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Performing Stereotypical Tropes on Social Media Sites: How Popular Latina Performers Reinscribe Heteropatriarchy on Instagram

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PERFORMING STEREOTYPICAL TROPES ON SOCIAL MEDIA SITES:

HOW POPULAR LATINA PERFORMERS REINSCRIBE

HETEROPATRIARCHY ON INSTAGRAM

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A Thesis

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In Partial Fulfillment

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Master of Arts

in

Communication Studies

———————————————

by

Ariana Arely Cano

September 2018

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzed three Latina social media celebrities' self-presentations on Instagram and focused on whether or not the content they published potentially challenges or simply perpetuates stereotypical tropes of Latinas found in mainstream media. This qualitative study took an Ideological Critical approach through a textual analysis that was informed by Feminist Theory. More specifically the research focused on: What were Latina social media celebrities self-presentations on Instagram that characterize what a Latina is? How were Latina social media celebrities self-presentations different from or similar to, mainstream stereotypical tropes for Latinas? Lastly, how do the Latina social media celebrities' self-presentations compare and contrast, what type of themes emerged?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

As more people are creating content on social media sites, it is important to understand these new grassroots/forms of cultural productions. Historically, traditional media have controlled the means of production, distribution and exhibition, and have worked to produce, create, and maintain hegemonic practices and representations that serve the interests of those are are able to wield this power. Mainstream constructions have been produced and reaffirmed by media representations, commonsense assumptions, about race, class, and gender that reinforce stereotypical performances. Marginalized groups had little to no control in how they were represented in traditional media. As Marx and Engels have noted, "The class [typically white men] which has the means of material production at its disposal consequently also controls the means of mental production" (1970, p. 59). Traditional media do not provide the opportunity for the consumer to easily produce media content; therefore, traditional media have worked to marginalize the voices of the Other. Social media however, is a system that offers consumers an ability to interact with one another and become producers of culture and content. Social media might provide an opportunity to shift power structures because anyone (with access) can produce content. Traditional media have long reinforced racist stereotypes and sexist ideologies especially in their depiction of Latinas in exaggerated and oversimplified roles, which not only affects cultural predispositions of the Latina, but also Latinas personally. Historically, media representations of Latinas include oversimplified roles such as: dangerous, catty,

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exotic, sexy, lazy, loud, crazy, etc. (Correa, 2010; Meskin, 2007; Reynolds, 2016; Rojas, 2004; Ovalle, 2010). Media, in general, encourage 'the gaining and maintaining' of hegemonic White male heterosexist power, that continues to marginalize the Latina. The negative depictions of Latinas disenfranchises their sense of self and is more often produced by people with and in power. Traditional media producers perpetuate racist, sexist, and classist stereotypes, that degrade Latina culture. Before exploring social media and online platforms, it is necessary to establish the framework of online spaces that differentiate it from other media. Nygren & Gidlund's (2016) state,

> It is necessary to analyze an understanding of power that goes beyond
> that of power as a relationship between oppressors and the oppressed
> where the individual could stage one's individualization as creating value
> for one's self while at the same time being exploited and creating surplus
> value for capitalism, and defend their actions in terms of identity creation
> (subjectification) (p. 404).

This is, the twofold performance. The creative empowering moment of self performance is simultaneously the disempowering moment within the current constraints and confines of social media's exchange value system. Not only perpetuating racist/sexist stereotypes, but also and, perhaps unwittingly reinforcing the very economic conditions that might lead one to such performances in the first place (Metts, 2017). As new technology becomes more fully integrated into everyday life and as more individuals are able to create content we should look

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into whether these do-it-yourself presentations and self-presentations challenge or simply reinforce current modes of representation. If the latter is true, then the goal for the research is to identify how social media platforms can create opportunities of recognition for a marginalized group, such as Latinas, that continue to be underrepresented or misrepresented in other media. The importance of this research is to improve our understanding of the challenges and benefits of producing content for social network sites. This work will look at self-presentations, self-expressions, and performance on social networking sites — the study will prove to be a significant contribution to new ways of thinking about Latina representation in new and non-traditional media.

This research will analyze Latina social media celebrities' self-presentation on Instagram. The analysis will focus on whether or not the content posted on Instagram by Latina social media celebrities potentially challenges mainstream media representations of Latinas or simply perpetuate the stereotypical tropes found in mainstream media. Social media is a new form of communication that billions of people are using, globally. In the digital age, social media is and will continue to be a relevant topic of research for media scholars, sociologists, psychologists, political economists, critical internet scholars, etc. This research is important because if Latina social media celebrities continue to reinforce stereotypical tropes of Latinas, it will continue the marginalization of Latinas, inevitably belittling the Latina identity formation, reducing them to stereotypical representations while limiting the possibilities of counter-hegemonic practices. Lastly, al-

though there have been studies on Latinas' representation in traditional media and studies on self-presentations on social media, this is the first study of its kind to locate Latina social media celebrities' self-presentations on Instagram. What will these modes of representations look like? This study is not only beneficial to Latinas, but should hopefully benefit all of those displaced by the dominant culture. For instance, anyone who has also been marginalized in traditional media can relate to this research and critically analyze their own self-presentation on social media. This qualitative study will employ an ideological analysis to examine Latina social media celebrities' presentations. The posts within the social site will serve as the text and the research will look at them through the lens of race, class, and gender.

This study will explore various perspectives that privilege social media as an alternative medium, as well as hegemonic practices in social media, self presentation in online platforms, and self branding and exoticization in online platforms. For the purpose of this study social media sites or platforms, social media apps, and social networking sites will be used interchangeably. The study will also explore how Latinas social media celebrities are presenting themselves on social media sites; that is, the representation of Latinas by Latinas social media celebrities. For the purpose of this study, Latinas are referred to as women residing in the United States of Latin American national origin or decent, regardless of race, language, or culture — the reasoning behind the chosen definition for Latina will be explained later in the paper. The research will address traditional me-

dia (television, magazines, film, etc.) stereotypical representations of Latinas in order to examine the issue with those representations. This research will explore the importance of this social phenomenon through a critical lens, critically analyzing cultural background and gender, and will seek to fill in the gaps of previous research in this field.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

The first section of the literature defines what a Latina social media celebrity is. Second, the literature review explores hegemonic power structures within society (Gramsci 1957, Lull, 1995 & Hall, 1985). The research also draws on the works of Manovich (2008) and Tierney (2013) to address the distinctions between traditional media and new media through the work of de Certeau (1984). The fourth section of literature is based on theoretical groundings of everyday life and the spectacle in which these frameworks of power are found, through the work of Lefebvre (1947), Vaneigem (1967), Crary (2013), Shields (1998), Debord (1967), and Deleuze (1992). The latter philosophers touch on capitalism representation and individuals as commodities. Fifth, the notion of performances are examined by questioning the self, identity, presentations of self, and alienation in the digital age. Here, the works of Goffman (1959), Phelan (1993), and Butler (1993 & 2004) on performance are addressed in order to better understand the presentation of self in social media. Lastly, the literature review consists of contemporary studies that focus on: self-presentation and self-branding. These studies by Volčič (2012), Hearn (2017), and Banet-Weiser (2011), to name a few, analyze how self-presentation and self-branding are different from presentation of self in everyday life because of the medium in which it is practiced, as well as,

how self-branding serves as a double-edge sword in the sense that it could po-

tentially be empowering while simultaneously disenfranchising.

Latina

The purpose of this section is to clarify the previous definition of Latina,

the context in whichever the Latino community is currently found, and the justifi-

cation as to why the Latina social media celebrities' self-identification and use of

the term Latina is valid for this research. First, although the research recognizes

the range of terms that encompass Latina — such as: Latino, Latino/a, Latin@,

Latinx, etc. — for the purpose of this research will only refer to the term Latina.

All other terms will only be referred to when used specifically by authors.

Who are Latinas and what characteristics do they have? According to Ro-

dríguez (2000) a Latina or Latino is a fluidity of race. It is a racial mixture, a shift-

ing, alteration, multiplicity, fluctuation of identities, "many of these cues or clues to

status — skin color, physical features, accents, surnames, residence, and other

class characteristics — change according to place or situation" (2000, p. 3). The

general differences typically influence how they and others "identify." As noted by

Rodríguez, the Latino identity arose when people marked "other race" and filled

in their national origins or ethnicity in the U.S. Census Bureau. They choose this

category because they are more than one of the race categories or none; Latinos

are mestizo, mulatto, Afro-Latino, or other mixtures (p. 11). Dávila (2002) also

agrees that, " … Latinos do not live and operate from neatly defined ethnic en-

claves isolated from other subgroups …" (p. 30). Dávila noted that other expressions of particular forms of identification that include race, class, nationality exist — destabilizing the "neatness" of Latinness as an all-encompassing category of identification (pg. 35). Unfortunately, the dominant definitions of Latinos emphasizes knowing and speaking Spanish, whiteness, and direct connection to a Latina American country (Dávila, 2002). Dávila (2014) explains that Hollywood search for performers of "Latino talent" who are mostly from Latin America and are sought for their overt signs of Latinness, consisting primarily of their accents, giving rise to light-skinned "Latin" stars who "sound" Latino.

Typically, Latino/a and Hispanic are terms used interchangeably. In 1993 the U.S. Office of Management and Budget listed Hispanic as a category who could be of any race and was widely used in the 70s. Hispanic is generally regarded as Spanish-speaking white ethnic group, they are typically "light-skinned" — typically an example of white passing (Rodríguez, 2000). Rodríguez states that the Latino experience can be shared by the discrimination, which is another form of identification, based on color, accent, residence, surname, or first name can indicate a person as Hispanic or Latino. Rinderle (2005) also explains that a Hispanic denotes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture regardless of race. Dávila explains, that Hispanics remain a protected segment from advertisers by their mere definition as a homogeneously bounded, "culturally defined" niche. This notion of homogeneous, makes all "Latinos" part of the same undifferentiated "market" … that is

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foremost behind the apparently greater representation of Hispanics within the spheres of corporate America (Dávila, 2012, p. 33).

Garcia (2000) points out the confusion the terms Hispanic and Latino create for people, since these terms are defined differently based on region — not only connotatively but denotatively as well. In the United States the term Hispanic is frequently used for descendants of Spaniards, Portuguese, and Latin America and the term Latino/a is widely used to refer to people of Latina American descent, regardless of their ancestry (p. 4-5). Garcia makes an interesting claim that since "… there is nothing that so-called Hispanics/Latinos have in common, there is no unity, no reality which stands behind the name, for there are no common properties to all Hispanics/Latino," then there should be a name for "us?" However, Espinoza (1994) explains how American society forces individuals to label themselves in categories because it correlates to power, or better yet, the hegemonic system of hierarchy. That is why there is so much importance placed on a discourse that is "for us or against us" (living in a dichotomy), multi-identity is not an accepted concept in dominant discourse (p. 17). Espinoza explains that once an individual is placed in a category they are assumed to posses all the characteristics assigned to that category. The categories are understood in opposition and other categories and an individual is either forced to assimilate or to be othered.

Dávila (2014) argues that categories conflate race, culture, and language with nationality, establishing the hierarchies and coordinates against which cul-

tural and linguistic differences are ultimately evaluated. Therefore, it is these hierarchies that frame the discourses of Latinidad channeled in the media, media's treatment of language and what it may potentially communicate to and about Latino's claim to belonging, and in what terms they may or may not belong within the political community of the United States (Dávila, 2014). Latinidad as defined by Beltrán (2010) refers to "a historical practice constituted through the homogenizing effects of racism experienced by Latinos and other people of color" (p. 7); therefore, their internal and racial differences are erased. Beltrán (2010) notes that Latinidad emerged as a response of people of Latin American decent being "othered" and racially stereotyped in the United States. Ultimately, Latinidad can also be characterized as an effort to expose inequalities and a shared history of struggle (Beltrán, 2010). Finally, the tendency for language to outshine race and serve as the primary defining element of "Latinidad" within mainstream media representations of US Latinos (Dávila, 2014).

