteristic about a person, reduce everything about a person to these traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without the change of development to eternity" (Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 258). Stereotypes are (re)produced in a wide range of practices of representation, including scholarship, literature, and situation comedies, i.e. both in high and low culture, and they are often directed to subordinate groups, such as minorities or women (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 471). Stereotyping reduces, naturalizes and fixes difference and images of homosexuals, black and Hispanic people are often represented in media in accordance with these stereotypes, which consequently serve to further strengthen them. Stereotypes also serve to divide normal and acceptable from abnormal and unacceptable. They exclude everything what is different, what doesn't fit. With stereotyping we connect representation, difference and power, where power refers to the power to represent someone or something in a certain way, in a certain regime of representation (Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 258). For Foucault, power can be found anywhere, it circulates. It involves knowledge, representation, ideas, cultural leadership and authority and economic constraint. Hall continues that the circularity of power is very important for representation, since everyone, the powerful and the powerless are caught up (not in equal terms) in the power's circulation - no one can stand outside the operation of power (qtd. in "The Spectacle of the Other" 261).

2.6.Fiction and reality

The term fiction suggest a separation from real life, entering an imaginary world which offers a qualitatively different experience from everyday life and from media forms which claim to deal with real world, like newspaper (Gledhill 340). Hall argues that the production of meaning and ideologies requires its material instruments, its "means", and a sets of social (production) relations - the organization and combination of practices within media apparatuses, but it is in the discursive form that the circulation of the product takes place, as well as its distribution to different audiences ("Encoding, Decoding" 91).

According to Foss, television shapes and reflects, i.e. represents American culture to audience, serving as an instrument for understanding cultural context of a certain moment (1). If we say that the role of dominant images of women in circulating and maintaining the established beliefs about the nature of the feminine and masculine and the proper role to be played by women and men, wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, etc., then they produce stereotypes, rather than positive images and psychologically round characters (Gledhill 346). So, in relation to this, Gledhill poses a question about the possibility to produce accurate reflection of images of men and women (346). Hall challenged this assumption of mimetic approach to representation ("The Work of Representation" 24), since "women", "men" or "homosexual" don't refer to a homogenous social grouping in which all women, men or homosexuals recognize themselves. This psychologically rounded character is seen as a kind of a golden standard of human representation, but like with stereotypes, it is a work of construction, produced by the discourses of popular psychology, sociology, education, etc. Therefore, these psychologically rounded characters and stereotypes are different kinds of mechanisms by which protagonists of fictions interact with reality (Gledhill 347). Their significance cannot be measured with real world. So, there is no fixed reality, nor fixed codes

of representation. The real is an ongoing production, in constant process of transformation (Ibid 356).

Genres produce fictional worlds which function according to certain structured set of rules and conventions, but they are also influenced by events and discourses in the social world. Therefore, sitcoms do not only repeat and recycle past models, but are interacting with social change (Gledhill 364). According to Gledhill, multiple pressures towards innovation and renewal means that popular fictions not only engage with social change, but become key sites for the emerging articulation of and contest over change, so that discourses and imagery of new social movements, like the women's, gay's or black liberation movements, which circulate into public consciousness through campaign groups, parliamentary and social policy debates, new and popular journalism, provide popular genres with materials for new story lines (362). However, this does not suggest a linear model of representation where social change is followed by its representation in the media. Rather, we can talk about the circulation of images, representations, and discourses from one area of social practice to another (Ibid).

2.6.1. Situation Comedy

Stuart Hall claims that media has the power to represent the world in a certain way, reproducing the dominant ideologies and maintaining the status quo ("Media Power and Class Power" 9). Pierson notes that sitcoms have become an instrument through which dominant ideologies are circulated, especially those concerning gender, social class and relationships (45). Bignell and Orlebar (2005) emphasize that British and US sitcoms have recognized the need to engage with cultural change, even though sitcoms still rely on outmoded and embarrassing assumptions about race and gender (38).

"A particular genre category refers to the way individual fictions which belong to it can be grouped together to in terms of similar plots, stereotypes, settings, themes, styles, emotional

effects" (Gledhill 351). There are certain conventions of each genre which represent a body of rules, codes, signifiers, signs, etc., and we have certain expectations when we watch a particular genre. Settings, character types and images are signs for a particular kind of fictional world. But, genres do not have eternally fixed rules and codes either (Ibid 351-352). If we take family sitcoms, we can see how *Modern Family* does to a certain extent break rules, push boundaries and redefine difference.

Situational comedy became popular since transition to the radio in the 1950s, and Marc defines it as "comic drama" or a "narrative comedy" (16). The term "sitcom" became popular in the American language because of the promotional needs of the American industry (Ibid). Since *I Love Lucy*, situation comedy has been the mainstay of prime-time television. At least four hundred sitcoms have appeared during prime time, three hundred were domestic sitcoms depicting families, while the rest were constructed as artificial families of friends or coworkers. Sitcom is built around a humorous "situation" in which tension develops and is resolved during the half hour, and after each episode, the situation is recreated (Butsch 111). Some components of the sitcom can be identified as key elements of the genre, but they are not exclusive to it. Sitcoms have a situation, like a house or a workplace where characters seem to be trapped together. Audience laughter tells the audience what is funny and therefore suggests when to laugh (Bignell and Orlebar 38-39). "The genre of the sitcom is a particular combination of elements such as scripted fictional narrative, self-conscious performance by actors, jokes and physical comedy, and studio audience laughter" (Ibid 39).

Family or domestic sitcoms are those which focus on home and family life and its members. *Modern family* clearly fits into the family, i.e. domestic sitcoms, and Sander notes that it has a very distinct and formulaic dramaturgy, neatly structured as typical for sitcom (64). The series is concerned with family, and the city is of no importance beyond the houses they live in (Ibid 65). However, the usage of handheld camera, changing camera angles, moving and

zooming distinguishes the show from other sitcoms. The viewer eventually starts to feel as a part of the family. The shots come from three different camera positions, "instantly demanding a suspension of disbelieve from the audience regarding the style as the different cameras never become visible" (Ibid 62).

Further, *Modern Family* lacks the audience laughter that was previously mentioned as a sign of a genre, it appears to be filmed by a single camera, where characters speak to it like being interviewed in a documentary. In fact, *Modern Family* appropriates the elements of nonfiction. By appropriating these elements, *Modern Family* is a mockumentary, which in a way "deceives" the audience by intersecting between the real and the unreal. Corner defines mockumentary as a text in which documentary devices are imitated and/or parodied for comic effect, yet it is not about parodying the genre, but the narrative content and the subjects (127). Therefore, "*Modern Family* is lifting the narrative restrictions of the format, and simultaneously through applying the documentary style circumventing the restrictions of the sitcom style" (Sander 66). Also, the documentary form of *Modern Family*, especially the interviews, contribute to the faster progress of the story and add pacing and intimacy (Ibid).

2.6.2. Real and Sitcom families

In the center of American sitcom stands the family, nuclear, extended, blended or created, where family is one experience to which all the viewers can relate. Coontz points out that one of the most powerful visions of traditional family comes from images that are still delivered to our homes through sitcoms (qtd. in Kutulas 49). Many domestic sitcoms feature innocent children as the comic characters and their wise parents, representing typical idyllic middle-class families, depicted in sitcoms such as *The Brady Bunch*, *The Coshy Show*, and *Seventh Heaven* (Butsch 111).

The concept of family changed together with the changes in society. Divorce, remarriage, homosexual marriages and parenting changed the definitions of family and homosexuality represents the most obvious division from the nuclear family (Altman 47). Nevertheless, homosexuality is still considered as a deviant sexual behavior, since heterosexual relationship and marriage are still more accepted and preferred. Within a traditional notion of family, discourse around women is based on their role as a wives and a mothers, who are doing housework, caring for children and fulfilling emotional needs of family members, while the father is the breadwinner. These kinds of discourses are gendered constructs relying on dominant family ideologies (Crompton 89). However, nuclear families have been disappearing in the last 50 years, and more women are represented in the workplace (56,7% of women compared to 69,1% of men) (United States Department of Labour, "Women in the Labor Force"). Rates of maternal employment, developments in contraceptive and reproductive technology, and no fault divorce petitions advanced space, while feminist and gay liberation movements spurred women and men to question established understandings of gender, race, sexuality and family life. Postmodern family represents no new normal family structure, but a family diversity, choice, flux and contest (Stacey and Davenport 356).

In the last 50 years, the depiction of women has changed in the media. Before, they were exclusively in the home setting, but now, women are featured in a variety of roles and settings. Lerner et al. claim that popular fiction follows reality, where the modern media and feminist movements coincide (28). Women have become doctors, lawyers, writers, they are married, single, divorced, lesbian or heterosexual. What is more, lead female characters have become ethnically and racially diverse. However, women as mothers in sitcoms are often still portrayed within the house with no outside identity separated from their roles as mothers. Some working mothers are represented on television, but not demographically representative of American families with working mothers (Coffin 2), where, according to United states Department of

Labor ("Women in the Labor Force"), 70% of mothers are also in the labor market. The representation of women has changed from the earliest day of television, which now offers a wide range of roles for women, particularly leading roles of women in their thirties and forties, yet, women in sitcoms still do not fit in that kind of program (Dalton and Linder 5). Thus, according to Dubowitz and Zuckerman, gender expectations are maintained in most sitcoms for men and women, as well as for boys and girls by representing traditional roles as the only socially acceptable behavior (qtd. In Coffin, 2). However, Coffin argues, the viewers want more families that portray reality, so that shows portraying adoption, step-parenthood and working mothers are becoming more popular (2). Nevertheless, they still maintain gender roles in relation to household duties and gender related expectations and behaviors, which is the case with *Modern Family* as well.

Since the 1950s, representations of American families on television have attempted to represent the ideal family or the modern one (Coffin 1). *Leave it to the Beaver* was a popular sitcom of that era, which idealized a world in which proper men were breadwinners, and proper women were homemakers (Richardson and Seidman 356). Kutulas summarized the sitcom family dynamics, claiming that in the 1950s, the structure of the American family was changing as a result of WWII, when the country appeared to be in transition and men's identities as fathers and sole providers was in jeopardy (51). The Cold War brought new expectations, where family had to be secure, consumerist and conformist. Television provided an inmate family prototype, presenting an ideal family structure: a white-collar father, a stay-at-home mom, and a flock of children. By the 1970s, the baby boomers had rejected fathers' traditional roles of providers and disciplinarians in the family, giving mothers more credit. In the new family structure, dad is the leader, but not the boss. The new ideal, reinforced by several decades of social fears about too strong women, rested on binary gender roles in marriage, where the father occasionally helps with housework (Kutulas 51-54). Spock points out that the modern husband was involved

in family life, occasionally drying the dishes, playing with children, and modeling appropriate gender roles for his sons, but in real life, as the family became more a consumer entity, it was the domain of women, while fathers worked long hours and tried to fit into a corporate culture (qtd. in Kutulas 51).