According to Rinderle (2005) Latino generally refers to a person residing in the U.S. of Latin American national origin or descent regardless of race, language, or culture (p. 306). Although, Latinas can also be identified by their intersectionality of race, gender, and class. According to Rinderle the term Latino comes from "latinoamerica" not "latin" which is why it is typically not associated with individuals residing from Spain. The Latina is made-up of the Diaspora which refer to the dispersion (separation/distribution) of any people from their original homeland. Rinderle explains that the Diaspora is an "identifiable group

residing in a geography other than its place of origin that experiences not only physical displacement but cultural hybridity; a yearning for the homeland; alienation from the so-called hostland; a complex structural relationship among homeland, hostland, and diaspora; and a collective identity largely defined by the relationship between home and hostland" (p.296). Since Western ideology seeks to compartmentalize people and identities, a definition for the purpose of this study will be set — as previously established Latinas are referred to as women residing in the U.S. of Latin American national origin or decent, regardless of race, language, or culture.

Latina Social Media Celebrities

Since this study is not focus on the "regular" Latina but on popular Latina performers the following section will define celebrity. According to Turner (2004) a celebrity is someone who is highly visible in media and someone who attracts public attention. For media or cultural studies, according to Turner, a celebrity is a commercial commodity or an object of consumption. Turner claims that a celebrity swifts a culture toward the momentary. They are products of cultural and economic processes. Turner explains that celebrities are commodified through promotion and/or advertisements, their cultural identity is negotiated, and they have representational processes. They are people who are well known, who change or invent culture and have the pressure of political and social conditions.

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For Turner the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) celebrities are similar when analyzing "cam-girls." Turner explains that these "cam-girls" create their own content and design their own performances (2004). "Cam-girls" according to Turner have minimal integration into the mainstream media. In Turners analysis he notes that these cyber-celebrities use sexual representations to attract visitors or subscribers. Turner also states "while still within the control of the website's creators, it is interesting to note how the construction of symbolic capital within alternative medium employs similar tools to those used within the mainstream media" (2004, p. 65).

Dyer and McDonald (1998) states that film stars are socially grounded and the meanings generated by their relation to their fans/audiences. Social media celebrities are no different from film stars since they too share meaningful relations with their fans/audience. The Latinas in this study have gained so much popularity that they now have a team of individuals who work with them to produce these Instagram skits. They become professionals in the digital space because how they produce material is no longer amateur. Consequently, and for the purposes of this research, popular Latina performers will be referred to as Latina social media celebrities.

Hegemony

The Latina identity in media and the Othering Latinas face in the United States is heavily based on the hegemonic system within the country. The prob-

lem with depicting stereotypical tropes to characterize Latinas in media, not only perpetuates hierarchical constructions of gender but it also maintains White male hegemony. In fact, patriarchy feeds hegemony; therefore, not only are Latinas degraded, based on their gender, but also their race. Hegemony refers to a function by civil society and the State "which the ruling class exercises over the whole society and to that of direct rule …" (Gramsci, 1957, p. 124). Gramsci, an Italian Marxist philosopher known for his theory of cultural hegemony, claims that a mediated relation exists between intellectuals and the world of production where hegemony is exercised (Gramsci, 1957). Meaning that this relation creates the hegemonic culture through ideologies which then become common sense — then cultural hegemony is reproduced through institutions — much like Foucault's normalized power and Nygren and Gidlund's pastoral power. Hegemony is a constant struggle over power that becomes "naturalized" and it is controlled by everyday existence. Stereotypes are one way of maintaining power by serving the interests of the dominant culture. According to Lull hegemony is "the power or dominance that one social group holds over others," (1995, p. 33). Lull expands the definition of hegemony which is more than having power, but also exists as "a method for gaining and maintaining" (p. 33) dominance over minorities. Media assist in these practices by continuously producing negative stereotypes of women of color (Correa 2010; Covert & Dixon, 2008; Guzmán & Valdivia, 2004; Meskin, 2007; Reynolds, 2016; Rojas, 2004). These media representations empower White males, while suggesting that women of color are a subordinate sex.

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Owners and managers of media industries can produce and reproduce the

content, inflections, and tones of ideas favorable to them far more easily than

other social groups because they manage key socializing institutions, thereby

guaranteeing that their points of view are constantly and attractively cast into

the public arena. (Lull, p. 34)

Lull explains that the hegemonic group maintains its control through its existing

power. Stereotyping of Latinas in mainstream media (might) affect how Latinas

view or perceive themselves.

Stuart Hall (1985) also defines hegemony as "dominance and subordina-

tion in the field of relations structured by power," (p. 81) the subtle sway of soci-

ety's haves over its havenots (Hall, 1985). Hall (1985) lays a foundation of classi-

fications when analyzing film and television and its representations of gender and

race. "Racism and media touches directly the problem of ideology, since the me-

dia main sphere of operations is the production and transformation of ideologies

…" (Hall, p. 81). Hall explains the power media holds in society by creating or

reaffirming notions. Hall claims that the historical construction of ideologies come

from an individual's own intentions, chains of meaning, and work to construct

their subjects based on small potions of ideological truths (Hall, 1985). Hall

claims the ideologies attempts to fix meaning however, meaning (and representa-

tion) is always on the slide. One cannot fix positive representations anymore than

the negative representations — even attempts at resistance are sometimes ex-

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pressed within an always already oppressive frameworks and by the terms of the oppressor. Can there ever be positive representations within a hegemonic system? How long will it last?

Overall, hegemony is a continuous struggle — the rulers must continually convince the ruled that the latter's best interests are served in the system that ultimately oppresses them. Hall defines overt and inferential racism as the language or actions seen on media that infer racism or serve as naturalized representations that are "unconsciously" racial. Hall not only explores explicitly what is shown—media representations of gender and class—but also what they imply—overt or inferential racism. Hall's work serves the analysis because it explains how media representations are assigned to minorities and are the foundation of how ideologies 'work'. According to Dávila, most studies on Latinos and the media have tended to focus on the mainstream media, such as Hollywood films and network TV, repeatedly reminding us that Latinos/Hispanics are too often excluded, and that when they are portrayed, narrow and simplistic stereotypes are inevitably employed (2012, p. 29). As previously stated media representations assigned to Latinas include: the dangerous, catty, exotic, sexy, lazy, loud, crazy, etc. (Correa, 2010; Meskin, 2007; Reynolds, 2016; Rojas, 2004; Ovalle, 2010). Those oversimplified roles are typically categorized into overall themes which include: the gangster, the maid, the sexy mami, etc. (Correa 2010; Covert & Dixon, 2008; Guzmán & Valdivia, 2004; Meskin, 2007; Reynolds, 2016; Rojas, 2004).

Social Media as Alternative Media

What makes online media so different from traditional media? According to Lev Manovich (2008), with online media, just about anyone can produce content to anyone with access to the Internet. The power of providing and producing content in traditional media — television, film, radio, newspaper, magazine — is developed by "professionals," (Manovich, 2008). Now, consumers of the products are "copying" the professionals, allowing them to become producers or prosumers — a mix of both consumers and producers. Manovich explains, "indeed, if twentieth-century subjects were simply consuming the products of the culture industry, twenty-first century prosumers and 'pro-arms' are passionately imitating it" (2008, p. 81). Manovich examines the difference between traditional media and social media and explains the power obtained by consumers as they shift to the role of producers. On social media, content is created by everyday people, anyone; this content is also consumed by anyone, by providing a platform where social media users can interact with one another. Manovich draws on de Certeau's (1984) "tactics" and "strategies" to illustrate how people use tactics and mundane practices to work with or around strategies set up by professionals to impose order. Manovich claims Web 2.0 shifts power roles into the hands of everyone and also changes the way we consume information. This shift is important because now social media platforms (tactics) can provide Latinas an opportunity to produce potentially liberating or subversive content that challenges mainstream media representations (strategies).

Using de Certeau's ideas of tactics and strategies, Manovich believes that there is now a mergence between the two. He states that people's identities, on the Internet, are now formed and colonized by commercial media as never before. In reference to prosumers, Manovich persists, "… they now make their own cultural products that follow the templates established by the professionals …" (Manovich, 2008, p. 81). This might be the case for Latinas who are simply consuming and producing products sold to them along with the stereotypical representations of themselves. Not only individuals, but the Internet platforms are also merging (or now 2017 have merged) the two. "... companies have developed strategies that mimic people's tactics of bricolage or remix" (p.82). Consumer and culture companies have co-opted subcultures into products, therefore, "to oppose the mainstream [no need for a revolution], you have plenty of lifestyles ... available for purchase" (p. 82). In 2008, Manovich predicted, "it is only a matter of time that constantly broadcasting one's life becomes as common as an email" (p. 83).

For de Certeau, the practice of everyday life stands for the tactics that everyday individuals use to counter every strategy produced by institutions and power structures. For instance, de Certeau gives the example of a city's layout — the rules and structures — as a strategy produced by institutions and navigating, or taking shortcuts, are the tactics we use. Similarly, consumerism controls and is the center of everyday life too. These products (images in this case) are not our own to begin with, we built our identities from the ob-

jects sold to us using tactics that often are in line with hegemonic presentations of self. Even when we find a new subculture to identify with, the subcultures are always already commodified and then sold back to us. de Certeau notes that individuals might produce content, their everyday practices (tactics), to restore their cultural legitimacy — despite their already commercialized essence. This can be true for Latina social media celebrities who produce content

that, continuously, appropriates culture. They live within consumer culture, or the operations of consumerism, which is now "everyday life." Jenkins (1988) also includes de Certeau's ideas, however in a slightly different context.

One must ask: how "new" are these texts? Although participatory culture and social media users' tactics have the potential to challenge traditional representations, be liberating and create new texts, producing one's own content can also be detrimental when following the footsteps of a consumer culture found within a patriarchal/hegemonic society (those professional templates). According to de Certeau poachers go beyond text and create a "new" text based off of the old one. Poachers — de Certeau's readers and Jenkins fans — use tactics as a type of culture bricolage. Jenkins believes that this "new" text is theirs "making their one's own, appropriating or reapproprating it" (de Certeau,1984, p. 166). "Consumption becomes production; reading becomes writing; spectator culture becomes participatory culture" (Jenkins, 1988, p.64) this is also true for social media celebrities as well. Conversely, if Latina social media celebrities are creating "new" texts based off of the old ones, that can imply that these "new" presen-

tations are based off of traditional media representations. As noted, some of these traditional media representations for Latinas include: the gangster, the maid, the sexy mami, etc. Social media celebrities have taken these themes and are running with them as Manovich would say — following the templates of pro-fessionals (Manovich, 2008).

Tierney (2013) echoes Manovich's claims of the prosumer. "Social media emerges as an individually accessible platform for the distribution of speech and images, while concurrently allowing one to observe the participation of others, resulting in a semi visible public space of assembly" (Tierney, 2013, p. 10). Soci-ety now has the tools to create content; therefore, individuals (now producers) can ideally formulate content with civic value — as Clay Shirky (2010) has noted (Tierney, 2013). Tierney also notes another major difference between traditional media and the web which is how public spaces create *many to many* instead of the *one to many* systems. This means that a small number of "professionals," in traditional media, were great at producing content for large audiences but now, numerous prosumers (anyone with access to the internet) can produce for vari-ous other prosumers. Historically, the communication process was *one-to-one* (face-to-face interactions), *one-to-many* (one producer or one group of producer to several consumers) and has now shifted to *many-to-many* (several prosumers with several prosumers). Now prosumers have the opportunity to communicate to other prosumers, which is why social media serves as alternative media. For Tierney, the overall object is to examine this shift and to "reflect on how we can

meaningfully engage with change and shape technology toward humanistic objectives" (2013, p. 103). Further, Tierney explains the "power" digital social platforms have to potentially shape identity by noting " participation over time — in the form of content uploading, reflexive commenting, and meme sharing — builds up spatiality vis-à-vis interaction and thus imbues a space with potential for agency" (Tierney, 2013, p. 82). Therefore, creating agency though online spaces shapes individuals identities.