Television was redefined in 1970s, when they explored modern life culturally and television's biological families became more fragmented and unstable. "Unlike biological family, constructed family was family by choice, family without the hang-up of family roles, family without hierarchy" (Kutulas 56). Family sitcoms were revived in the early 1980s with two hits, *The Cosby Show* and *Family Ties* (Ibid). These shows involved neither the complementary parental roles of the 1950s nor the frustrated housewives and invisible dads of the 1970s. Their dynamic was modern, and the boomers were in charge. In the 1990s boomers lost representation, except on shows like *Everybody Loves Raymond* that were aimed at an older audience. Until the mid-1990s, homosexual orientation was rarely represented overtly in American sitcoms, so that it seemed that everyone in America was straight (Dalton and Linder 9). However, with the gradual disappearance of the traditional family sitcom, heterosexual characters began to occupy nonnormative narrative positions (Raymond, 2003), and in the new millennium sitcoms started to show more Hispanic and gay characters (Butsch 131). Dalton and Linder argue that newer programs, such as *Will & Grace*, "advance the cause of "normalizing" homosexuality to the general public, even if the approach on these programs is exceedingly cautious" (8). *Modern Family* also normalizes homosexuality, and we can see how the political agenda of such programs supports social change and progressive movements. Moreover, black and working class sitcoms started to be shown on prime-time television in the new millennium, like *According to Jim*, *Malcom in the Middle* or *King of Queens*, but working-class men represented as unashamedly irresponsible and childish. Even though there have been variations and exceptions, the stock character of irresponsible, buffoonish, working class man has

persisted as the dominant image, contrasted with competent working-class wives and children, and masculine middle-class fathers. Middle-class families in the new millennium stopped to be portrayed as perfect like in 1950 and 1960s, including a larger range of characters and situations. However, a super parent continues to be a common representation of middle-class, and middle-class men, and, even though sometimes portrayed as irresponsible, they were successful at their careers and never demasculinized (Butsch 129-133).

2.6.3. Sitcoms and stereotyping

Butsch argues that from the beginning of situation comedies, the producers preferred blandness to sustain mass audience, and it often meant that the characters were oversimplified stereotypes that were rather consistent from series to series throughout history (115). Inferior status is often represented in sitcoms using negative stereotypes of women and minorities, young and old, etc, and these stereotypes are useful for their familiarity since they are already embedded in the larger culture. "Over time, stereotypes are merged into character types that recur and have a special importance in the culture as stock images…" (Butsch 112). They become codes that writers use to advance the dramatic goals without having to explain, since the audience is expected to recognize these codes. Calvert et al. note that comedy often diverts our attention from its content, which often works on the basis of stereotypes that may fail to challenge them (40). Indeed, it ends up reinforcing and legitimizing dominant ideological positions (Ibid). Stuart Hall argues that stereotyping connects representation, difference and power ("The Spectacle of the Other" 259), dividing between the "normal" and the "abnormal". It can function to regulate some social group which are often the butt of humor, positioning them to a subordinate place both within the narrative of the text and, consequently, outside the real world (Calvert, et al. 40). Source of gratification and humor in sitcom often comes exactly from inevitably present stereotypes, and Medhurst and Tuck maintain that the sitcoms can't

function without them. These authors emphasize the necessity of stereotype in the thirty-minute sitcoms to provoke immediate audience response and recognition (115).

3. Methodology

3.1. Specific field of research

Specific field of research will include the analysis of gender representation in a contemporary popular American sitcom, *Modern Family*, created by Steven Levitan and Christopher Lloyd, and premiered on ABC on September 23, 2009 (production companies: Levitan/Lloyd, 20th Century Fox Television, Steven Levitan Productions, and Picador Productions).

3.2. Aims of research

The aim of this paper is to analyze how the sitcom, *Modern Family*, which apparently resists the traditional gender portrayal, uses systems of representation, language and images to construct gender definitions, meanings and identities. Moreover, the paper will also provide the analysis of how gender representations in sitcoms serve to reproduce the normalization of gender roles. The paper will provide answers to the following questions: To which extent do images of femininity and masculinity fit into (or resist) the traditional representation of gender identities? Does Modern *Family* liberate and embrace the deviation from "the norm" or does it reinforce stereotyping of gender, homosexuality and race? To which extent are these characters represented as inferior and subordinate in relation to those who fit into "the norm"?

3.3. Methods

The focus of this paper is to provide analysis of the gender representation in *Modern Family* using mainly Stuart Hall's work on representation and Foucault's concepts of discourse, power, knowledge and normalization. The focus will be on gender representations in these sitcoms in general, with emphasis on the analysis of major characters, and by using scenes from specific episodes which implicitly or explicitly provide necessary evidence.

4. *Modern Family*

One of the most popular American ABC sitcoms, *Modern Family*, was introduced in 2009, and centers around three interconnected families living in Los Angeles suburbia – those of Jay Pritchett, his daughter Claire Dunphy, and son Mitchell Pritchett. The show includes one traditional nuclear family, Claire and Phil Dunphy, the intermarriage of Jay Pritchett and his Colombian trophy wife, Gloria, and a homosexual married couple, Mitchell Pritchett and Cameron Tucker. Claire and Phil Dunphy have three children, Haley, Alex and Luke. Jay and his young wife, Gloria, raise her son from previous marriage, Manny Delgado, and have their own son, Fulgencio Joe, while Mitchel and Cam have an adopted Vietnamese daughter, Lily Tucker-Pritchett.

4.1. Critical Reception

Modern Family has won 23 Primetime Emmy Awards and 6 *Writers Guild of America Awards*. The show won *Emmy Awards for Outstanding Comedy Series* for the first five seasons, and *Emmy Awards for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series* and *Emmy Awards for Outstanding Writing for a Comedy Series* for various episodes. The show also won the *Golden Globe Award for Best Television Series – Comedy or Musical* in 2012. *Modern Family* was also well received in *Gay and Lesbian Entertainment Critics Association* (GALECA) and won the Dorian Award for the *TV Comedy of the Year, LGBT-Themed TV Show of the Year* in 2012 and *for the LGBT Show of the Year* in 2013, as well as *GLAAD Media Awards for Outstanding Comedy Series* in 2011 and 2112 (The Internet Movie Database, "Modern Family: Awards").

Since the beginning of the show, *Modern Family* has remained popular. It was ranked the sixth highest-rated scripted show in America and the third-highest rated new show (Andreeva, "Full Series Rankings"). Therefore, it is obvious that *Modern Family* has received a lot of positive criticism from television critics for its acting, humor and writing. Jones calls

the show “the most successful comedy to come out of America since *Friends*” (“Ty Burrell on playing Modern Family's Phil Dunphy”). First season was well received and *Entertainment Weekly* called it the best sitcom so far because it is not recognizable as any other sort of sitcom, offering a “comic equation for almost every audience segment, while never blanding out the characters for mass consumption” (Field “Modern Family”). *New York Times* called the show the funniest new family comedy of the year for its comedic representation of parenthood and family dysfunction (Poniewozick, “Yes, We Kin”). In the review of the 2nd season, King claims that the show features one of the best ensemble cast on television, and the show plays with the audience expectations, “taking common sitcom archetypes, like the effete homosexual, the dumb kid, and the loony foreigner, and turning them on their heads”, where homosexual characters, Cam and Mitch play gay stereotypes and break them at the same time (“Modern Family: Season two”. However, other critics, such as Tassi, argue that *Modern Family* just worsens the stereotypes about homosexuals (“Are Modern Family and Glee really our best shows on TV right now?”). Swanson says that 3rd season of *Modern Family* reinforced the show central premise: “that the diversity of “modern” families is a strength, not a weakness, a point that the writers thankfully emphasize through humor rather than cheap sentimentality” (“Modern Family: Season Three”). Campbell argues that the show hasn’t managed to achieve its past glory with Season 4, with the jokes stale and situations tired (“Modern Family's Season 4 Premiere”). However, Season 4 got positive review from Bianco, who called it “the most appreciated great comedy… which just wrapped up another deservedly dominant Emmy performance” (“TV tonight: 'The Middle,' 'Modern Family,' 'CSI'"). However, the show was criticized by Haimoff (2012) because the female characters on *Modern Family* are stay-at-home moms, while male characters are professionally accomplished (“Not so Modern Family”). Season 5 also received mixed reviews, where Wolfston (2013) claims that “what was once an acutely observed comedy about family dynamics has turned into a shrill pastiche of

stereotypical characterizations and superficial banter lacking both feeling and wit, where they are rehashing the same personal quirks and familiar clichés" ("Modern Family: Season Five"). On the other hand, Adler (2013) holds that the 5th season of the show is not going through a mid series crisis, claiming that "what kept viewers and *Emmy* voters coming back is the show's broad appeal, which few laughers on television have anymore, and the excellent cast" ("Modern Family Season Premiere Review"). Season 6 received more positive feedback, with most of episodes graded with B or higher by *The A.V. Club*. According to Chilton, Season 6 features "nothing new, nothing adventurous… but remains a tightly written and funny comedy that appeals to all ages" ("Modern Family: The Long Honeymoon"). Season 7 is criticized for its lack of character progress and overstuffed episodes, which resulted in "little room for storylines to breathe, meaning that a certain complexity and depth has been sacrificed" (Fowle, "A Messy Finale Caps off a Frustrating Season of Modern Family"). .

Modern Family was also positively received for its mockumentary style, and the ability to transmit the "realness". Writers Steven Levitan and Christopher Lloyd claim that the sitcom portrays real life, familiar situations, saying that watching the show answers to the questions "What are the conversations that we're having with our kids, with our wives? What are the funny situations that we are witnessing in our schools?" (Salem, "Modern Family Worth Adopting"). Explaining how the show uses interviews to "incorporate its own hashtag of simultaneous self-analysis directly into the storyline" for *New York Times*, Lloyd also emphasizes that "the interviews are a chance to have characters more honestly express things than they might openly do in a scene with someone. So we get a laugh from the contrast between what they're really feeling and what they were willing to admit they were feeling in the scene" (Feiler, "What 'Modern Family' Says About Modern Families").

4.2. Representation of Gender in *Modern Family*

In the description of the show on ABC, the show is described as a culturally defining series, and the word "modern" suggest that the family communicates something new, innovative, a positive progression from what has already been established. The sitcom obviously defies the norm of traditional family structure, if we bear in mind that it involves a homosexual marriage, step parenting and a mixed marriage between a Latin American young woman and an older man. However, if we look a little closer, it seems that they fit into the patriarchic family ideology, promoting stereotypical gender roles, and seemingly reflecting reality and supposed natural gender behavior. Nevertheless, some would say that the writers of the sitcom are trying to harmlessly play with the stereotypes.

The family that takes the most airtime of the sitcom is the Dunphys. They are the nuclear family of the sitcom similar to those presented in the 1950's, consisting of the father, Phil, who financially supports the family, his wife Claire, a stay-at-home mom (who later works in and becomes a manager in her father's closet company), and their three children; Haley, the oldest daughter portrayed as an attractive dumb girl; Alex, a smart daughter often represented as unattractive and unsociable; and Luke, the youngest clumsy son. However, even though the family structure is patriarchal, some of the characters and the way they interact resist the conventional representation of gender.