Our digital identities consist of our digital footprint in the sense that we are what we do online. Morales (2014) examines how social media platforms cover and understand Latin@s (Latino and Latina) identity for example,

These new media ventures are allowing news to be gathered, assigned, and edited in a way that has never been done by either the established or alternative media, perhaps making the case that many of the inaccuracies in mainstream media coverage of the Latin@ community can potentially be solved by the employment of editors and writers who, as Latin@s, understand the complexities of Latin@ identity and issues … (p. 334).

Morales offers an interesting observation by claiming that Fusion Network wanted to create a network that appealed to Latin@s, however the network failed to feature enough Latin@s of color or produce enough bilingual programs (Morales, p. 334). Morales compares media content that ignores class and gender discrimination concerns produced by cultural nationalists, and media content that is produced for Latin@s by Latin@s. Unfortunately, Latin@s' productions simply reflect

traditional media. He suggests that an alternative media (the web) should fulfill the concerns of the Latin@ community and challenge internal hierarchical structures (Morales, 2014, p. 335). These social media platforms potentially create contradictory spaces of self where they provide opportunity for identity creation and/or self-objectification — degrading the self as a mere object (Ibrahim, 2017, p. 106).

Theoretical Framework

<u>Everyday Life</u>

Lefebvre (1947) notes, that through labor we become objects serving the political economy. Lefebvre mentions the revolution of everyday life, in the sense that we need to wake up/question everyday life. Individuals work to benefit the themselves, the same is true for Latina social media celebrities whose labour exist within — what Lefebvre calls — bourgeois society, ultimately only "benefiting" themselves. Nevertheless, these celebrities become commodities intertwined with their labour. Lefebvre claims that everyday life means struggling with the fact that what makes us human also makes us inhuman, the human as a commodity in capitalistic culture. Lefebvre mentions that Charlie Chaplin is not funny because of what he does, but because Chaplin makes fun of the everyday, humans and our relations with our objects. Lefebvre claims "when an individual life is shaped by individualistic tendencies, it is literally a life … deprived of reality, of links with the world — a life for which everything human is alien" (p.149), mean-

ing nothing is ours and our own lives are reduced to the simplest thing — abstractions. For Chaplin's character in *Modern Times* (1936) this would be even truer in the digital age, as individuals suffer further abstractions (the process of removing something) and are exploited or alienated (from their products) — as will later be explained. Lefebvre uses Chaplin as an example because, for Lefebvre, everyday life is to a much greater degree cumbersome, but also a place for liberation. Similarly, Vaneigem (1967) states "a social mask conceals people and things, transforming them under the present conditions of privative appropriation, into dead things — into commodities" (p. 66). Meaning people become alienated from their products they lose creativity and become mere product themselves.

Vaneigem is a notable situationist. Situationists (or) wanted to collapse the boundaries between art and life. Vaneigem believes, "the system of commercial exchange has now come to govern all of people's everyday relations with themselves and with their fellows. Every aspect of public and private life is dominated by the quantitative" (1967, p.71). This suggests that there is no aspect of everyday life that is not submersed in the commercial consumerist culture. Or, as Fisher more recently noted what we are witnessing is "a total commodification of human creativity" (Fisher in Nygren & Gidlund, 2016, p. 408). Vaneigem claims that there is nothing new and no one is creative anymore, everyday life ceases all imagination that was. Everyday life is now an economic space of the production and consumption of all in it (even individuals). Vaneigem examines how we are the objects/products made to humiliate, isolate, suffer, and sacrifice in order

to succeed in the hierarchy of society. However, Vaneigem also suggests that the more individuals produce or consume the "happier" they will be because of the endless reproductions (images) which they can identify with — ultimately, individuals want to have an identity (1967). For Latina social media celebrities this could infer they are producing content characterizing what a Latina is and identifying as a Latina because of the endless reproductions which they can identify with. On the contrary, Crary (2013) mentions no matter how much we consume or produce we will never be happy because there is always something better, newer, faster, etc.

Crary (2013) too emphasizes that everyday life basically turns into a commodity much like Vaneigem. In reference to social media as everyday life, Crary states, "whether one's vantage point is Marxist or not, there is no evading the extent to which the Internet and digital communications have been the engine of the relentless financialization and commodification of more and more regions of individual social life" (2013, p. 99). Crary claims we choose to do what we are told to do. This is especially true for social media users because as Crary mentions media are always "on" and society is addicted to media — similar to the consumption of drugs. According to Crary, "sleep is the only enduring natural condition that capitalism cannot eliminate" (p. 74).

For some, it must be hard to imagine that sleep is the only gateway from capitalism, even more so that capitalism, in the digital age, exists everywhere else. Social media performances in the context of everyday life, means that so-

cial media have now become part of everyday life performances — the users are always "on". Crary predicted that, "… corporate success will also be measured by the amount of information that can be extracted, accumulated, and used to predict and modify the behavior of any individual with a digital identity" (p. 75), meaning these corporations are watching individuals for capitalistic purposes. Shields (1998) also claims that during the process of production individuals are always being watched (surveillance). However, Shields explains that the creation of one's self is based on what they do, for social media that would mean one's creative production is what identifies that individual. As previously mentioned, prosumers are free to produce content, however, that content is always under surveillance. Shield's also states that, "everyday life is a collection of activities that are repetitive and banal" (p.69), this is exactly what Lefebvre means by "everyday life." According to Shields, Lefebvre believes that there is a lack of authenticity which turns daily life into a boring and repetitive everyday life. Whereas some scholars believed that everyday life — as mundane as it may be — was the only escape from the logic of consumerism, Crary believes that now every aspect of everyday life powers the digital economy. Hence, Crary's notion of sleep as: the only space left, or available outside of capitalism. This lack of authenticity in everyday life was earlier echoed by, Vaneigem who noted that even the tiniest gesture has already been represented and shown to us within the spectacle (1967, p.77). Similarly, Shields claims that within the spectacle one's identity has been commodified only to be sold back to one and vice-versa, as de

Certeau (1984) would have noted. Everyday life then, may have once represented a space where a more "authentic" way of living could have been realized, but is now, more than ever colonized (consumed) by the spectacle.

<u>Spectacle</u>

Debord (1967) claims the spectacle is a relationship among people that is *mediated* by images. The spectacle is the capitalistic reality we live in and now are a part of. The spectacle is a social division, a form of alienation. It is the specialization of power and it is everywhere. Similar to Vaneigem, Debord states, "... the individual's own gestures are no longer his [her] own, but rather those of someone else who represents them to him [her]" (p. 23). As the previous scholars stated, nothing is new and everything is simply a representation of something else, "all that was once directly lived has become mere representation" (Debord, 1967, p.12). In this case the same can possibly be said for Latina social media celebrities who produce performances claiming to be "Latina," however these are simply representations of stereotypes taken from traditional media — that ultimately marginalize the Latina. These performances are part of the spectacle because as noted by Debord, "the spectacle is capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image" (p. 24).

The spectacle is also another form of money, therefore a commodity. Commodity as spectacle, in the form of economic power, has turned human labor into a commodity itself. Vaneigem claims, "fragmentary power organizes appearance as spectacle" (1967, p. 106). Therefore, in the colonization of social life, in-

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dividuals serve as objects/commodities who are enslaved by hegemony. Much like Lefebvre (1947), Debord also believes that each commodity fights for itself and does not recognize others, this is also true for social media celebrities who produce content at the expense of Latinas' identity. Debord states, "media stars are spectacular representations of living human beings, distilling the essence of the spectacle's banality into images of possible roles" (p. 38). Debord argues, "the individual who in the service of the spectacle is placed in stardom's spotlight is in fact the opposite of an individual, and is clearly the enemy of the individual in himself [herself] as of the individual in others" (1967, p. 39). In the context of this study, I argue that Latina social media celebrities serve the spectacle at the expense of more authentic modes of self-presentation, and are also emptied of their own individuality.

The spectacle by Debord and control society by Deleuze (1992) are essentially the same according to Crary (2013). Currently we are living in "societies of control" which are referred to as institutions such as prisons and hospitals. They simultaneously consist of "liberating and enslaving forces." In this sense, social media can be referred to as an institution. "There is no need to fear or hope" (Deleuze, 1992, p. 4) as in there is no need to be celebrates or skeptics of social media. Deleuze believes individuals should only find ways to combat this new from of control. Deleuze explains that the form of control back then was referred to as the "factory" which is composed of organizations in society such as banks, schools, etc. Now in "social control" the term factory has been replaced

with "corporation," meaning control is everywhere. The corporation can be described as an idea that is never fully done with an organization —as compared to the factory version. This is because these organizations — for instance, the educational systems and the armed services — are coexisting with one another. Deleuze states that earlier forms of capitalism were used for production and property, now we no longer make things in factories — we just sell things, including ourselves. As explained by Deleuze, "it's a capitalism of higher-order production … this is no longer a capitalism for production but for the product, which is to say, for being sold or marketed" (1992, p. 6). Lastly, Deleuze argues that mechanisms of control are intergraded into the prison, school, hospital, and corporate systems, this can be hard to realize for any individual accustomed to living within "disciplines or within the spaces of enclosure." Similar to Foucault's notion of normalized power, in which individuals are made to do what they believe they want to do however, they are really doing what society wishes them to do. Normalized power, according to Foucault is when individuals believe in ideologies, such as hierarchy, so they do not question it and perform as a "normal" citizens.

Media representations of Latinas are an aspect of everyday life that is submerged into the spectacle. Although social media can offer individuals a space to potentially challenge mainstream media representations (a tactic or practice of everyday life) and live more "authentically," the spectacle remains a place that lures passive consumers. If social media users are prosumers and can

have interactions that are multi-directional via new media, then how come digital age makes us more alienated? The following section will examine this question.

Alienation in the Age of Digital Capitalism

Fisher (2012) explores exploitation and alienation within audience labour on social media (particularly Facebook). Fisher notes, since audience serve as both commodities and workers, audience exploitation exists in mass media. Fisher claims that mass media exploitation of audience labor was low while alienation was high, conversely social media has high exploitation and low alienation. Exploitation and alienation serve as a trade-off, in mass media the trade-off is programming for advertisements over (low exploitation) over anonymity passivity and hierarchy (high alienation). On social media the trade-off is platform for communication (high exploitation) over engagement authenticity (low alienation). Alienation, for Fisher, drawing from Marx refers "to the separation of the worker from vital life processes and objects, as well as to the resulting state of estrangement from these objects" (p. 173). Alienation is the state of not being in control of the products produced. Fisher claims that social media platforms are less alienated than traditional media because social media sites allows for one to express the self and control the products one produces. Overall, social media sites facilitates the de-alienation of individuals by "offering user opportunities for self-expression, authenticity, communication, collaboration with others, and deep engagement with, and control over cultural, social, and economic ventures" (p.

174). Facebook, for example, as a mode of production, gives users the means to be "objectified" and is associated with an empowerment (Fisher, 2012). Fisher argues that social media users are encouraged to reveal and present their "true/ authentic" selves however, social media sites are also platforms for exploiting free labour.