Even though Phil is often represented as a goofy and childish character, he appears to fit in the traditional sitcom father role, who was the one financially providing for the family in the first four seasons, and therefore the man of the house. Phil is a white, able-bodied man, who is successful in his career as a housing realtor, a typical characteristic of middle-class men in domestic sitcoms (Butsch 115). Nevertheless, Phil's character does resist the masculine norm of behavior and parenthood. Phil Dunphy was a cheerleader in college, he is overly sensitive,

not authoritarian, not handy around the house, unable to open a pickle jar, he spends time in spas and he is never afraid to cry when his feelings are hurt. Represented in a comic way, these characteristics and behaviors signify femininity, and therefore they signify Phil's difference. In Season 2, the episode *Slow Down Your Neighbors*, Gloria wants to learn how to ride a bike and wants Phil to teach her because she needs "someone gentle, nurturing, like a woman". In his chapter "Exhibiting Masculinity", Nixon refers to the book "The Sexuality of Men", where the authors described masculinity characterized by aggression, competitiveness, coldness and emotional inability (296) - which makes the discourse of hegemonic masculinity. Phil Dunphy is incapable of being aggressive, he shows his emotions, and seeks acceptance from his children and other family members. Therefore, he "successfully" resists the traditional portrayal of hegemonic masculinity. He is actually not a traditional father figure, and wants to be friends with his children. For example, Phil wants to be a cool that, saying "I've always said that if my son thinks of me as one of his idiot friends, I've succeeded as a dad." (Season 4, Episode "Door to Door"), and in the ninth episode of the first season he says "Act like a parent, talk like a peer. I call it peerenting". Another example of Phil's emotionality and desire to spend time with his children is evident in season 6, episode *Marco Polo*, when the Dunphys have to leave their house for few days while it is being treated for mold. Phil books one room at the hotel for all of them just so that the whole family can spend more quality time together, but Claire decides to find herself a room to be alone, after which kids decide also to stay with Claire since her room is more comfortable. Phil feels so betrayed and sad that he starts to hang out with a Nigerian family, who do not even speak the language.

 [1]

However, in the "Starry Night" episode Phil takes the traditional father role when helping his son, Luke, with his science project, while his wife, Clare, helps their daughter, Haley, with making cupcakes for a fund-raiser, representing the dominant belief that men are better at science and women in the domestic sphere. One thing that writers use to "save" Phil's masculinity is the sitcom is that he is very good at technology, and when teaching Claire how to use their new printer, he instructed her with a baby rhyme so she can learn the steps by heart, reproducing the stereotype that women are bad at technology (*The computer and the printer must talk, talk, talk. Command-P makes the picture walk, walk, walk*) (Season 2, Episode *The Kiss*).

The humor of the sitcom often derives from the portrayal of Phil as childish and Claire, a matriarchal mother, having to deal with him, and negotiating equal parenting with him. Even though they belong to the middle class, Phil's masculinity fits more into what Butsch would describe as the irresponsible, buffoonish, working class man portrayal (115, 127), and Siskind says that "Phil Dunphy is just a trim Homer Simpson with hair" ("The Evolution of the Family

[1] Phl Dunphy crying. Web 22 Feb 2015. <http://comedytvaddict.blogspot.com/2010/11/modern-family-manny-get-your-gun.html>

Sitcom"). Despite promising to Claire that he will fix the bathroom tub, the steps, or a bookshelf, he never does it. Nevertheless, he is hurt when Claire calls the repairman because, a typical behavior of inept TV dads. He resists the traditional discourse of masculinity, at the same time feeling insecure about it. After failing to fix Alex's computer and opening a pickle jar, Phil volunteers to fix a leaking roof, to which Jay yells: "Sit!" and goes to fix it himself (Season 7, Episode *The Storm*). Nixon argues that besides being historically specific, a certain version of masculinity is not only determined in relation to other versions of masculinity, but is also defined in relation to femininity (298). Therefore, Nixon argues that an adequate account of the field of gender relations, besides analysis of the relations between femininity and masculinity, should include the relations of domination and subordination operating between different forms of masculinity (Ibid, 300). Foucault's insistence of the operation of power through discursive regimes, therefore, opens up the possibility of analyzing power relations in the construction of images that signify masculinity. Phil's masculinity is often measured in relation to feminine characteristics and he is often contrasted with his father in law, Jay, who is the embodiment of the hegemonic masculinity. Thus, power relations in this respect are evident in a way that Phil and other men in the sitcom, whose marginalized masculinities are the source of the humor, are subordinated in relation to Jay.

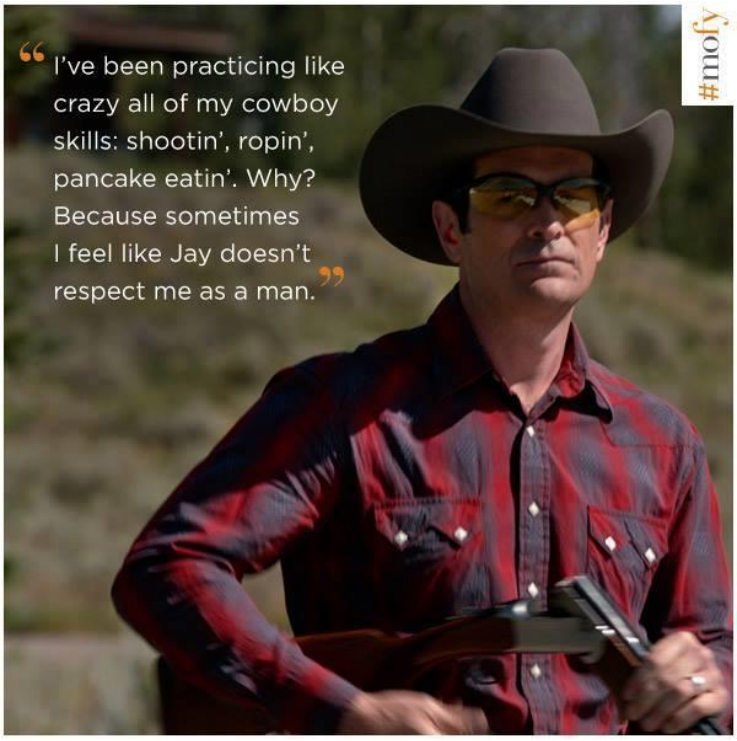
Hall argues that media does not reflect but represents social reality ("Media Power and Class Power" 9). In their research about modern masculinity conducted on adult American men, *A Woman's Nation* reported that men nowadays value family roles more than before. Dual earner families have become the norm in the USA, and men tend to prefer their "present partner" roles more than the roles of the provider, and they are embracing their emotional intelligence. "In achieving the American Dream, men are most likely to say that being a good son, husband, father and a friend is most important to them" (A Woman's Nation, "The Shriver Report Snapshot: An Insight Into the 21st Century Man"). If that is what it means to be a modern man

today, then Phil does represent a discourse of modern masculinity. However, his embodiment of what is still generally considered as the feminine characteristics and emotionality, combined with goofiness and childishness, signifies his lack of masculinity, and because of that Phil is often a focus of many jokes in the series. Hall also maintains that difference cannot be analyzed just in terms of extremes, like feminine or masculine, because they are oversimplified, but binary positions are crucial for classification and if someone does not fit to a certain category, negative practices can rise ("The Spectacle of the Other" 235). Phil does not embody hegemonic masculinity, and because his behavior often signifies femininity, his character is in a way represented as abnormal, and by rejecting normative masculine behavior, he is often treated with no respect by his family. What meaning does *Modern Family* communicate to the audience with this? Foucault argued that each individual is a subjected to normalization, where the norm makes it possible to measure all the degrees of individual differences (184). Other family members always criticize Phil's behavior. His father-in-law, Jay, always makes fun of him when he is too sensitive and calls him a "girl", and Claire criticized him for not being a strict enough father. Foucault says that the judges of normality are present everywhere (304). Bearing in mind that people are rewarded or punished according to how close they resemble the dominant gender, if we say that the judges of normality in this sitcom, besides the writers, are other family members, we can see how not fitting into the discourse of hegemonic masculinity results in being made fun of and not respected as a man as a sort of punishment.

[2]

Therefore, the authors of the sitcom attempt to portray Phil as embodying modern masculinity, apparently representing, or reflecting what men nowadays (should) look like and behave. Phil's character challenges the typical discourse of hegemonic masculinity, but as a result, his character is a focus of many jokes and represented as inferior and subordinate, especially in relation to characters that fit the discourse of hegemonic masculinity, for example, his father-in-law, Jay Pritchet.

[2] Phil Dunphy sitting on a bench with his add. Web 23 August 2016. <https://www.pinterest.com/rsocial/modern-family/>



[3]

Claire Dunphy is a very complex character. In the first four season she was a stay-at-home mom, even though she is a college graduate. Although Claire is often represented as the responsible parent who has to take care of everything, her character is still based on the creation of the gender stereotypes that society and television have placed upon women. Contemporary situation comedies on U.S. television portray smart and attractive women who are married to inept and immature men, such as in *King of Queens* or *According to Jim* (Walsh et al. 123),. “These shows discursively maintain patriarchy by employing two contradictory story lines: the first positions women as physically and intellectually superior to their husbands, and the second restrains feminist ideals while reaffirming male dominance” (Ibid). This is also the case with the Dunphys where Claire is portrayed as more intelligent, rational, sensible, responsible, and mature than Phil, but nevertheless, inferior to her husband in terms of contribution to the family income (until the 5th season), and the reduction of her identity to motherhood, family orientation

[3] Phil Dunphy as a cowboy. Web 22 Feb 2015. Web 22 Feb 2015. <https://www.pinterest.com/beatles6270/modern-family/>

and domesticity. Claire was almost always within the house, cooking, cleaning, doing laundry and yelling at other members of the family for being irresponsible. She is often presented as too emotional, manipulative, controlling and irrational, further strengthening the stereotypes about women as being irrationally hysterical. However, the development of her character encountered progression, when her ambition and intelligence were realized outside of the home. In the third season, she runs for the City Council, and after 20 years of being a housewife, her kids are not small any more, and in Season 5, episode, *First Days*, Claire starts to work for her father's closet company. Nevertheless, she continues doing her usual house choirs. A *Woman's Nation* found out that in dual earner families only 19% of men do house choirs, and this sitcom represents the real social situation of dual roles of women who "have to" do it both – work and take care of the household ("The Shriver Report Snapshot: An Insight Into the 21st Century Man"), reproducing and strengthening that ideology. Phil does occasionally help with house choirs, but it still remains primarily her job. When Claire is too busy working she asks fill to order the food because she won't be able to cook dinner (Season 7, Episode *Man Shouldn't Lie*). In the episode *The Verdict* from Season 7, Claire has to be a boss for one day at the closet company, and she makes so many mistakes, fails at being a good leader and realizes that she is not respected as a boss by the employees. After her father, Jay, retires from being a boss in *White Christmas* episode from Season 7, Claire runs the company. Claire has apparently become a supermom, she runs the business and takes care of the household. At least that what she wants everyone to think. In the episode *I don't Know How She does it* she secretly "hires" an assistant to help her pack the kid's lunches, do the laundry, etc., because she is ashamed to admit that she cannot take good care of her family because of her job. She starts feeling guilty for not actually doing those things, and cries saying: "I'm so damn busy trying to be the perfect mom and the perfect boss, but I'm outsourcing the one job that means the most to me, and I really miss it. I miss being a mom". According to Hochschild, women are inevitably "doomed"

to work the "second shift" after they arrive from work, taking more than humanly possible (291). Science provides materials proving the nature given and biological difference between men and women, where women are more nurturing and biologically competent to take care of children. Through discursive operation women's roles as nurturers is considered to be natural and biological, and women find themselves in a disadvantaged position if they try to do both. Therefore, Claire is just another example how even progressive sitcoms, which bend gender performances, reproduce the knowledge which makes us believe that for women biology is their destiny.

In episode *Thunk in the Trunk* from Season 7, Claire admits her fears about not being a good authoritative boss as her father was, saying "I'm faking it Phil, I have no idea what I'm doing… I'm just copying my dad… The steak, the scotch, the cigars… I haven't had the guts to sit at my dad's desk since he left… I still feel like the little girl who used to play hide-and-seek under it", reaffirming that in order to be a good boss, you have to adapt characteristics that signify masculinity. In order to be taken seriously as a boss, Claire has to undo her gender and adopt a masculine script of leadership. Kelan calls this a female masculinity, but since binaries remain and perception of performances as masculine or feminine differs according the body it is placed on, female masculinity is classified as not real (188). As Barret and Davidson note, the last three to four decades experienced a rapid increase in numbers of women in the workplace around the world, with more women also entering managerial ranks. Nevertheless, despite legislation in many countries which aimed at furthering women' capacities to move to the top of their organizations, the phenomenon of the "glass ceiling" still persists (Barrett and Davidson 1). Many women are confronted with gender stereotypes, gendered expectations, and their related behaviors. Bearing in mind that most workplaces are predominantly masculine domains with masculine norms of behavior, including ways of interacting, it is obvious that women find themselves in a disadvantaged position. According to Holmes and Meyerhoff,

leaders are typically characterized as authoritative, strong-minded, decisive, aggressive, competitive, confident, brave and goal-oriented (3), which is a masculine conceptualization of how leadership should be performed. We can see how Claire's problems at work actually represent the real troubles women are still experiencing at managerial positions, where she feels incapable of being a leader because she is a woman, further straitening the ideology that leadership is a masculine field. Her other problem is balancing between work and family obligations, and what *Modern Family* perhaps communicates with this is that women who resist the normative gender behavior end up too stressed, the family suffer as well, and they must choose between family and career in order to be good mothers and wives.

Claire's physical appearance fits into the norm of an American housewife and mother. It seems that she does not have much time to care about her looks as she mostly wears sloppy clothes, blouses or button-up shirts, and jeans. Haley and Alex call it "mom clothes". In season 5, episode *Other People's Children*, Gloria and Claire go dress shopping for Lilly, where Gloria talks her into trying on dresses so as to "feel beautiful" before getting back to her "boy clothes". Claire justifies her tendency towards wearing boy clothes as not having enough time to worry about that and by being a father's daughter who had to behave and look slightly masculine due to her brother being gay.

[4]

However, in order to be attractive to her husband, Claire has her sexy alter ego, Juliana, whom she embodies when she and Phil play their sex games. Phil sometimes even seems to prefer Juliana, since she is sexy, provocative, not hysterical and more flexible than Claire, getting sad when the real Claire is back. Thus, in this sitcom the wife is supposed to portray a typical wife and mom, who should be improved by becoming sexier and more relaxed as Juliana. Even though Claire eventually becomes a manager at her father's closet company, her character fits into the norm by being immersed into the discourse of motherhood and domesticity. The sitcom attempts to represent, i.e. construct the knowledge about a gender identity of a modern woman who should be both the financial provider and the family oriented mother.

[4] Claire Dunphy in the kitchen. Web 22 Feb 2015 < https://modernfamilytranscripts.wordpress.com/tag/claire-dunphy>

 [5]

Haley could be compared to the representation of typical dumb blondes in media, who is frequently being teased by her Sister Alex for being stupid. Haley's character also reinforces gender stereotypes that girls are not smart, constructing the idea that intellectuality is masculine. She is also defined in terms of her appearance, and the bodily discipline placed upon her signifies the proper performance of her femininity, which makes her very popular and socially desirable. In many episodes it appears that even her parents like her more than her smart, nerdy sister.

[6]

[5] Phil's alter ego, Clive and Claire's alter ego, Juliana. Web 22 Feb 2015 < http://abc.go.com/shows/modern-family/episode-guide/season-06/614-valentines-day-4-twisted-sister>

[6] Haley Dunphy. Web 22 Feb 2015. < http://hylandsgifs.tumblr.com/post/42772905087/haley-dunphy-season-4-gifs>

Alex, on the other hand, resists the traditional discourse of femininity in media, being very intelligent and rational, but presented as unattractive and not having friends. Alex does not embody normative gender behavior, and we can see that it ends up with her being excluded or "othered", and that even her parents sometimes wish she were more "normal". For example, when Alex wants to wear plain shirt and a pair of trousers, Claire forces her to wear a dress, saying "It's gonna kill you to look like a girl for one afternoon?". Alex is angry, but in the "ending resolution" part of the episode, we learn that she did buy the dress, a "happy ending" typical of the sitcom genre (Season 1, Episode *Come Fly with Me*). This is one of the example in which we can recognize what Foucault' calls the "normalizing power" (304), or disciplining of the body to make it look more feminine, more normal, more acceptable. In season 6, Episode *Strangers in the Night*, she admits to her parents that she has a boyfriend but they think it is an imaginary one since they have a hard time believing that is possible.

[7]

Luke as well represents a typical boy, being goofy, competitive, and reinforcing stereotyping of boys as being sporty, competitive and mischievous. His normative behavior is presented as understandable as it is typical for a normal boy, to whom the audience can relate. Like his father, Luke is goofy and not the smartest link in the series. Nevertheless, he is good

[7] Alex Dunphy. Web 22 Feb 2015. < http://giphy.com/search/alex-dunphy>

at technology, and after Claire and Alex don't know how to use a new remote control Phil bought, Luke has no trouble with it, reaffirming the dominant belief that men are better at technology (Season One, Episode *Fifteen Percent*).

The Dunphys represent a classic conception of what an ideal American family should look like, acting as a baseline for traditional nuclear family norms, where stereotypes are at the core of many jokes in the series. Thus, we can say that the sitcom families contribute to the creation of knowledge about gender behaviors and expectations which are historically and culturally specific, and which cannot meaningfully exist outside specific discourses, i.e. outside the ways they are represented in discourse, produced in knowledge and regulated by the discursive practices and disciplinary techniques of a particular society and time (Hall, "The Work of Representation" 47).

[8]

The Pritchett family consists of Jay and Gloria Pritchett, her son Manny Delgado-Pritchett, and their son, Joe Fulgencio Pritchett. This family is different from the other two because it depicts an interracial marriage. Gloria's presence in the show represents the social reality of American population, where 17,6 of the total population make up people of Hispanic origin, the largest ethnic minority in the USA (U.S. Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the

[8] The Dunphys. Web 22 Feb 2015. < http://yourpopfilter.com/2011/07/the-pop-filter-top-ten/>

Resident Population"). This family resists the norm of sitcom families since, besides involving step parenting, Gloria is Latin American and almost half Jay's age. They don't represent an ideal family from the 1950s sitcoms, nevertheless, the Pritchetts embody the dominant ideology where men have more power - the husband is the income provider, while Gloria is a stay-at-home mom who cooks, cleans and takes care of Manny and Joe.

Jay Pritchett is the breadwinner of his family, he is tough, he drunks scotch, he doesn't like to show his emotions and never misses the opportunity to show his disappointment and make fun of Phil, Manny, Mitchel and Cam for showing characteristics that signify femininity. Besides being historically specific, masculinity is always interwoven with other social factors, such as race, class, ethnicity and generation (Nixon 297). Jay is the oldest man in the family, and from time to time his outdated attitudes and represented as ignorant. Nevertheless, being the owner of a company, married to a beautiful and young Colombian wife and having control over the rest of the family who depends on his approval. Jay is represented as the manliest of all the men in the series, and immersed in the power-knowledge that values hegemonic masculinity as the highest form of the mentioned, both his family members and the audience perceive him as the dominant heterosexual male and his masculinity performance justifiable. Brooks and Hebert (308) note that the fundamental delineation in media research is between the dominant, normative, white, heterosexual, and middle-class masculinity and subordinated masculinities. The father of this family is influenced by the patriarchic ideas of manhood and fits into the normative dominant discourse of masculinity, reinforcing the masculinist ideology that men are not allowed to be emotional or admit their weaknesses. Therefore, Jay fits into what Butsch calls middle-class masculinity - successful father, admired by his wife and children and never demasculinized (118). The target of humor in this middle-class sitcom family is, therefore, the wife (Ibid). Traditional role of the father is to be a provider and to teach the sons how to be real men. Compensating the lack of Phil's ability to teach his son things boys should

do and him not having had the opportunity to do that with his gay son, Jay teaches his grandson Luke to work with tools and even considers letting him to try drinking beer like a "real man". Jay seems to embody the normative father role for most of the sons of the sitcom, since other fathers, not being masculine enough, or simply gay, are not capable of teaching them those normative values. In Season 7, episode *Promposal*, Jay is demonstrating to Joe how to change car oil. When Joes asks if Manny knows how to change oil, Jay answers "Bath oils". When Joe ask what bath oil is, Jay proudly says "That's my boy". Another example where the show reinforces gender stereotypes in raising children is when the family decides that they should give Lily's old princess house to Joe since she is not using it anymore, but to Jay's relief, they repaint it to look like a pirate house, where Gloria explains that it is because "He's a boy.." (Season 6, Episode *Integrity*). With this example we see how language serves in circulating knowledge about gender. "He's a boy" immediately prescribes him a variety of roles that should be performed as a result of his biological sex, since sex is widely seen as a cause of gender (Butler "Gender Trouble" 117, 121).

Although it seems that Jay accepted that his son is a homosexual, it is clear that Jay believes that homosexuality is a breakdown of masculinity. For example, in the 3rd season, episode *The Last Walt*, Jay and Cam's father argue about whose son is more masculine, since neither of them can fully accept that their sons are gay. Jay fits into the traditional normative discourse of masculinity, and thus is presented as superior to both other women and men in the sitcom. His relationship with Phil is based on his constant rejection of bonding with him and making fun of him for not being masculine enough. So, even though Phil's character is lovable and very funny, we can say that we are laughing with Jay, who fits to the norm, and at Phil, whose "modern" masculinity deviates from the norm. This kind of gender representation and power relations further reinforce the construction of normative gender behavior.