Fisher provides other perspectives that suggest Facebook is a framework that merges leisure and work time, meaning Facebook serves as both play-ground and as a factory. Can the same be true for Instagram, especially when analyzing the social media platform through a twofold perspective? In this case, the social media site is a pleasurable band, but also a lure of exploitation. Ex-ploitation on social media sites is achieved by having users spend more time on the site, the self-surveillance technology (Fisher, 2012) generating surplus value for media corporations while also subjecting users to corporate surveillance. Users are exploited, often without their knowledge, can the same be said for Latina social media celebrities who post for a living? This is where the trade-off emerges between exploitation and de-alienation. For users it is hard to view such labour since it is "produced during leisure time, within private spaces, and within the communicative space between individuals, as part of their everyday lives" (p. 179). Therefore, every aspect of life drives the digital economy with exploitive and pleasurable practices/opportunities (Fisher, 2012), similar to Crary's (2013) notion on sleep being the only space away from which to escape capitalism. Users are tethered to these social media apps, in a sense users are always "on".

Nygren and Gidlund (2016) examine alienation in digital culture thorough both Marx and Foucault's point of view simultaneously. The authors explain that through Marx ontological questions are raised, as such, digital technologies create alienation. Foucault, on the other hand, raised more epistemological questions, how digital technologies create alienation. The term alienation in this case simply means the separation from. For Marx alienation of labour is separation from your work, it is separation from your creativity. Nygren and Gidlund state, "human totality is alienated from self consciousness, and the digital 'self' becomes a commodity" (p. 406). Yet another form of Othering, not unlike Fanon's (1952) much earlier observation about class and race. Nygren and Gidlund (2016) use the term twofold performances to explain the "two faces of technology practice," meaning digital technology marginalizes everyday life which leads to an alienated practice however, digital technology is also people-centered and creates social meaning. The twofold performance is what this research calls the double-edge sword to explain the same phenomena.

Nygren and Gidlund also focuses on power distribution and individualization, since the study is using a pastoral power lens, in order critically analyze the power distribution, to challenge, reveal, or disrupt the hegemonic system. They describe how pastoral power disguises labour and surveillance as the logics of individualization and self-performance; therefore, subjectification — the storying of self — is seen as a positive creation. Therefore, not only are individuals dehumanized when objectified, but also when *subjectified* "humans are controlled

when created as objects and subjects, as long as the subjects conform to hegemonic practices" (Nygren and Gidlund, p. 404). However, because of this illusion, media users are becoming more willing and efficient self-governing subjects. "…capitalistic hegemony tends to be hidden and digital processes become mystified as free individual choice" (p. 406). Like robots, we are doing our "jobs" happier because it is in the name of expression (the creative self). Yet, "We are no longer in control of the self we preform" (Nygren and Gidlund, p. 406), and this is the idea of how we are being alienated from creativity though commodification. Digital practices allow us to perform individualization however, digital technologies create an illusion of individuality. Ultimately, this illusion, leads to the marketization of the self — subjectification as commodification. Digital practices increase the exposure of self regardless of how private the self might be, they as they are are eventually commodified. Nygren and Gidlund (2016) conclude that in digital culture, control and power indicate the "need" of total surveillance and administration of society.

Before analyzing Latina social media celebrities performances within the context of everyday life, performances, themselves, must be explained. First, the notion that Latina social media celebrities' performances on social media are an "authentic" representations of Latinas will be examined. Lastly, what is being performed will also be analyzed.

Performances

<u>Possibility of Authentic Expression</u>

  Goffman's (1959) presentation of self explains how individuals are always

playing a role within social daily interactions. In Goffman's terms we are actors

performing the self. All of the characteristics that make up the performance are

called the front, this is the part of the performance which is generally fixed. Simi-

larly, Lefebvre (1947) makes a metaphorical conceptualization of everyday life

being a theatre and individuals as actors, "in everyday life or in full glare of the

theatre footlights, human beings always behave like mystifiers, who manage to

'play a role' precisely by exaggerating their own importance" (p. 136). To be clear,

Goffman however does not state that the front is personalized or embodies char-

acteristics that are authentic. The fronts are determined by the given social con-

text: setting, appearance, time, etc. — thus a social front. Goffman claims "… a

given social front tends to become institutional in terms of the abstract stereo-

typed expectations …" (p. 27), in this case, the front according to Goffman, be-

comes a "collective representation." As the previous authors might have noted,

individuals are mere representations of the products given to us by capitalistic

industries of everyday life (Debord, 1967 & Manovich, 2008). Goffman mentions

two extreme presentations: the sincere and the cynical, both presentations are

interestingly enough are dependent on the audience — viewers of the prefor-

mance. For the most part, Goffman is focused on the interpretation of others on

the given performance, analyzing the *expression given off* — how others view the

performance. "We do not as a matter of fact lead our lives … we live by inference" (Goffman, 1959, p.3), in other words, actors put on a performance depending on the given occasion/audience/social factors. Nonetheless, Goffman (1959) states, that the self is a result of the performances and comes into being in its performance (and are intentionally performed).

Similar to Goffman's collective representation, Vaneigem (1967) states, "the range of stereotyped behavior includes alienating forms that only barely conceal lived experience and its requirements" (p. 132). Therefore, similar to Goffman, Vaneigem also does not believe that these behaviors or collective representations are fixed. Vaneigem claims that these stereotypes are images of the spectacle and are used by the means or need to identify — since, stereotypes shape the role and the role shapes behavior. For Hall (1980),

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production,' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. This view problematizes the very authority and authenticity to which the term, 'cultural identity' lays claim (p. 222).

Similarly, Vaneigem (1967) claims, "the role is a consumption of power. It locates one in the *representational* hierarchy, and hence in the spectacle … but never *outside* the hierarchy…" (p. 115).

The Anticipatory, Speculative Self

Butler states "the real is positioned both before and after its representation; and representation becomes a moment of the reproduction and consolidation of the real" (1990, p. 106). Meaning that the "real" is a trap because the spectacle already determines the real before and after it is presented. Both Butler and Phelan (1993) are addressing the trap of visibility that goes with presenting a self in the world. Much like Goffman, Phelan states that we preform imitating what we think others see when they look at us. Phelan analyzes the exchange of gazes, self-portraits as a feminist tool, sexuality, and the importance of the negative in photographs and how it relates to women as being not-male. Phelan states, "thus for the spectator the performance spectacle is itself a projection of the scenario in which her own desire takes place" (1993, p. 152).

Similarly, Butler suggests that we perform gender, race, and ethnicity identities through communication (Big Think, 2011). Butler argues that communication is a channel in which identity is expressed, therefore; if identity is performative then performativity is simply a communication process. Butler (2004) states,

> If gender is performative, then it follows that the reality of gender itself is produced as an effect of the performance … through the practice of gender performativity, we not only see how the norms that govern reality are cited but grasp one of the mechanisms by which reality is reproduced and altered in the course of that reproduction (p. 218).

For Butler, the online performances come to be when they are communicated. However, performativity cannot be reduce to a performance,

> In no sense can it be concluded that the part of gender that is performed is therefore the 'truth' of gender; performance as a bounded 'act' is distinguished from performativity insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice'; further, what is 'performed' works to conceal, if not to disavow, what remain opaque, unconscious, unperformable (p. 234).

For others online performativity is something that can be shared or omitted. For example, in Freitas's (2017) study participants made the connection between social media presentations and "branding," and stated that only part of themselves (their identity) is portrayed on social media sites. Understanding the possibility of "parts of the self" presented on social media helps tease out the correlation between advertisements (money), the online presentation of self, and branding (a method to earn money). Nevertheless, a part of the performance is still shown on social media sites and still follows the notions of a performance.

Miller (2010) echoes both Goffman and Phelan by stating that identity(oneself) is perceived through the other's perception. According to Miller, "we exist only if we are looked at by the other" (p. 6). Phelan addresses this notion of self-seeing or the exchange of gazes which she explains as the desire to see our own identity through the image of the other. In reference to Cindy Sher-

man's photos, Phelan claims that Sherman was visible to others by the negotiation of others. It is possible then that these social media celebrities (performing subjects) might have the urge to construct a performance to gain recognition of others — measure success and validating the self by media presence and media audience. Latinas could also, potentially, see themselves through other performing subjects identity/the screen performances. As individuals we see ourselves through our own perception, the perception of the other, and what we think the others' perception is. Miller is analyzing the performing subject and the postmodern identity of the performers including the image creation, popular culture, lived experiences, and even the camera itself. Similar to Crary (2013), Miller references the whole idea that we are always performing — "always being on" for the camera. The performing subject can re-invent identity; therefore, the performing subject is a subject in process because identity is constructed, vis á vis Hall. Miller also mentions self-surveillance being part of everyday life. Giroux (2015) offers a counter and questions the empowering potential of selfies, (a skeptic viewpoint) and believes that individuals give up power through surveillance and that through selfies we are not creating civic value.

Self Presentation

Smith and Sanderson (2015) examine athletes' self-presentation on Instagram, in particular the gender displays and their differences, as well as the emerging themes from the captions used in their photos. The researchers ana-

lyzed six emerging themes based on their textual analysis. This study will focus on three of those six themes: personality traits and interests, endorser, and socialite. "Personal traits and interests involved the athlete providing insight on their personal lives, endorser where the athlete pitched a sponsor of theirs, and the socialite where the athlete participates in galas or high profile events" (Smith & Sanderson, 2015, p. 351-352), similar to other celebrities and now a trend among social media celebrities when they seemingly promote a brand. Smith & Sanderson note "Athletes rely a great deal on their public image. Indeed, how the public perceives an athlete can plays a significant role in his/her ability to obtain endorsement" (2015, p. 345), concluding the possibility that athletes are the brand they are selling and self-presentation serves as brand management. Smith & Sanderson also draw on Goffman's notions of licensed withdrawal, in his study of advertisement images, which is "characterized by a female gazing away or removing herself psychologically from the social situation" (p.355). This can be suggested when the individual is not looking into the camera, lying back, or being socially disconnected within a group of people. Smith and Sanderson suggest that, "their pose may be the result of cultural norms more than the conscious decision to look suggestive" (p.354) cultural norms that they have internalized. According to Devor (2009),

> As patriarchy has reserved active expressions of power as a masculine attribute, femininity must be expressed through modes of dress, movement, speech, and action which communicate weakness, dependency, ineffectual-

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ness, availability for sexual or emotional service, and sensitivity to the needs

of others (p. 674).

These social constructions reaffirm and perpetuate the notion that gender roles

exist between men and women; however, Devor (2009) explains that individuals

actually have ambiguous genders. He explores how gender role behaviors disen-

franchise women; which serves as foundational perception of gender classifica-

tions. For example, "… Power is generally conveyed throughout photos framed in

a close-up manner, resulting in men being framed more close in head shots, and

women framed from a more distant perspective" (Smith & Sanderson, 2015, p.

354).

Essentially, self-presentation, identity management, and selfhood in the

age of social media are the various ways in which we give up information about

ourselves. That is, social media users are working to post and craft themselves

online with the promise of social status and high visibility. As Hearn (2017) has

noted, neoliberal capitalism "combines work on self" (p.73). Meaning that self-

presentations on social media now serve "as a new form of currency and, more

generally, value" (Hearn, 2017, p. 67). If one chooses to self-brand we give up

other forms of power for self-presentation, one form of power only to be caught in

another —such as surveillance. Hearn (2017) states that existing social assump-

tions, biases, and inequities are already instilled into the processes of machine

learning and data analytics that undergird forms of identity management. There-

fore, "it will most certainly be the poor, indebted, and marginalized who will pay

the heaviest price for their 'digital and financial inclusion' with increased levels of surveillance, monitoring, and government control" (Hearn, p. 72). Hearn also explains how third-party companies and cookies track information of social media users and use the information collected to advertise back to these social media users (2017, p.73). Ultimately, those advertisements and content effectively fix and define how social media users create and manage their online identities. Hearn (2017) also claims that self-presentation does not function by their intent, content, or outcome but by the way they are pursued — "verified" —therefore, privately owned technology industries and financial institutions pursue social media users to encourage self-presentations with hyper personalized lures. For example, like the Twitter or Instagram checkmark, social media users are inserted into global flows of capital yet, stripped of "meaningful" identities all the while helping to create surplus value (Hearn, 2017, p.74).

Ibrahim (2017) talks about how self-presentation online serves as a commodity. This notion of commodifying the self inevitably leads to the objectification of self. Can there be exchange value, can objectification also serve as a form of empowerment? Individuals are egocentric and self-presentation online is an obsession with consuming ourselves. Much like a double edge sword or a trade off we gain, self-expression and community validation, however we give up "authentic" notions of self. Self-production, according to both Lefebvre and Sartre, could be authentic and Fisher (2012) argues that "authentic" self-expression is possible in social media (p. 200). The things we post, more recently, images, comments,

profiles, etc., or one's digital footprint makes up our digital identity (Ibrahim, 2017, p. 107). Ibrahim explains the mirror used to be how we understood ourselves, now we understand ourselves through our digital selfs, therefore our online self replaces the mirror. According to Ibrahim, social media is like Alice in wonderland, in that reality is fantasy. Social media users lose their "aura," as Benjamin (1967) might say, — replaced by another kind of star-cult personality — because the self serves as a commodity through non-stop technologies. The fascination with the economy of validation through the spectacle and social capital far outweighs the loss of "aura" or loss of authentic forms of self-expression in social media platforms. Producing and managing the online self also collapses time and space. Consumption and validation are the motives for posting because "Inserting ourselves in between the happenings of the world and celebrity life, the self is permitted to exist within this thrust of public attention, forming its own audience economy through the architecture of the web (Ibrahim, 2017, p. 109). Therefore, the 'self,' as an object in online platforms, becomes part of the digital economy, as explained by Ibrahim, "The commodification of the self is co-opted into new forms of consumerism" (2017, p. 105). As Marcuse says in a slightly different context, "as commodities they too communicate the repressive whole" (1978, p. 40).

Ibrahim (2017) states that self-curation is the presentation of self for production and consumption and the modes of representation where we consciously seek to affirm our presence on the screen (p. 104). Subsequently, consuming our

digital selves becomes an "exploitation of our fascination" meaning it leads to an unstable amount of obsession, aside from therapeutic gains through self-expression (p. 106). Overall, self-curation offers possibilities to re-invent or extend ones' self; similar to Fisher's (2012) de-alienation of self in social media.

To sum up, we are in a digital economy and encouraged to present ourselves and those selves are being commodified and transformed into objects — within this commodified voyeristic space.

Hogan (2010) questions whether we can even consider media "performances" performances. He claims "the actor performs in real time for an audience that monitors the actor. The artifact is the result of a past performance and lives on for others to view on their time" (p. 377). For Hogan social media platforms were referred to as "exhibition," drawing on Goffman's (1959) spaces where individuals submit artifacts to show to each other. Hogan believes that people can have and present an "authentic" version of themselves, however the most popular choose to present an "idealized" version of themselves, metaphorically one based on Goffman's dramaturgical approach (p.378). Hogan claims:

Individuals thus engage in performances, which Goffman (1959) defines as "activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his [her] continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (p. 22). This continued presence allows individuals to tweak their behavior and selectively give and give off details, a process he termed "impression management" (p. 378).

These performances are not coincidental but are embedded in us and shaped by social norms. The idealized version of a specific role is regarded as the frontal stage and the place where one can escape that idealized front is called the back stage (Goffman,1959, p.112). Even in everyday life performances, the idealized self is self-selecting specific details to present. Is there any reason to believe that social media performances would be any different on their social media platforms? Why, is this action based on their audience? While, performances are based on several factors, including, time or space. One of those factors requires an audience. Hogan states "individuals adjust their performance based on the presence of others" (p. 378). We modify ourselves because we are under surveillance (impression management). Since individuals are self-selecting specific details to present to their online audience, social media platforms are part of front stage to some audiences and back stage to other audiences. Meaning what an Instagram celebrity chooses to share or not to share, for example their Instagram names could be part of the identity they are performing and choosing to share.

Hogan also makes it clear that not all online content, representations, are performances. Goffman (1959), Phelan (1993), and Butler also agree that a performance is a one time event. Phelan states "performance's only live in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representation of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance" (1993, p. 146). Accordingly, this research is not analyzing performances of Latinas on social media, it is analyzing

self-representations of Latinas on social media. These social media images or videos live in the present, but also in the past and future. Here, impression management is impossible as an audience is not co-present in space and time with the performer.

> Once a performance has been recorded, the nature of the performance has altered. It may still be a presentation of self, and undoubtedly it continues to signify an individual. However, it no longer necessarily bounds the specific audience who were present when the performance took place. Instead, it can be taken out of a situation and replayed in a completely different context (Hogan, 2010, p. 380).

The difference is that the original performance may have what Benjamin (1967) calls the "aura". This aura is part of a unique singular presence, which cannot be transformed by mechanical reproductions, representations. For Benjamin, unlike viewing its replica, an art piece co-present in time and space with the viewer has an aura. Similarly, Hogan states "all historically unique objects [including people] have an aura" (p. 380).

Hogan is ultimately extending presentation of self to "exhibition approach or sites" for digital reproductions. An exhibition approach is "a site where people submit reproducible artifacts" (Hogan, 2010, p. 381). The extension of terms is based on the curators who selectively mediate our experience of online content (digital representations). The extension of terms is also based on the theory of

lowest common denominator, social media users creating a single mix of perfor-

mances for all of the online "friends" or followers.

Although the online content this research is focused on is not a perfor-

mance, it is important to understand performances in order to understand repre-

sentations of performances and "undoubtedly" the presentations of self on social

media. According to Hogan nothing prevents us from using these ideas to under-

stand representation of the individual in everyday life "… now that everyday life is

replete with reproductions of the self" (p. 381).

<center>Self-Branding and Exoticization</center>

Self-Branding, unlike self presentation, is "a distinct form of marketing

practice intended to link products and services with resonant cultural meanings

through the use of narratives and languages" (Hearn, 2008, p. 497). The material

form of what was originally considered the brand —an image, logo, trademark —

is now the sign of a type of social identity. Similar to self-objectification within

presentations on social media, Volčič (2012) analyzed how "exoticization" played

a huge role in promoting Urska Cepin as a celebrity. Her representation aligned

itself with a tendency to portray Slovene Women as sexually promiscuous and

available. According to Volčič, Cepin serves as an example of ethno-self/ethno-

national exoticization. Cepin purposely executed sexual ethno-national femininity

which actively seeks to capitalize on ethno-national stereotypes. Volčič (2012)

states "ethno-national femininity is patriarchal nationalism covered by freedom

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and empowerment via self-promotion" (p. 612). Many Latina celebrities also follow the same path. It is assumed that they believe in order to be successful they have to play the stereotypical role of their nation (e.g. Salma Hayek). These stereotypical roles are covered as forms of personal empowerment — according to some of the interviewees Volčič studied — which is a post-feminist notion. The baggage carried along with sexual ethno-national femininity is the notion that there is nothing wrong with being sexy and exploiting ethno-national stereotypes so long as they are in the name of self-promotion as personal empowerment (Volčič, 2012). The ethno-national stereotypes (similar to other stereotypes) creates national Otherness, in which the Other is ready to be consumed. In reference to Cepin's portrayal in media and her viewers, Volčič states,

> … a direct connection between cast members and audiences, highlighting the shared need to self-brand and promote oneself in contemporary economy. In the 'real' culture of self-promotion the construction of a 'sexualized,' ethno-national brand is more important than possessing other skills … what counts is how individuals position themselves as 'brands' and how successful they are in selling themselves (2012, p. 611).

Cepin, in this case, is responsible for creating Otherness by exploiting ethno-national stereotypes. Volčič claims, "current gender equality is based on the ability to capitalize on one's own sexualized ethno-self exoticization" (2012, p. 612). Creating Otherness by capitalizing on ethno-self exoticization can also occur

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when individuals construct their self image based on images produced by the West.

Volčič (2005) states that stereotypes are commodified and celebrated. The whole notion about "giving them what they want" and "making money in order to succeed" might be ideal for an individual (like Cepin), but ultimately, such practices negatively affect women as a whole (Slovene women). Eva Longoria also made similar statements when interviewed about her role as Gabrielle Solis in Desperate Housewives. Internet celebrities are (image)-making a commercialized identity for the benefit and economic success of one's self. Guzmán and Valdivia (2004) claim "while these contemporary representations may provide the opportunity for individual Latinas to open spaces for vocality and action, they nevertheless build on a tradition of exoticization, racialization, and sexualization, a tradition that serves to position Latinas as continual foreigners and a cultural threat" (Guzmán & Valdivia, 2004, p. 218). In a similar context Grindstaff (2002) explains how TV talk shows increase representation and creates new opportunities for oppressed groups. However, since these talk shows regulate "voices" or characters, Grindstaff suggests that these depictions are no different from initial stereotypes assigned to oppressed individuals. This study addresses how Latinas might have opportunities to enter the fields of media so long as they follow the stereotypical role of a Latina, bitchy, loud, and catty. Performing irrationality apparently serves as a form of freedom and resistance against Western oppres-

sion, however these stereotypes stand for nothing more than a generalization of a group — often to demean or belittle the group of individuals (Volčič, 2005).

Hearn (2006) explains self-spectacularization, in reference to TV shows, is how the persona or character an actor will play is now produced by the actor themselves. This form of self-branding is practiced by many Internet celebrities as well. This process leads to contain/control individuals incorporating identity. Hearn (2006) claims, "participants are laboring to create a product they know has market value-fame" (p. 136).

Hearn (2008b) examines how self-branding is a kind of labour, stylized self-construction as a way to compete and gain power (p. 201). Personal branding celebrates freedom and radical individual empowerment, however it simultaneously reduces the any notion of "authentic self"expression. Similar to Hearn (2008), Marwick (2013) explains that Internet celebrities self-brand themselves to gain stardom. Some of these Internet celebrities, initially, do not intend to self-brand however, ultimately they do. These Internet celebrities' "self-construction" is a way to compete and gain power. Social media works the same way, Internet celebrities are constantly competing for likes and followers.

Banet-Weiser and Juhasz (2011) question whether self-branding can be considered a feminist practice. Is feminist labor on social media a part of the capitalistic culture of everyday life? Not necessarily, feminist labor in social media just takes place in a specific political economy. Juhasz explains, how blogging is a platform where other feminists and Juhasz shared their academic struggles:

isolation or to be seen, heard, or known. Juhasz states how blogging can easily

be referred to as "self-promotion" or "self-branding," however — for the author —

blogging is a space for feminists to voice their ideas, express themselves, self-

name, build community, etc. Banet-Weiser points out how the debate of whether

blogging or uploading videos can be a critical feminist practice, can also be a

discussion of self-branding. Ironically, individuals are branding themselves in the

name of feminism. Banet-Weiser states "… it seemed perfectly logical to speak of

ourselves as 'brands,' particularly in relation to the job market" (p. 1771). Social

media sites are powerful spaces for self-branding for business since it is a space

for visibility as well. Banet-Weiser and Juhasz draw on Hearn's (2008) descrip-

tion of self-branding "Hearn (2008) has argued, self-branding is a practice

whereby one constructs a narrative of the self using the logic, language, and

strategies of branding—it means to transform the self into a branded commodity

within consumer culture" (p. 1771).