[9]

Jay is a wealthy businessman who owns a closet company, while his much younger wife grew up in poverty, which she often mentions. Nevertheless, she does not seem to have a problem adapting his lifestyle and spending a lot of money on tight dresses and jewelry. Even though there is a mention that she has worked as a taxi driver and hairdresser, Gloria doesn't seem to have ambition to work outside the house and feels comfortable with spending her husbands' money. Throughout the series we notice how Jay buys her expensive things. She is defined in terms of her husband. In Season 1, episode *Game Changer*, we learn that she is excellent at chess, but when she and her husband play a match, she doesn't win intentionally, admitting to the audience that she is "a very good chess player, but a better wife." She hides her intellect so that her husband doesn't feel demasculinized. Another way in which she demonstrates her subordination is evident in Season 3, Episode *Leap Day*, Gloria and Jay go to a soccer game, and when Gloria starts arguing with some man who insults her on the account of her Colombian origin, Jay insists they go to another table to avoid confrontation. But, Gloria is disappointed because Jay didn't physically fight with him to protect her and therefore prove his masculinity.

[9] Jay Pritchett. Web. 11 August 2016. <http://www.quickmeme.com/p/3vrqio>

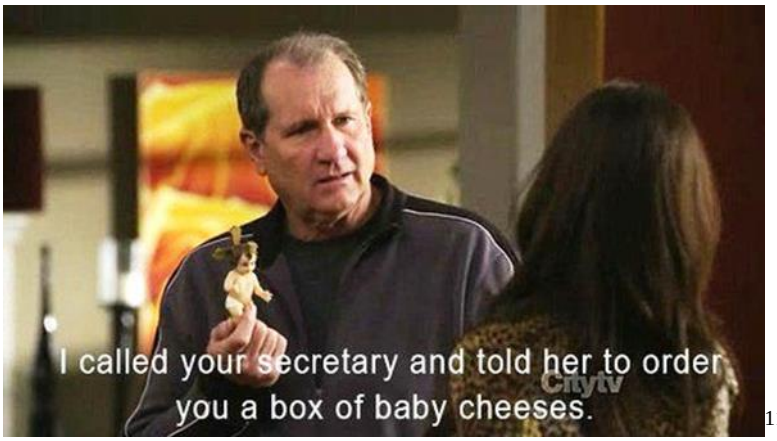
 [10]

ABC's says that Jay "married much younger, much hotter, much more Colombian Gloria" (“Modern Family: Bio Jay”). She shares with Claire the identity of motherhood and domesticity, but their characters differ greatly. Gloria serves as a stereotypical portrayal of Latin American women, described by Correa as "'passive”, “dependent on men”... “hot-tempered”,... and “sexy" (qtd. in Lehmann 3). As Fiske notes, “Whiteness is particularly adept at sexualizing racial difference, and thus constructing its “others” as sites of savage sexuality” (45). In the 7th season Gloria starts financially contributing to the household by selling the hot sauce based on a recipe that has been in her family for generations. However, when the real-size cutout of her is displayed next to her sauce in the supermarket, it seems that it’s just another way for her to be an object of the unsavory attention from men (Season 7, Episode *Thunk in the Trunk).* The emphasis wasn’t on the sauce, but inevitably, on her oversexualized appearance

Throughout the show, she is being laughed at for her Hispanic accent and frequent misuses of phrases and mispronounces words. For example, in season 2, episode *Halloween,* she asks Jay's secretary to order a box of little baby cheeses he likes, but what he gets is a box of baby Jesuses. In the 3rd season’s episode *Planes, Trains and Cars* when explaining to Jay

[10] Gloria. Web 9 August 2016. http://nypost.com/2015/01/24/drugs-murder-mafia-inside-sofia-vergaras-rocky-road-to-fame/

that she doesn't want to ride in a helicopter, Gloria cannot find the right word, "helicopter", asking "How do you say it in English the takatakatka?" Jay responds by saying, "Helicopter." This example, among many, reflects and reproduces stereotypes about Hispanic people as being ignorant of the English language. Besides that, Gloria is also portrayed as more primitive than "the whites". She is superstitious, thinks that her family is cursed, believes in fortune telling, and in the 6th season, episode *Fight or Flight*, Manny thinks he has a high temperature, Gloria checks it by kissing him on the forehead. Jay reminds her that she can use the thermometer, to which she replies "Why do you have to be so white all the time?".

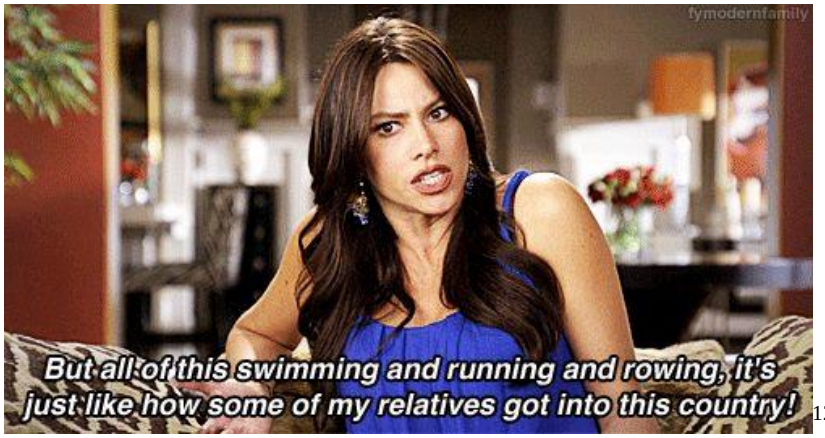


[11].

Brooks and Hebert note that just as gender is a social construct through which a society defines what it means to be masculine or feminine, race also is a social construction (297). Throughout the show Gloria's Colombian heritage is present, not only through her accent but also through her frequent references to her previous life in Columbia where, as she says, there are lots of prostitutes, goats on the streets, she was even babysat by a goat named Lupe. She knows how shoot from a gun, to break into a school locker using a credit card, and has no problem killing a rat with a shovel. Representation is complex, especially when dealing with difference. As Hall notes, with representation of difference, race doesn't exist without gender

[11] Gloria ordering baby Jesuses for Jay. Web 15 August 2016. https://www.pinterest.com/pin/96968198201524596/

and sexuality, where one difference attracts the other, creating the spectacle of otherness ("The Spectacle of the Other" 231). With Gloria, her race further brings new expectations of gender behavior, where Hispanic women are portrayed as strong, passionate, hot-tempered and sexy. Even though the authors of the show play with stereotypes, especially concerning Gloria's character in order to accomplish the comedic effect, these images presented in the sitcom still serve in reproducing the power-knowledge which creates gendered and racialized culture, contributing to our understanding of race and gender, where the viewers assume certain kinds of behaviors or appearances to be authentic. This is her "true nature" and she cannot escape it. Naturalization is, thus, a representational strategy designed to fix difference and secure it forever, an attempt to secure discursive and ideological "closure" (Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 245). Here we can see how sitcoms serve in circulating the power-knowledge that assumes the authority of the truth in representing gender and sexuality. All this creates stereotypes, a signifying practice essential to representation of difference (Ibid 258). By employing, what Stuart Hall calls "inferential racism" ("The Whites of Their Eyes" 20), sitcoms provide viewers with an opportunity to absorb racialized meanings in a way that do not require a massive emotional investment (Ehrmann 6). Thus, we can say that the show is representing and reinforcing already existing stereotypes about Latin look as something that everyone recognizes - "brunette, sensual, expressive, animated, perhaps threatening" (Rodriguez 3).



[12]

In contrast to the racist stereotypical portrayal of Gloria's character, Claire represents the traditional American mom, who, at least until the fifth season, defines herself almost exclusively in terms of motherhood and domesticity. As it has already been mentioned, Claire dresses more casually (since she does not have time to take care of her looks), while Gloria is also defined in terms of her glamorous appearance. Thus, Claire's character is represented as more normative since her appearance implies, i.e. signifies that her priority is the family. While Claire is represented as "the norm", embodying normative or proper gender behavior of American white woman, Latin American Gloria is represented as "the other". What is more, white people are seen as standard or the norm and everything else is "the other".

[12] Gloria Pritchett referring to her origin. Web 23 Feb 2015 < http://giphy.com/search/vergara>

 [13]

Manny Delgado is Gloria's son from a previous marriage with Javier Delgado. Manny is a charming, eccentric and confident boy who often behaves too mature for his age. He drinks coffee, writes poetry, cares about his appearance, wears suits, and once Claire mockingly commented that Manny "wears aftershave" and "dresses like a count" (Season One, Episode *Coal Digger*). From the beginning of the show his character resists dominant discourse of masculinity. He is not tough or athletic, he doesn't have the need to prove his manliness to other boys, but he is smart, romantic and poetic. Gloria encourages Manny to be himself, but it seems that sometimes she's afraid that his not being a typical boy can be detrimental to his social adaptability. For example, in Season 1, Episode *Run for Your Wife*, he wants to go to school wearing a poncho to show his classmates that he is proud of his Colombian heritage. Jay disagrees with it because he thinks other children will make fun of him. Gloria supports Manny, but when she realizes that he also wants to play traditional pan flute and dance, she asks Jay to break it to prevent him from embarrassing himself, saying "my son will die a virgin". Throughout the seasons Manny grows a bit self-conscious, representing typical troubles teenage boys go through, but he still remains himself. It has previously been said that masculinity can

[13] Claire and Gloria organizing the school dance. Web 25 August 2016. <http://www.adamreisinger.com/2010/12/modern-family-dance-dance-revelation.html>

be defined in terms of femininity as well, and throughout the show Jay advices him to be less sensitive, like a woman, and more masculine. Moreover, masculinity depends on other social factors, such as age, race and ethnicity. Even though Latino masculinity is often related to excessive masculine displays and machismo, Mirandé claims that many traits that are usually defined as feminine in the dominant culture, such as being affectionate, warm, emotional and sensitive are much more acceptable with Latino men than with other white men (131). We see that Manny actually embodies these traits, as well as that he is also a admired by girls, and even though he doesn't grow into a macho man, his sensitivity and emotionality is represented as something natural to his Colombian origin and fits into the discourse of Latino masculinity.