Banet-Weiser explains how online productions — posting thoughts, opin-

ions, ideas — can be empowering self-work, but also be transformed into self-

branding. Therefore, self-presentation on social media sites is a double-edged

sword in the frame of empowerment. Banet-Weiser claims that individuals should

not only capitalize on participatory culture and notions of gendered empower-

ment, but also frame and shape what is known as "participation" and "empower-

ment." The author believes that, "feminists can promote our work while simulta-

neously challenging the institutional and commercial structures in which our work

so often finds a home … self-presentation as confident and powerful and cri-
tiquing normative practices of self-branding" (2011, p. 1772). Can some postfem-
inist ideologies, such as visibility or self-empowerment, be considered academic
labor? Phelan (1993) claims, "if representational visibility equals power, then al-
most-naked young white women should be running Western culture" (p. 10). In
the context of a postfeminist notion, Volčič (2012) states that portrayals can be
"reversed," known as *reverse othering* which is not only believing that these
stereotypes are true but also believing that they serve as a form of resistance.
Banet-Weiser and Juhasz (2011) claim that although media feminist practices are
organized around capitalist culture, these labor practices are not necessarily an-
tifeminist. For Banet-Weiser and Juhasz it is a feminist labor to self-brand.

Research Questions

Based on the extensive literature review on Latinas, hegemony, social
media as an alternative media, theoretical grounds (everyday life, spectacle),
performances, self presentations, alienation in the digital age, and self-branding
or exoticization, it is clear that popular Latina media representations are general-
izations in order to maintain a hierarchical structures. The literature review also
denotes the high possibility that although these new media platforms might offer
a chance to escape conventional representations of Latinas, social media pro-
sumers might inevitably follow the patterns of traditional media stereotypical
tropes of Latinas. For this reason, it is important to compare social media self-

presentations to traditional media representations of Latinas in order to provide an examination of possible changes or similarities among the two. The following research questions were carefully generated to analyze new media platform self-presentations of Latinas.

RQ1: What are Latina social media celebrities self-presentations on Instagram that characterize what a Latina is?

RQ2: How are Latina social media celebrities self-presentations different from or similar to, mainstream stereotypical tropes for Latinas?

RQ3: How do the Latina social media celebrities' self-presentations compare and contrast, what kind of themes emerge?

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

In order to look at Latina's self-presentations on social media and provide deeper understanding of the research questions this study will use a textual analysis. A textual analysis is a data-gathering process, to gather information and understand how individuals of various cultures and subcultures make sense of the world and who they are in it (McKee, 2003). When using textual analysis, researchers make an educated guess (McKee, 2003), on the more probable interpretations of the text. According to Frey, Botan, and Kreps a textual analysis is a "method used to describe and interpret the characteristics of a recorded or visual message" and "the purpose of a textual analysis is to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in texts" (1999). Therefore, a textual analysis attempts to obtain information about sense-making practices (how we make sense of the world) of a culture or subculture through texts.

In this case, the sense-making practices of Latinas will be analyzed. This research will use purposive sampling, specifically a mix of criterion and critical incident sampling. A criterion sample is one that involves searching for cases or individuals who meet a certain criterion, in this case it would be under the definition of Latina social media celebrities (Palys, 2008). A critical incident sample is one that explores data related to incidents that (or people who) are unique given the research being pursued. The question this study seeks to pursue is: How do

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Latina social media celebrities present themselves on social media? For that reason, the critical incident sample must include Latinas who are considered social media celebrities. Ultimately, to understand the previous question and the nature of the research objective, the top three Latina social media celebrities were chosen and deemed to be the most suitable sample size. For the purpose of this study, the top three Latinas fit the manageability and variety this study hopes to uncover. The purpose of this study is also to compare and contrast the self-presentations of Latina social media celebrities, to possibly find comparisons/themes. Therefore, three Instagram accounts, that belong to three different Latinas, will be analyzed. The data gathered will be from the three women who at the time of the study (March 2018) had to identify as a Latina. These Latinas identified themselves as Latinas through their Instagram account/profile via bios or posts by specifically using the term Latina. These Latinas were also chosen by their status of "social media celebrity." In order to be considered a social media celebrity, these Latinas must have a verified badge. According to the official Instagram, inc. help center webpage:

> A verified badge is a check (white check within a small blue circle) that appears next to an Instagram account's name in search and on the profile. It means that Instagram has confirmed that this is the authentic account for the public figure, celebrity or global brand it represents (2018).

Instagram accounts that have a verified badge are popular enough to be claimed as a public figure or celebrity. These badges also indicate that the account is "au-

thentic," meaning it belongs to the actual individual posting the content — not a spam account. Verified badges are also only given by Instagram, they cannot be requested or purchased. Aside from the verified badge, these Latinas must also have over five million followers on Instagram in order to be considered "social media celebrities." Lastly, none of the Latinas chosen could have been celebrities before their appearance on social media sites, in particular Instagram. Meaning these Latinas became famous through a social media platform or through Instagram itself.

The average Instagram user differs from those who are verified by Instagram or those who have roughly over 1,000 followers, and the main reason (why they differ) is due to the fact that advertisers are willing to pay for the content posted on verified Instagram users accounts or those who have roughly over 1,000 followers. Different advertisers look for different components for which they are willing to pay a verified Instagram user. This can include, the number of followers the user has, the number of comments on a post, or the number of views on the post. The pay itself also differs — for instance, "people with more than 100,000 followers can ask for more than $400 per post" (Settembre, 2017, ¶3) compared to another source that states "an Instagram user with 100,000 followers can command $5,000 for a post made in partnership with a company or brand" (O'Connor, 2017, ¶17).

The social media site Instagram is a photo and video-sharing platform. The platform enables users to edit, publish, and share their posts. It also offers

users the ability to create personal profiles. "Currently, Instagram has approxi-

mately 600 million active monthly users worldwide; approximately 80 million pho-

tographs are uploaded daily, collectively garnering an estimated 3.5 billion

'likes' [viewings] per day," the predominantly image-based site, Instagram in 2017

is an "… area in which sexual objectification has had the potential to

occur" (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018, p. 312). Instagram (2010) was chosen for its

widespread popularity and contemporaneous — younger than Facebook by six

years — and for the demographic this study is researching. "Instagram enables

individuals to express themselves and interact with others primarily via photo-

graph sharing. This social networking site is different from sites like Facebook

because it easily allows people to access and leave comments on each other's

photos" (Lupinetti, 2015, p.4). Instagram users post their stories through pho-

tographs and short videos creating a limited text, visual-oriented culture (Lee, E.,

Lee, J., Moon, & Sung, 2015, p. 552). "Unlike Twitter and Facebook, text-only

contents cannot be created on Instagram. This 'image first, text second' [is the]

rule of Instagram …" (Lee, E., Lee, J., Moon, & Sung, 2015, p. 552). Therefore,

Instagram is superior to other platforms, especially for videos, because it allows

for quick/short content to be produced to gain and maintain the audiences' atten-

tion, but long enough for the story/skits to be a comprehendible narratives for

viewers. Because of its platform, Instagram was preferred over other social me-

dia sites, such as Facebook or Twitter, for analysis. "Eighty percent of Instagram

users are outside of the U.S., suggesting that the social site has a massive global

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reach" (Leibowitz, 2017, ¶3) — Instagram has a strong audience reach and engagement with their users. Even after an 11% decrease, Instagram managed to hold the highest audience engagement compared to other social media sites (Leibowitz, 2017, ¶5). Instagram provides the ideal form of expression, even though these expressions fall under stereotypes. In comparison to Facebook that is more family and friend oriented, Instagram is more pop-culture based. Instagram's framework allows for photos, videos, and caption, which attracts a younger audience. Other social media sites such as Twitter and Snapchat are limited to texting and Snapchat is limited in time frame history. Instagram also has a limited time frame for their videos, however it provides enough time to share a short narrative, thus keeping the attention span of the audience. Overall, because of the advantages Instagram — as a social media site — has to offer, advertisers are attracted to seek out media influencers, and or micro influencers as websites call social media celebrities. For those reasons, the platform Instagram was favored over any other social media site for the purposes of this research.

The first Latina social media celebrity to be analyzed is Lele Pons (Instagram name). With 23.2 million followers [from the start of the research (March 2018)], Lele Pons is the most followed social media celebrity, out of the three Latinas analyzed. Lele Pons is Venezuelan and has addressed herself as Latina in various posts of her Instagram account. Her personal and professional life information as well as her status was obtained from Instagram itself and from vari-

ous other sources (Edsor, 2017; FamousBirthday.com; 2018; & Madormo, 2017). With 8.1 million followers (March 2018), the Californian of Peruvian descent, Salice Rose is the second Latina social media celebrity who will be analyzed. Salice Rose, much like Lele Pons, has also identified herself as Latina in her posts. Salice's personal and professional life information as well as her status was obtained from Instagram itself and from other sources (TheFactNinja.com, 2016 & TheFamousPeople.com, 2018). The last Latina social media celebrity chosen is Andrea Espada, know as andreaespadatv on Instagram. This Colombian has 5.3 million followers (March 2018) and has been identified as Latina in her bio and her posts. Andrea did not start her "celebrity" career on Instagram, but instead was recognized for being on TV since 2009 (Perez, 2018 & Sah, 2018). However, she is currently an Instagram celebrity as a way to maintain, sustain, and continue to gain recognition — for this reason Andrea was included in the top three.

Textual analysis is a method for studying a signification process, to serve as one possible "truth" to reality. Ryan (2010) explains, that a textual analysis draws attention to some features of a text while ignoring others. Due to the process of encoding and decoding of texts, by individuals, there exists a variety of readings; therefore, there is a possibility of multiple textual readings (Hall, 1980). For this reason, every textual reading stands for only one possible interpretation of the text from one person's perspective (Ryan, 2010). Therefore, this study serves as one view point of Latina social media celebrities' self-presentation.

The Text

The text according to McKee (2003) is "something that we make meaning from" (p.4). Botan and Kreps (1999) claim that there are two general types of text, one of them being outputs of communication. This research will analyze the outputs of communication, these are messages produced by communicators. The posts found on Instagram will be the text analyzed in this study. The posts are multimodal media, meaning that they are audio, visual, textual, etc. The posts — any content that is published on Instagram — will be chosen based on two criteria: 1. The Latina social media celebrity must identify as Latina within the posts (via in the comments attached to the post or directly in the post itself — therefore it must be specifically addressed). The post itself and/or the description for the post must specifically include the term Latina (expressed orally, written or in multi-modal). For the purpose of this research, the posts analyzed are only those where a Latina social media celebrity characterizes what a Latinas is or does— for example, "Latinas be like …". All other posts will be disregarded since those posts do not directly impact or specify what it means to be a Latina or what constitutes a Latina. 2. The post must be recently published, from when the study first began (March 2018). Since the study is only focused on posts that characterizes what a Latina is or does, and not on all other posts, the time frame for the analysis will be set in the last three years or less — in order to obtain a rich data collection. Aside from those two criteria, the posts could range in various aspects, the posts could have: different number of views or comments and/or be videos,

pictures, or texts, etc. In order to compare and contrast the data further, three posts will be analyzed for each Latina social media celebrity. In total, nine posts will serve as the data and will all be analyzed according to their own content. This research is not focused on the quantity of the Latina social media celebrities' self-presentations, but more specifically what implications do the posts have.

Critical Perspective

This research employs a critical perspective. It seeks to critically analyze the self-presentations of Latina social media celebrities on Instagram. Are Latinas' self-presentations going against mainstream tropes or are they simply perpetuating them? To go against stereotypical roles typically assigned to Latinas is to challenge their own representations. If the latter is true, this research will illuminate a possible avenue to counter hegemonic practices. If the former is true then the research will shed light on the possible forms of empowerment these productions can bring for Latinas. The research will critically examine the way Latinas use Instagram to self-present. Aside from analyzing the self-presentation of Latinas, another objective of this research is to suggest ways to improve, transform, and disrupt the power relations that degrade the Latina identity. Therefore, this study's findings might potentially reveal the reinforcing practice of stereotypes and present an alternative mode of self-presentation within social media. Freire (1968) explains that the dimension of values shared in an investigation should be "… a critical perception of the world, which implies a correct

method of approaching reality in order to unveil it" (p. 111). Vis-à-vis Freire (1968) critical perspective also serves as an educational pursuit and a call to cultural action.

Such a call to culture action may be seen in the form of civic engagement. Barnes, for example (2016) explores how mobile devices are platforms that can create such engagements. Barnes explains that these mobile devices serve as power tools of those who feel alienated or marginalized (p. 118). This is a new form of power that consumers did not have with traditional media. Through these social media platforms there are also ways in which prosumers (a combination of consumers and producers) can give up other forms of power. How can social media give power, yet take it away simultaneously? An example might be gleaned from hook's critique of Beyonce's *Lemonade* cover. hooks claims that the cover — a dedication to black women empowerment — is "the business of capitalist money making" (2016) because it exploits black female bodies, the body serves as the commodity. However, hooks also claims that *Lemonade* shifts away from the white mainstream culture gaze and challenges society by offering a "decolonized radical revisioning of the black female body" (hooks, 2016, ¶4). Although the cover, according to hooks, refuses to be silent, it also exerts misguided notions of gender equality through female violence. Overall, hooks states that *Lemonade* "glamorizes a world of gendered cultural paradox and contradiction" (hooks, 2016, ¶12). Similarly, it is possible for social media to simultaneously challenge mainstream tropes while continuing to perpetuate them.

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Since this analysis will identify how these Latina social media celebrities' self-present their gender through language, visual images, and cultural cues, it is important to understand how power structures marginalize Latinas based on their gender. A more general goal of this study is to critically analyze the way a marginalized group, in particular Latinas and Chicanas, can potentially use social media as a tool to revolutionize their self-presentations. Zepeda (2014) explores Xicana Indígenas artistic production and visual representations as those products remember hidden/lost history, heal communities who have been disconnected from their ancestry, decolonize, and critique heterpatriarchal state and nationalist politics (p. 136). Through the work of Zepeda (2014), Latinas may potentially use Instagram to promote their artistic culture and cultural productions which can offer a critical examination of heteropatriarchy, hegemonic practices, and nationalism.

Ideological Criticism

The critical approach this research will take is an ideological textual analysis that is informed by Feminist Theory — since this study includes a number of Feminist Theories from strategies of representation to different articulations of performance. An ideological criticism is used in order to interpret the meaning assigned to the artifacts. An ideology is defined as "a system of ideas or pattern of beliefs that determine a group's interpretation of some aspect(s) of world" (Foss, p. 237, 2018), this research is critically analyzing the ideology

which follows a set of beliefs around Latinas. In particular the research is critically analyzing heteropatriarchy. As previously explained hegemony is the gaining and maintaining of power over other groups, according to Foss (2018) "hegemony is the privileging of ideology of the ideology of one group over the ideologies of other groups" (p. 239). Heteropatriarchy, as a hegemonic ideology, must be renewed, reinforced, and continuously defended by rhetorical practices in order maintain its dominance over other perspectives (Foss, 2018). Although individuals might challenge or do not accept the hegemonic ideologies, individuals cannot help but to participate in these through the consumption of media or what is socially and culturally acceptable (mainstream media). Therefore, through our culture we are encouraged to participate in the hegemonic ideologies. This study will critical analyze the set of beliefs (ideology) of the Latina identity by using an ideologically textual analysis that is informed by feminist theory.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS

As previously stated the three Latina social media celebrities analyzed were Lele Pons, Salice Rose, and Andrea Espada. They were looked at in order from most followers to least. For the purpose of this research, the most recognizable names (used by mainstream sources) were used in order to identify the Latina social media celebrities, not their Instagram username nor their full names. The following includes the nine different posts in which each Latina social media celebrities characterizes what a Latina is whether it be in the description or within the post itself. The analysis will then compare and contrast the findings among all nine posts, more importantly it will highlight reoccurring themes among them. It is important to understand that the purpose of the analysis is to look for stereotypical tropes found in traditional media; therefore, focus is purposely drawn to the overt or ideological messages attached to these presentations. An interpretation of the findings will then be applied based on the theoretical groundings discussed in the literature review. When examining representation, or in this case, presentations, it is also necessary to understand that what is there is just as important as what is not there as noted by Hall. Finally, all posts analyzed were published in video format as comedic skits. If verified Instagram users are getting paid for followers or likes by advertisers, then it will come to no surprise if these Latina social media celebrities' play into the stereotypical tropes found in

mainstream media in order to gain stardom and financial reward. Although social media might offer an opportunity to challenge or change these stereotypical tropes, these platforms are still within the framework of consumerism and the logic of capitalism; therefore, when money is the ultimate goal these Latina social media celebrities' might just imitate the "templates" already set-up by professionals (Manovich, 2008).

Lele Pons

The first post analyzed is by Lele Pons and was posted on January 15, 2018 although the same post with the same caption was posted on June 18, 2017. The comment to this post is "When a Latina meets another Latina (emoji of the shocking face, a red dressed woman dancer, and the letters VE) w/ @andreaespadatv @hannahstocking (tag a friend) #tb. This video shows two women bumping into each other at the park, one of whom is identified as a Latina later in the video. As Hannah (racial identity unknown, but assumed to be white if skin color and the name are any kind of signifiers) apologizes and compliments Andrea, Andrea the Latina, is completely bothered by the situation and calls Hannah a puta and redicula — Spanish slurs for slut (or in their translation bitch) and ridiculous/obnoxious. She uses an aggressive tone and facial expressions to project her feelings and only uses Spanish to communicate. Completely unaware of Andrea's comments and unbothered by her aggressive manner, Hannah is shown in a different shot with Lele sharing the exciting news that she made a

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Latina friend. After Hannah addresses Andrea's previous comments, Lele explains to Hannah that Andrea actually insulted her and proceeds to talk to Andrea. Lele is then shown ready to refute Andrea's previous actions however, before she could talk, Andrea stopped her to ask if she is a Latina herself, now in English. Lele replies yes, and through a montage, is then shown with Andrea getting along extremely well. One of those shots includes them dancing to salsa music in the park. After bonding together, Lele asks Andrea to give Hannah "another try" to which Andrea agrees. When called over, Hannah obnoxiously calls out "what's up putas!" The last shot shows an infuriated Andrea running after Hannah, it is assumed she will do some sort of harm. Overall, Andrea's aggressive character is a familiar stigma assigned to Latinas, the spitfire Latina. It seems that she is hot-tempered and when insulting Hannah, she had to use Spanish slurs. Also, when both Lele and Andrea identified themselves as Latinas they were preforming what Volčič and others have termed an "ethno-national exoticization," as dancers, and objectifying themselves when taking a selfie by sticking out their derrière and plucking up their lips. The use of the red dressed woman dancing emoji is a stereotypical representation of the Latina firecracker, the one who dances to Latin music.

The second post analyzed from Lele Pons was published January 10, 2018. The description reads: Matchmaking a Hispanic and an American (red dress woman dancer, happy crying emoji) w/ @hannahstocking @marioruiz @sebas (tag a friend). This video starts off with Hannah running to Lele Pons

asking her to teach her how to be a Latina, because she met a Latino, insinuating she is trying to impress him. Lele agrees to teach her how to be a Latina. Another scene also shows a similar interaction taking place between two men. One of the men agrees to teach the other how to be American. The rest of the video is shown in shots of the women or men doing a series of different actions in order for them to either be Latina or American. These series of actions are perpetuated stereotypes in particular for Latinas. First Lele attempts to teach Hannah how to roll her Rs. This is a clear correlation to the Latina speaking Spanish or having a Spanish accent. Since the roll of the Rs comes from the Spanish language "rr" (ere). Ultimately, Hannah was unable to roll her Rs and ends up making some sort of screeching noise. Lele again reiterating the use of Spanish tells her to just say "como estas" which translates to "how are you," however Hannah ends up adding the screeching noise in the middle of the "estas." In the second scene, Lele is shown dancing merengue outside in the patio, Hannah is next to her however dancing some sort of Irish jig. The back ground music is a popular Spanish merengue music among Latin community in particular in the US; there-fore, in this case, Lele is appropriating dancing to the music. It is assumed that Lele is teaching Hannah how to properly dance to Latin music, however once again she is unsuccessful. This is the stereotypical trope that Latinas dance, in particular dance, to Spanish music. In the third scene, for the women, Lele is shown helping Hannah get ready. Hannah wears a white beach dress which seems to be inspired by traditional Mexican design, a large sombrero, and the

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Venezuelan flag wrapped around her. Lele is helping her pin something up by her breast, apparently to lift up or enlarge her breast. However, something in Hannah's dress pops, failing once again to pin up something within the dress. The enhancing, or lifting of breast, is likely associated to the notion that Latina women are voluptuous. Apparently, having more curves means being more Latina. Wearing the large sombrero is typically a stereotype assigned to Mexicans, however through the homogeneity of the Latina community, it is not uncommon to see this symbol for other Latinas, who do not identify as Mexican. The wrapping of the flag is another signifier of "ethno-national exoticization." The last scene illustrates Hannah and the Latino meeting. She reiterates "como estas" with the screeching noise in the middle. The skit concluded with both of them dancing to the merengue music that was previously playing, once again Hannah is dancing some sort of Irish jig. In the foreground, Lele and the other man are shown in utter disappointment.

Lele Pons's last post is captioned: Nothing like a LATINA (woman dancing in red dress emoji, smiling sinister emoji with horns, kiss face emoji) w/ @andreaespadatv @twan @4kpapi (tag a Latina). This post was uploaded on October 21, 2017. The skit starts off with a man, who is later identified as Twan, with Lele sitting by the counter top. Lele is excited that her friend Andrea is going to visit, however, Twan next to her does not share the same feelings. He states, "I mean, you know how Latinas are," to which Lele replies "what about Latinas, man" aggressively. Twan then proceeds to list stereotypical tropes of Latinas and

their actions: they are loud, everything turns into a "fiesta" (party), they like clean-ing, and lastly (turning on the TV to a spanish telenovela) insinuating that they love telenovelas. Each stereotypical trope listed by Twan, was followed by An-drea or Lele preforming the particular action assigned to them. For instance, after Twan said Latinas are loud, Andrea and Lele greet each other by yelling, after Twan states everything turns into a fiesta, Andrea starts dancing to Spanish mu-sic and Lele starts banging on the counter-top, after Twan states Latinas like to clean, Andrea is shown catching a water-bottle purposely dropped by Twan, be-fore it even hits the floor, and after Twan turns on the TV to a telenovela, Andrea quickly appears to be interested and Lele agrees "yea maybe we do like our te-lenovelas." At the end of the skit Lele states "… maybe you were right, I'm sorry I doubted you," although she herself exposed the stereotypical tropes Twan had listed by stating "that's so stereotypical". However, when stated, Twan was no longer sitting next to her, he is shown wearing a large sombrero dancing with An-drea to a merengue Mesa song. Some of the more notable characteristics of An-drea is her voluptuous body wearing skin tight shorts and a shirt. It is not un-common to see a voluptuous Latina in media, for example: Sofia Vergada, Jen-nifer Lopez, Salma Hayek, etc. These women are hypersexualized, often shown with tight and minimal clothing. Andrea has the Latina look portrayed in traditional media. Her use of Spanish and/or Spanglish is also notable. Again, referring to the assumption that all Latinas speak some sort of Spanish. In particular, the phase she used when she caught the water bottle from falling was "I've got you

papi," papi is translated to daddy in Spanish. This phrase and her actions not only imply the use of the Spanish language among Latinas, but also the subordination of women. The phase is referring to a service being done and her actions state that she is in service for the man in the situation, cleaning after the man. Their need to clean also is a common trope for Latinas, correlating to the Latina maid from traditional media. Lastly, her tendency to dance, first when she exhibited excitement for the "fiesta," and when she and Lele broke out into rhythm. She then danced again when she heard the song from the telenovela playing. The last time Andrea danced was with Twan at the end of the skit. Overall, according to this skit, dancing for Latinas is natural.