 [14]

Modern Family is not the first television show which depicts gay life, and we are witnesses how media manages to shape society, rather than just reflecting it. Not only does *Modern Family* address social change and attitudes towards homosexuality, but it also manages to normalize it. Therefore, this sitcom is a perfect example of the circulation of images, representations, and discourses from one area of social practice to another – from social change to sitcoms, and vice versa. Namely, according to THR poll conducted in 2012, thanks to *Modern Family*, gay marriage is winning support among US voters (Appelo, "THR Poll: "Glee" and

[14] Manny drinking coffee. Web 15 August 2016. http://www.savingforcollege.com/articles/nine-reasons-why-every-modern-family-needs-a-529-plan-735?page=4

"Modern Family" Drive Voters to Favor Gay Marriage"). In the first four seasons of *Modern Family*, the gay couple, Cameron Tucker and Mitchell Pritchett weren't married, but as soon as gay marriage was legalized in California in 2013, it was reflected in the show's plot and in the first episode of the fifth season, *Suddenly, Last Summer,* Cam and Mitch start thinking about getting married, and they finally do at the end of the season.

Nevertheless, the sitcom's reliance on patriarchal structures models traditional ideologies even when we talk about the liberal homosexual couple. Obviously, Cameron Tucker and Mitchell Pritchett do resist the traditional family structure and even their adopted Vietnamese daughter's last name is written with a hyphen, implying their equality and defying the patriarchic idea. However, even though the sitcom tries to communicate the resistance towards patriarchic dominance through this couple, it's reliance on it is to a large extent present. According to Mundy, same sex couples differ from heterosexual couples in terms of labor division, house duties, child bearing and problem solving. Those marriages are less gendered and they don't have to follow the "who will do what" based on their gender ("The Gay Guide to Wedded Bliss"). This is not represented in *Modern Family*, and their relationship, parenting and labor market status is still placed within the heteronormative discourse of gender roles, where Mitchell's identity is defined mostly in terms of his lawyer career, while Cam defines himself as a stay-at-home-dad/trophy wife, who sometimes behaves like an overly protective mother to their daughter, Lily. In the first season, episode *Up All Night*, Cam says "I'm like a mother bear. When I hear my cub crying, I have to run to her". Cam used to be a music teacher before adopting Lily and deciding to be a homemaker and a stay-at-home dad. When Lily is old enough, Cam becomes a substitute part-time teacher (Season 4), and later a high school football coach. Even though Cam has a job there is no economic parity in that marriage. This dynamics reminds of a modernized male breadwinner family model, where the father works full time,

while the mother works part time, and therefore earns less and still has time to take care of the household (Kotowska and Matysiak 10).

 [15]

At first sight the sitcom does not allow either of them to become a caricature, since both of them embody both feminine and masculine characteristics. For example, Cameron is more flamboyant, he wears colorful clothes, but he is also more athletic, stronger and handy around the house. He is portrayed as a stereotypical camp gay character, nevertheless, his rural origins and "farm strength" have been mentioned in various episodes. Mitchell, who is insensitive and fits within the traditional male role of the breadwinner, is unathletic, meticulous, worries about everything, traits normally attributed to "feminine" characters. They do challenge gender expectations, but their relation is still defined in terms of heterosexist roles, where one is masculine; the father and the breadwinner, while the other fits more into the discourse of femininity and domesticity, taking care of the household and teaching their adopted child to dress and behave like a girl. Butler notes that if gender is a "normative institution which seeks to regulate those expressions of sexuality that contest the normative boundaries of gender, then gender is one of the normative means by which the regulation of sexuality takes place. The threat of homosexuality thus takes the form of a threat to established masculinity or established

[15] Mitchell Pritchett and Cameron Tucker. Web 24 Feb 2015. < http://www.sheknows.com/entertainment/articles/1017245/the-men-of-modern-family>

femininity" (“Against Proper Objects” 23). As Mirzoeff puts it, any corporal identity that falls outside the established parameters for personal identity will encounter disciplinary force, the same disciplinary force that produces heterosexual men and women (185).

[16]

Cameron Tucker is portrayed as a flamboyant, overly dramatic, sensitive, he likes Broadway musicals and is more engaged in raising their daughter and even teaching her to perform her femininity properly. For example, in Season One, Episode *Run for Your Wife*, Cam admits that he just finished photographing Lily dressed as various pop icons outfits. Also, when he is helping Lily with her school project, all the materials he picks for her are made from glitter, to which Lily protests “Mrs. Daniels says my projects have too much glitter”. When Mitch reminds him the project is about the Potato Famine, Cam shockingly replies “I’m sorry. Do Irish tears not sparkle?” (Season 6, Episode *Patriot Games*). Moreover, in the 5th season he starts to coach a high school football team, but within that context he is represented as a hyper-feminized stereotypical gay character, which the writers use to remind the viewer of his “otherness”. For example, he wears make up at games, and when he explains that he videotapes the football games to see what they are doing wrong, he says: "That's how I figured out that powder-blue windbreaker washed me out so much ..." (Season 6, Episode *Don’t Push*). His character reinforces the stereotypes that gay men are dramatic, obsessed with fashion, theatrical

[16] Mitchell Pritchett. Web 24 Feb 2015. < http://www.tumblr.com/search/mitchell%20pritchett>

and flashy, which reduces, naturalizes and fixes his difference. Moreover, it seems that with gay characters *Modern Family* promotes gayness as a "lifestyle", which attaches it to commodities rather than practices as an expression of the self (Raymond 105). Almost all their friends are tacky flamboyant and superficial gays, whose names are Longines, Pepper, Ronaldo, Steven and Stefan, etc. Stereotypes as a signifying practice crucial in representing difference, and they serve to strengthen the division between normal and abnormal, insiders and outsiders (Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other" 258), where subjects embodying these stereotypes are classified within power knowledge as "the other". As is the case with Phil and Gloria, Cam's character is a focus of many jokes in the series, and this stereotypical representation of homosexuality is the source of humor without which sitcoms, including *Modern Family*, apparently cannot survive.

 [17]

Mitchell, on the other hand is a successful lawyer who wants to be a masculine figure in his daughter's life. However, his character does resists the normative masculine behavior too, since he is not athletic, is afraid of spiders, birds, etc. Nevertheless, Michel is still portrayed as more realistic, sarcastic and not very sensitive. Mitchell's character reinforces the male stereotype of intellectual pursuit and masculine ideal of not being sensitive to others. He criticizes Cam for being "too gay" and embarrassing him, and in Season One, Episode *Fears*, Mitch asks Cam to wear a less flamboyant shirt because he is embarrassed of his "gayness".

[17] Cameron Tucker. Web 24 Feb 2015. < http://moviespictures.org/biography/Tucker,_Cameron>

This kind of situations just represent fears against homosexuals, where flamboyant clothes serve as signifiers of deviant sexuality, and therefore something socially unacceptable. So, what *Modern Family* communicates with this is that not conforming to the dominant ideology is dangerous, and therefore it is better to conform in order to be socially more acceptable. Moreover, the sitcom also reproduces the stereotyping that it is manlier to be a breadwinner, and Mitchel frequently mentions that he is the one who financially contributes. After he and Cam made up after a fight, Mitchel says in the interview: "And just like that, peace returned to our house. Well, technically, it's my house", reminding the viewer that he is the head of the family (Season 2, *Two Monkeys and a Panda*). One episode that clearly emphasizes the heterosexist role these characters embody is *Mother's day* from 2nd season, where Mitchell brings breakfast to Cam saying "today is your day". Later, when they are in the park, they meet a group of families that have gathered to celebrate mother's day, where one of the mothers asks Cameron to join in to take a picture with all of the other moms and kids. Another example where *Modern Family* communicates that Cam is "the wife" in that relationship is evident in Season 3 Episode, *Me? Jealous?,* when Cam and Mitch stay in The Pritchett home for a couple of days because their house is being fumigated. While Jay and Mitch are at work, Cam and Gloria start getting on each other's nerves because Cam starts rearranging the house, while Gloria changes Lily's hair, takes her shopping, etc. Cam is jealous of Gloria's bonding with Lily, while Gloria is insulted because Cam is undermining her skills as a homemaker. With this example, its seems that the show tries to play with the stereotypes of two wives living under the same roof, and competing with each other, further strengthening the stereotypes of women being inevitably jealous of each other. Mitchel identifies himself within the father role and he often has anxieties as not being a good father because he is not masculine enough. For example, in Season 3, Episode *Dude Ranch*, Mitchel and Cameron are planning to adopt a baby boy, but

Mitchel is afraid he is not going to be a good father because he is not manly enough. However, he reassures himself after realizing he is able to blow up a bird house with a firecracker.

Furthermore, throughout the sitcom there are occasional sex related scenes connected to both Claire and Phil, and Gloria and Jay, but not one episode includes such scenes nor there is talking about the intimate life of Cam and Mitchell - they are desexualized and their relationship seems almost platonic. It seems that the sitcom implicitly constructs the belief that homosexuality is acceptable as long as people do not have be exposed to anything related to their sex lives, further reproducing the belief that it is unnatural. What is more, in Season 6, Episode *Patriot Games*, Cam and Mitch express discomfort of community's boycott of a restaurant that doesn't support gays, since they like the restaurant's burgers. It seems that with this, the sitcoms communicates the wright and wrong of forms of gay cultural practice.

Modern Family does try to normalize homosexuality, but in order to balance the situation, the couple fits into the patriarchic family ideology. Even though both of them embody masculine and feminine traits, the sitcom implicitly represents one as more masculine and the other as more feminine, as it has been said. Therefore, since Mitchell is the breadwinner, Cam is immersed into the discourse of domesticity, implicitly represented as the mom, and therefore inferior. Moreover, the term "normal" can be dangerous since it can always confirm the outdated and oppressive ideas of the "abnormal", and homosexual characters in *Modern Family* are represented in a reductionist way, i.e. as stereotypes. Rich maintains that in a culture based on the compulsory heterosexuality, media tends to portray heterosexuality as natural and inevitable, positioning other forms of sexuality as "the other" (qtd. in Raymond 104). Although situations like from examples above are used to play with the stereotypes about gays, they still serve in reproducing the exact stereotypes, which the audience absorbs as authentic and natural. Both Cam and Mitchell are represented as "the other" and deviant in relation to the normative

discourse of masculinity, with Cam being more othered than Mitchell, since he employs a lower degree of masculinity.

4.3. Discussion

Bearing in mind that *Modern Family* includes both a traditional family, a homosexual and interracial marriage, all of them being interrelated, we cannot deny the fact that the family is to some extent a portrayal of a new vision of modern American families, where the sitcom successfully combines traditional and newer family discourses. Both Pritchett and Tucker-Pritchett families appear to be innovative and progressive, especially when contrasted to the Dunphy family. However, each family is full of stereotypes and outdated gender identities, since this non-traditional family functions within the normative family dynamics, where all three families are structured around heterosexual arrangements. It appears that the term "modern" can be misleading since this resistance towards the patriarchic family ideology lies only in the surface. These new family elements that the sitcom tries to incorporate still rely on patriarchic family dominance, where through such systems of representation traditional gender roles are still maintained and further reinforced. Moreover, although sitcom families have changed over time, with supposed shift from patriarchic to modern ones, it seems that they still serve to reproduce and normalize traditional gender identities, where women who seemingly have control over both their family life and their own life are nevertheless inevitably immersed into the discourse of domesticity. The show has experienced some progress throughout the seasons, when Claire has started working and eventually leading her father's closet company and even Gloria started selling her sauce, but their role within the domestic sphere remained almost the same. Moreover, Cam also started working as a substitute teacher and then high school football coach, but he is still not economically equal to his husband, since Mitch is still the main breadwinner.

Thus, the sitcom's reliance on the dominant patriarchic ideology is also represented in the portrayal of the homosexual couple, who seem to embody heterosexist roles, where one is more feminine (the mother), and the other more masculine (the father), with clear division between work and domestic sphere. Since Mitch employs a higher degree of masculinity, we can say that in relation to him Cam is inferior. The same can be applied Jay and Phil, with clear contrast between the hegemonic and marginalized and, therefore, inferior masculinity. Jay embodies the normative hegemonic masculinity with all other masculinities in the show being subordinated, he is the head of all the families, and all the family members seek his acceptance. Further, as it has been said, Claire Dunphy is represented as "the norm", since she embodies normative or proper gender behavior of American white woman, while Colombian Gloria is represented as "the other". Thus, we can say that in this sitcom as well, power relations are constantly explicitly or implicitly present, where the more powerful ones are those who fit to the norm; more masculine in relation to less masculine, or white in relation to Hispanic.

Hall argues that meaning can never be finally fixed, since words and images carry connotations over which we don't have control, and some other meanings can be constructed and re-appropriated ("The Work of Representation" 23). This is possible by replacing negative images with the positive ones. However, what can be a problem with this method is that these positive images increase the diversity of representation of gender, race and homosexuality, but they do not displace the negative images. Since the binaries remain, meaning continues to be framed within them (Ibid). *Modern Family* represents the resistance towards traditional discourse of femininity and masculinity, which is specifically evident from Phil's, Alex's, Manny's, Mitchell's and Cam's characters, nevertheless, these characters are represented as inferior in relation to characters who fit into the norm. They are charming and lovable, we laugh at them, but certainly would not like to be like them. Walsh et al. maintain that the power in a sitcom is with those who make the jokes, where the characters who are laughed are doomed to

hold the undesirable position or function as scapegoats (131). These characters' resistance towards traditional discourses of masculinity and femininity is represented as hilarious and the other family members are constantly making fun of them and trying to "fix" them. Since gender is always directly related to race and ethnicity, the sitcom represents Gloria as a stereotypically sensual, passionate, oversexualized and even slightly primitive woman, an image which inevitably strengthens the stereotype about Latin women, not reflecting the actual reality. Foucault argued that the power of normalization makes it possible to measure gaps, establish levels and differences by fitting them one to another (184). Norms serve to evaluate and control us, excluding those who do not conform. This exclusion is not the case in *Modern Family*, but nevertheless, and comic or not, it seems that the representation of race and gender, or "the other" in the sitcom still reinforces the stereotyping that the audience assumes to be true and authentic. Therefore, besides relying on the patriarchal family discourses and distribution of gender roles, the power of normalization of gender roles in this sitcom is realized in a way that the characters who do not fit to the norm are the focus of many jokes and represented as inferior in relation to the ones who are more "normative".

Discourses produce subject-positions from which they become meaningful (Hall, "The Work of Representation" 56), and individuals identify themselves within subject-positions according to their gender, race, class and sexuality, and immersed in the circle of power-knowledge, they look like and behave according to the rules of the discourse. Therefore, subjects are produced within discourse, cannot stand outside the power-knowledge, and we see how characters of *Modern Family* are invested in discourses of hegemonic masculinity, femininity, sexuality and race. Hegemonic masculinity is resisted in this show, nevertheless, modern masculinity is represented as deviant and inferior. Besides being measured in relation to the normative, hegemonic masculinity (Jay Pritchett), subordinated masculinities, those of Phil, Mitchel and Cameron, are also defined in terms of femininity. Inferior status in this sitcom

is also represented with stereotypes, a signifying practice that is the key of representing "otherness". This clever and hilarious show makes us laugh the hardest to Mitch, Cam and Gloria, but why is that so? It is so easy to accomplish a comic effect with using simple, easily recognizable and well-known characteristic about a certain social group, such as Hispanic people or homosexuals, but that reduces everything about a person to these traits, fixing and simplifying their identity, i.e. signifying difference and ensuring a so called ideological closure. Instead of challenging them, stereotypes in this show actually reinforce dominant ideological positions and reproduce traditional discourses around gender and race. Stereotypical portrayal of characters is often the source of the humor in sitcoms, including *Modern Family*, and they are not only inferior just within the narrative of the show, but also as a result, outside in the real world. Unlike other forms of media, sitcoms are constantly forgiven for using stereotypes, and *Modern Family* has been gaining praise and approval from both critics and the audience for its progressiveness, genius writing and acting performances.

According to Hall, codes are the means by which power and ideology are made to signify in particular discourses. However, for message to have an effect it first has to be appropriated as a meaningful discourse and be meaningfully decoded. It is this set of decoded meanings which produce and effect, influence, entertain, persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioral consequences (Hall "Encoding, Decoding" 93). In "Media Power and Class Power" Hall points out how apparently subversive media content can fail deliver a single subversive charge because it takes place and is constructed as entertainment (13). Therefore, we can see how sitcom genre provides a context in which dominant discourses of gender, sexuality and race are circulating through stereotyping and subordinating everything "abnormal" in a comic and, therefore, easily forgivable way, where these decoded meanings are taken for granted - as authentic. Stereotyping serves to maintain the symbolic order, the frontier between the "normal" and the "deviant", the

"acceptable" and the "unacceptable", what belong and what is "other", "insiders" and "outsiders". Thus, stereotyping is what Foucault calls a "power-knowledge". It classifies people according to the norm and constructs and excludes the "other" (Hall "The Spectacle of the Other" 258). Therefore, it is evident with the example of *Modern Family* how discursive form of power operates through culture, the production of knowledge, imagery and representation.

5. Conclusion

Predominance of sitcom on American prime-time television and their consequent share of the television audience over this history mean that they are major examples of dominant culture, constantly presented to the largest population over the longest time, where "pervasive and persistent images crystallize as cultural types" (Butsch 111). What contributes to the erasing of the division between reality and fiction in *Modern Family* is its mockumentary style, which contributes to the feeling that what is represented is the exact reflection of social reality and gender behavior. In his works Stuart Hall argues that media represents social reality, constructing meaning about the world around us, instead of just reflecting it. *Modern Family* is, among many shows, an evidence how sitcoms engage with social change. However, sitcoms are also a means through which dominant discourses of femininity, masculinity, sexuality and race are circulated and reproduced. Even though *Modern Family* is progressive, since it engages in social change, representing the changes in family dynamics and attitudes towards gender, women's and gay liberation movements, the sitcom still relies of patriarchic family discourses, outdated gender identities and stereotypes, it subordinates everything that does not fit to the norm, further reinforcing, naturalizing and normalizing traditional discourses of gender, sexuality and race. Consequently, the viewers absorb these representations as authentic reflections of reality, which in return serve to circulate this discursive knowledge, the truth about knowledge, and therefore serving as models of how a man, woman or homosexual, or a Latin American person should perform their gendered identities. Therefore, we can see how the discursive power still operates through the characters through representation of gender, race and homosexuality, dividing between the normal and the abnormal, superior and inferior, acceptable and unacceptable, the characters that we laugh with, and the ones we laugh at.

6. Works cited

Altman, Dennis. *Coming out in the seventies*. Sydney: Wild and Wooley, 1979 Print.

Barrett, Mary, and Davidson, Marilyn J. *Gender and Communication at Work*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006. Print.

Bignell, Jonathan, and Orlebar, Jeremy. *The Television Handbook: Media Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2005. Print.

Brooks, Dwight, and Hebert, Lisa. "Gender, Race and Media Representation". *Handbook of Gender and Communication*. Eds. Bow, Jonie D., and Wood, Julia T. London: SAGE Publications, 2006, pp. 297-318. Print.

Butler, Judith. Against Proper Objects. *Differences.* 6.2 (1994): 1-26. Print.

---. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.

Butsch, Richard. "Five Decades and Three Hundred Sitcoms about Class and Gender". *Thinking outside the Box: A Contemporary Genre Television Reader*. Eds. Edgerton, Gary R., and Rose, Brian G. Kentucky, 2005, pp. 111- 136. Print.

Calvert, Ben, et al. *Television Studies: The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge Publisher, 2007. Print.

Coffin, Samantha B. *How Modern Family and Parenthood Represent Equal Parenting: A Feminist Discourse*. All Theses, Dissertations, and Other Capstone Projects. Paper 122. 2013. Print.

Corner, John. "Documentary Realism". *The Television Genre Book.* Ed. Creeber, Glen. London: BFI Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp. 126-9. Print.

Crompton, Rosemary. *Employment and the Family: The Reconfiguration of Work and Family Life in Contemporary Societies*. Cambridge: London, 2005. Print.

Dalton, Mary M., and Linder, Laura R. "Introduction". *The Sitcom Reader: America Viewed and Skewed*. Eds. Dalton, Mary M., and Linder, Laura R. Suny Press. 2005 Print.

Ehrmann, Brett J. *Black, White, and Watched All Over: The Racialized Meanings in 1990s Sitcoms*. Undergraduate Honors Thesis for the Program in American Culture University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, 2009. Print.

Fiske, John. *Media matters: Race and gender in U.S. politics.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Print.

Foss, Katherine A. "You're Gonna Make It After All": Changing Cultural Norms as Described in the Lyrics of Sitcom Theme Songs, 1970-2001. *Rocky Mountain Communication Review*. 5.1. (2008): 43-56. Print.

Foucault, Michel, and Colin, Gordon. *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1980. Print.

Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan, Harmondsworth: Peregrine, 1977. Print.

Gledhill, Christine. "Genre and Gender: The case of soap opera". *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* Ed. Hall, Stuart. London: SAGE Publications, 1997, pp. 337-387. Print.

Hall, Stuart. "Encoding, Decoding". *The Cultural Studies Reader*. Ed. During, Simon. London and New York: Routledge, 1999, pp. 90-104. Print.

---. “Media Power and Class Power”. *Bending Reality: The State of the Media*. Eds. Curran, James, et al. London: Pluto, 1986, pp. 5-15. Print.

---. “The Spectacle of the Other”. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* London. Ed. Hall, Stuart. SAGE Publications, 1997, pp. 223-291. Print.

---. “The Whites of Their Eyes”. *Gender, Race and Class in Media: A Text Reader*. Eds. Dines, Gail, and Humez, Jean. M. London: Sage Publications, 1995, pp. 18-23. Print.

---. “The Work of Representation”. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* Ed. Hall, Stuart. London: SAGE Publications, 1997, pp. 13-75 Print.

Hochschild, Arlie, and Marhung, Anne. *The Second Shift*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. Print.

Holmes, Janet, and Mayerhoff, Miriam. *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. Print.

Kelan, Elizabeth. Gender Logic and (Un)doing Gender. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 17.2 (2010): 174-94. Print.

Kotowska, Irena E., Matysiak, Anna. Reconciliation of Work and Family under Different Institutional Settings; In: Höhn, Charlotte, et al. (Eds.). People, Population Change and Policies: Lessons from the Population Policy Acceptance Study. *European Studies of Population*, 1. (2008): 299-318. Print.

Kutulas, Judy. “Who Rules the Roost? Sitcom Family Dynamics from the Cleavers to the Osbournes”. *The Sitcom Reader: America Viewed and Skewed*. Eds. Dalton, Mary M., and Linder, Laura R. Suny Press, 2005, pp. 49-61. Print

Lerner, Lee K., et al. *Gender Issues and Sexuality: Essential Primary Sources*. Detroit, Michigan: Thomson Gale Publishig, 2006. Print.

Magnusson, Eva, and Marecek, Jeanne. *Gender and Culture in Psychology: Theories and Practices*. Cambridge, 2012. Print.

Marc, David. "Origins of the Genre: In Search of the Radio Sitcom". *The Sitcom Reader: America Viewed and Skewed*. Eds. Dalton, Mary M., and Linder, Laura R. Suny Press, 2005, pp. 15-25. Print.

Medhurst, Andy, and Tuck, Lucy. "Situation Comedy and Stereotyping". *Television Times: A Reader*. Eds. Corner, John. And Harvey, Sylvia. London: Arnold, 1996, pp. 111-116 Print.

Mirandé, Alfredo. *Hombres Y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997. Print.

Mirzoeff, Nicholas. *An Introduction to Visual Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.

Nixon, Sean. "Exhibiting Masculinity". *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Ed. Hall, Stuart. London: SAGE Publications, 1997, pp. 291-337 Print.

Pierson, David. "American Situation Comedies and the Modern Comedy of Manners". *The Sitcom Reader: America Viewed and Skewed*. Eds. Dalton, Mary M., and Linder, Laura R. Suny Press, 2005, pp. 35-49. Print

Raymond, Diane. "Popular Culture and Queer Representation: Critical Perspective". *Gender, Race, and Class in Media.* Eds. Dines, Gail, and Humez Jean. M. London: Sage Publications, 2003, pp. 98-110. Print.

Rodriguez, Clara E. Latin Looks: Images of Latinas and Latinos in the US Media. *Journal of American Ethnic History*. 19.2. (2000): 116-118. Print.

Sander, Johanna. *New Style in Sitcom: Exploring genre terms of contemporary American comedy TV series through their utilization of documentary style*. Linköping University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 2014. Print.

Stacey, Judith, and Davenport, Elizabeth. "Queer Families Quack Back". *Handbook of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Eds. Richardson, Diane, and Seidman, Steven. London: SAGE Publications, 2002, pp. 355-374. Print.

Staricek, Nicole C. *Today's "Modern" Family: A Textual Analysis of Gender in the Domestic Sitcom*. Auburn University, 2011. Print

Stoddart, Mark C. J. Ideology, Hegemony, Discourse: A Critical Review of Theories of Knowledge and Power. *Social Thought & Research*. 28. (2007): 191-225. Print.

Taylor, Dianna. Normativity and Normalization. *Foucault Studies*. 7. (2009): 45-63. Print.

Uecker, Matthias, et al. *Norms, Normality and Normalization*. University of Nottingham, 2014. Print

Walsh, Kimberly R., et al. Beauty and the Patriarchal Beast: Gender Role Portrayals in Sitcoms Featuring Mismatched Couples. *Journal of Popular Film and Television.* 36.3. (2008): 124-133. Print.

TV series:

Levitan, Steven, and Lloyd, Christopher, creators. *Modern Family*. Steven Levitan Productions, Picador Productions, and 20th Century Fox Television, 2009-2016

Web sources:

Adler, Jordan. “Modern Family Season Premiere Review: “Suddenly, Last Summer” And “First Days” (Season 5, Episodes 1 and 2)”. *We Got This Covered*. 2013. Web. 10 August 2016 http://wegotthiscovered.com/tv/modern-family-review-suddenly-last-summer-first-days/

Andreeva, Nellie. “Full Series Rankings for The 2009-10 Broadcast Season”. *Deadline*. 27 May 2010. Web. 22 August 2016. http://deadline.com/2010/05/full-series-rankings-for-the-2009-10-broadcast-season-44277/

Appelo, Tim. THR Poll: “Glee' and 'Modern Family' Drive Voters to Favor Gay Marriag -- Even Many Romney Voters”. *The Hollywood Reporter*. 11 March 2012. Web Retrieved 14 August, 2016 http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/thr-poll-glee-modern-family-386225

Bianco, Robert. “TV tonight: 'The Middle,' 'Modern Family,' 'CSI'”. *USA Today*. 25 September 2012. Web. 2 October 2016 http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/tv/story/2012/09/25/tv-tonight-the-middle-modern-family-csi/57843000/1

Campbell, Nick. “Modern Family's Season 4 Premiere: Comfortable, Not Outstanding”. *Tv.com*. 27 September 2012. Web. August 10 2016. http://www.tv.com/news/modern-familys-season-4-premiere-comfortable-not-outstanding-29673/

Chilton, Martin "Modern Family, The Long Honeymoon, season six, episode one: review". *The Tepegraph*. 4 November 2014. Web. 10 August 2016 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/tv-and-radio-reviews/11207098/Modern-Family-The-Long-Honeymoon-season-six-episode-one-review.html

Feiler, Bruce. "What 'Modern Family' Says About Modern Families". *New York Times*. 21 January 2011. Web. August 2016 http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/fashion/23THISLIFE.html?_r=0

Field, Danny. "Modern Family". *Entertainment Weekly*. 9 Octobeer 2009. Web. 2 August 2016 http://www.ew.com/article/2009/10/09/modern-family

Fowle, Kyle. "A Messy Finale Caps off a Frustrating Season of Modern Family". *TvClub*. 18 May 2016. Web. 20 July 2016 http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/messy-finale-caps-frustrating-season-modern-family-237003

Jones, Alice. "Ty Burrell on playing Modern Family's Phil Dunphy". *Independent.* 31 January 2014. Web. 10 August 2016. http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/features/ty-burrell-on-playing-modern-familys-phil-dunphy-9093930.html

King, Kris. "Modern Family: Season two". *Slant Magazine*. 15 November 2010. Web. 12 August 2016. http://www.slantmagazine.com/tv/review/modern-family-season-two

Lehmann, Carolin. "How Modern is Modern Family? A Critical Review on the U.S. Sitcom Regarding Gender Roles and Hegemonic Ideologies". *Rhetoric and Composition I.* 16 December 2011. Web 12 February 2015 http://www.academia.edu/1302382/How_modern_is_Modern_Family_A_Critical_Review_on_the_U.S._Sitcom_Regarding_Gender_Roles_and_Hegemonic_Ideologies

Haimoff, Michelle. "Not so Modern Family: Top Sitcoms Make for Sexist, Inaccurate Television". *CSMonitor.com.* 21 January 2012. Web. 7 August 2016 http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2012/0127/Not-so-Modern-Family-Top-sitcoms-make-for-sexist-inaccurate-television

"Modern Family: About the Show". abc.com. ABC, n.d. Web. 23 February 2015 http://abc.go.com/shows/modern-family/about-the-show

"Modern Family: Awards". *Imdb.* 2016 Web, 27 July 2016 http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1442437/awards

"Modern Family: Bio Jay". abc.com. ABC, n.d. Web. 23 February 2015 http://abc.go.com/shows/modern-family/cast/jay-pritchett

Mundy, Liza. "The Gay Guide to Wedded Bliss". *The Atlantic* June 2013. Web. 14 August 2016 http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/06/the-gay-guide-to-wedded-bliss/309317/

Poniewozick, James. "Yes, We Kin". *Time Magazine*. 28 September 2009. Web. 12 August 2016 http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1924499,00.html

Salem, Rob. "Modern Family Worth Adopting". *Toronto Star Nrwspapers*. 23 September 2009. Web. 3 August 2016 https://www.thestar.com/opinion/2009/09/23/modern_family_worth_adopting.html

Siskind, Sarah. "The Evolution of the Family Sitcom". *Harvard Political Review*. 24 May, 2012. Web. 25 August 2016 http://harvardpolitics.com/books-arts/the-evolution-of-the-family-sitcom/

Swanson, Peter. "Modern Family: Season Three". *Slant Magazine*. 20 October 2011. Web. 8 August 2016 http://www.slantmagazine.com/tv/review/modern-family-season-three

Tassi, Paul. "Are Modern Family and Glee really our best shows on TV right now?" *Unreality Magazine*. 2010. Web. 12 August 2016 http://unrealitymag.com/television/are-modern-family-and-glee-really-our-best-shows-on-tv-now/

"The Shriver Report Snapshot: An Insight Into the 21st Century Man". *A Woman's Nation*. 2015 Web. 5 August 2016 http://awomansnation.org/twenty-first-century-man-poll/

"Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States and States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015". *United States Census Bureau*. Web 8 August 2016 http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk

Wolfston, Matthew. “Modern Family: Season Five”. *Slant Magazine*. 6 November 2013. Web. 24 July 2016 http://www.slantmagazine.com/tv/review/modern-family-season-five

“Women in the Labor Force”. *United States department of Labour*. 2016. Web. 25 July, 2016 https://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/stats_data.htm

Reprezentacija roda u *Modernoj obitelji*

SAŽETAK

Televizija predstavlja i oblikuje, odnosno jezikom Stuarta Halla, reprezentira američku kulturu, a komedije situacije jedne su od glavnih instrumenata kroz koje cirkuliraju dominantne rodne ideologije. Cilj ovog rada jest analizirati kako popularna američka ABC-jeva komedija situacije, *Moderna obitelj*, koja se naizgled opire tradicionalnom prikazu roda, koristi specifične oblike reprezentacije kako bi konstruirala i cirkulirala rodna značenja i znanja, pri čemu će se uglavnom koristiti Hallov rad o reprezentaciji te Foucaultovi koncepti diskursa, znanja, moći i normalizacije. Analizom se pokazalo kako, iako *Moderna obitelj* koketira s društvenim promjenama, gdje se kroz likove i njihovu interakciju opire tradicionalnim diskursima o rodu, serija se i dalje oslanja na stereotipe i patrijarhalne diskurse roda i obiteljske dinamike. Također, moć normalizacije u *Modernoj obitelji* realizirana je kroz stereotipnu reprezentaciju različitosti, tj. drugosti, subordiniranje i pozicioniranje onih likova koji se opiru rodnim normama kao objekata humora, raščlanjivanjem između „normalnih“ i „nenormalnih“, „*insidera*“ i „*outsidera*“, što u konačnici dodatno učvršćuje i naturalizira tradicionalne diskurse o rodu, seksualnosti i rasi.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: reprezentacija, rod, komedija situacije, stereotipi, znanje i moć, normalizacija