Salice Rose

The second social media celebrity analyzed is Salice Rose. All of Salice's analyzed posts include only herself, however she plays two different characters in each of them. This can be noted by the change of voice, behavior, clothes, etc. The forth post analyzed was published on June 29, 2017. The description reads: When two people in the hood break up … (around ten crying laughing emojis) IM SO DONE HAHAHAHA #salicerose #hispanic #latina (red dressed woman dancing emoji). In this skit, Salice is first dressed in a plaid shirt with only the top button buttoned-up, a white top underneath, grey sweats, and big hooped ear-rings (character one). In the background the music "I Lean Like a Cholo" plays softly. Salice, in a different shot is dressed in a white flannel with a jersey/sweater over

it, also wearing grey sweats, with high socks over the sweats and chanclas (sandals) (character two). "Their" wardrobe is commonly shown in media as being worn by Cholos, Cholas, gangsters, etc. This is a perpetration of the gangster Latina, one who is involved with drugs, weapons, and other gang related activities. Meeting up in the streets, character two calls out to character one asking if they could talk — insinuating that they had previous history together. Aside from the initial greeting, character two never talked but lip-synced songs who's lyrics match the given context. Both of their accents have slang such as: foo, ama, ay. Their accent is similar to the stereotypical gangster found in traditional media. After every lyrical reply, character one would refute the lyrics that matched the context, for instance when she sang "you are one of those pretty girls," character one replies, "what pretty girls are you talking about, so there's more than me, girls, girls, really alright foo …" Character one's gestures and facial expressions also always look annoyed and angry at character two lip-singing remarks, and the tone of voice was always aggressive. The aggressive, hostile, intimidating attitude is again part of the stereotypical package shown on traditional media, in particular film and TV for gangsters — especially for Latino and Black communities. Lastly, the song "Lean Like a Cholo" which was played in the background in the beginning of the skit, and then later played in the foreground at the end of the skit. Cholo refers to a Latin American with Indian Blood; a mestizo, a lower-class Mexican, a teenage boy, especially in a Mexican-American community, who is a member of a street gang. The last lip-sync character two does is to that song,

"Lean Like a Cholo," and although, at first, character one was fed up with the situation, she still came back to dance to the song. In fact, at the end of the skit, both of the characters ended up dancing with their elbows up, moving them side to side as explained in the song lyrics — once again reinforcing the stereotypical trope of Latinas as dancers.

The second post by Salice was posted on October 24, 2017. The caption reads: When you tell your Hispanic mom to shut up or disrespect her in anyway ……. (emoji of a heel) HAHAHAHA #salicerose #latina #hispanic. As the mom Salice is wearing an olive green shirt and grey leggings, and she has her hair tied up in a messy bun. As the daughter she is wearing the same grey leggings, but a crop-top long sleeve shirt, grey socks, her hair is down. Salice is holding the camera when recording herself. In this skit the mom is trying to get her daughter to go clean her room immediately, however the daughter refuses to do it immediately. The second time she is told, the daughter gets aggravated and tells her mom to "shut up," which is not taken lightly by the mom. The mom is then shown grabbing the chancla and, through an elaborate dance, preps herself to hit her daughter. Although the daughter pleaded, she still was aggressively and repeatedly hit by the chancla. In the end the mom raises both hands as if winning a boxing match, throwing the chancla up which eventually hits Salice (as the daughter). As seen in other videos of Salice, the punishing mother grabs the iconic chancla to hit her daughter for disrespecting her. The chancla serves as a symbolic weapon of punishment for Latino parents, as well as their use of Span-

ish profanity. The notion that Latinas are aggressive and short-tempered can be seen reiterating through the actions of both the mom and daughter. The daughter's uncomplying attitude and snappy mouth got her into the situation in the first place. The mother's use of chancla expresses abusiveness against her daughter. When the mother is prepping to hit the daughter, the daughter states "you do this every time," which suggests that these arguments happen frequently, or when the mom is upset she grabs the chancla to punish and hit her daughter. As the song "In the Arms of an Angel" plays in the background, the daughter pleads to her mom to stop her actions. However, the mom disregards this pleading, implying that Latina women are also not empathic, or are heartless. Also, the mother's loud demands in the skit are also assigned to Latinas; to be loud. As the mother charges towards the daughter to hit her, she screams loudly as if she were to be in war. Once again the Latina mom is shown dancing. Dancing Latinas is a perpetuated theme is common among the Latina social media celebrities.

The last post by Salice Rose is captioned as: When your friend comes to your Hispanic household & is in for a BIG SURPRISE! (Emoji of a pizza slice, a chicken leg, and a bowl of soup) HAHAHAHAHA! #salicerose #hispanic #latina #food (emoji of a sad face then around 12 crying happy faces). This video was uploaded August 24, 2017. In this skit, person one is wearing a bright green cap, her hair is in a bun, she is wearing a black shirt, and ripped jeans. Salice, as person two, is wearing a bright pick shirt, her hair is in a side pony tail. The skit begins when person one greets her friend inviting her (person two) into her house.

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After an initial greeting, person two is offered food, however, person two simply asks for some cereal. As person one reaches for the milk, she instead pulls out instead Horchata by stating "Tenemos esto Horchata." Horchata is a typical Mexican drink that tastes like milk, but is sweeter. Person one's use of Spanish again reiterates Latinas' use of the Spanish language. Person two asks for "regular milk," to which person one responds by taking out "La Lechera." Lechera is a sweet cream Mexican product. Person two, now annoyed and confused asks "What is this," to which person one also annoyed and confused replies " They're both milk!" Person two then proceeds to ask for some Nesquil-(chocolate), again, person one instead takes out a can of chocolate Abulelita. Confused further, and now almost mocking person one again questions the product. Person one is now irritated and states "… you idiot, just fuckin drink it …" However, person two does not consume what was given to her and instead asks for hotdogs and cheese. Again person one, assumes she knows what she asked for, takes out Racho traditional Mexican cheese and a sausage. Person two, refusing to eat what is in front of her because it is foreign, lastly asks for soup. Person one now completely frustrated takes out a can of Juanito's maze, typically used for pozole, a Mexican soup. The skit ends as person two mockingly questions the product. The products shown in the skit are general products found in a Mexican house hold, according to the caption of the post, it is assumed that these products are used by Hispanics, Latinos, and Latinas. It is also assumed that when referring to common household items Latinas are ignorant to understand what these products

are. The hostile tone of voice used by person one again perpetuates the spit-fire Latina, who is hot-tempered. Aside from her tone of voice, the use of profanity and gestures also indicate the aggressive Latina.

<center>Andrea Espada</center>

The third Latina analyzed was Andrea Espada. Her bio reads: ANDREA ESPADA Comedy|| Proud Latina (the letters C & O in a box)|| Ferran's Mom (email emoji sign) ardreaespada.booking@gmail.com (hands pointing downward) Watch my new parody video (link attached). The post analyzed by Andrea was posted February 20, 2018. It is captioned as: Competitive Girls "Be Like" (happy crying emoji and shocked emoji) (Tag A Girl Like This). In this skit Andrea and Lele are sitting in what looks like a waiting room. A man walks in, and quickly both women prep themselves. Lele perks her breasts and Andrea flips her hair. The man asks for a Latina, and quickly the women raise their hands and jump out of their seats exclaiming "I'm a Latina." Andrea states she is Colombian and takes out a Colombian jersey and Lele states she is Venezuelan and takes out a Venezuelan flag. Then Andrea states that she knows Shakira and how to dance salsa and begins to dance. Lele responded that she knows Daddy Yankey and how to dance reggaeton. Andrea shoves Lele slightly with her elbow to throw her off balance however, with her derrière, Lele pushes Andrea. Lele then states that Andrea's butt is fake, to which Andrea then exclaims that Lele breasts are fake, to which Lele responds by pulling down her shirt as to show that they are not

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fake. Lele claims that Andrea's hair is fake, stating "tu pelo es falso," later pulling on Andrea's hair. Andrea responded by claiming that Lele's lips are fake exclaiming "y tu te pusiste labios," Spanish for, "you got your lips done". Finally, a third women walks into the waiting room and stands in between both women. Slightly raising her hand and calmly claims "yo tambien se hablar Espanol" (I too can speak Spanish). The skit ends when both women look at her and start attacking her aggressively, the man is frightened. The perking of breast and flipping of hair are literally indicators of the women being available to the man. It appears to be some sort of audition which is a clear sign that the women understand that they must perk up their breast and flip their hair in order to get casted. The "fakeness" of lips, breast, derrière, and hair also a stereotypical trope for Latinas. The enhancement of these particular areas are based on the notion that Latinas are voluptuous. Latinas competing against other Latinas is a common stereotype assigned to women, in general, for attention. The cattiness and short-tempered Latina is commonly perpetuated in traditional media frameworks. This leads the Latinas to get aggressive and physically violent toward one another, again indicating that Latinas are barbaric and hostile and would rather fight than band together for the further empowerment of women, more generally. Among the usual themes, these Latinas know how to speak Spanish and how to dance. They also listen to popular Latin artists which verifies their identity as a Latinas. Based on this skit, in order to be considered an "authentic" Latina, or possess Latina characteristics, one must know Spanish, have curves, know how to dance, and listen/

know Latin artists. Lastly, the Latinas use of the Colombian jersey and Venezue-lan flag another example of "ethno-national stereotypes," again displaying their close relation to their nationality.

The second video by Andrea is captioned as: Dating a Latina. Salienda con una Latina. W/ @marioruiz @erubeydeanda (old film camera emoji) @4kpa-pi (Space) Full Video On Facebook (link in bio) emoji of hand hold up one finger. This video was posted on September 4, 2017. The skit opens up with Mario's sister asking him what he's doing in Spanish. He replies he is cleaning because he girlfriend is going to visit, however the sister tells him that all his girlfriends have been horrible. Mario assures his sister that she will like her, and then begins to daydream about his girlfriend (Andrea). His daydream starts in the kitchen where the sister is sitting on the counter and Andrea is standing by the counter playing with one of the sister's pig tails. Both Andrea and the sister are smiling exaggeratedly. Then Andrea and Mario are shown standing in the another part of the kitchen, Andrea is feeding Mario. Mario eating something off of Andrea's hand and is smiling. Andrea pucks up her lips while closing her eyes as she reaches out towards Mario to pet his hair. Andrea is then shown in the kitchen sweeping, washing the dishes, and cleaning some shoes all the while smiling as she performs these actions. In the daydream, Andrea is displaying stereotypical characteristics of an ideal woman. The notion of an ideal woman is one who is not complex (gets along with everyone), cleans, feeds her spouse, and is happy doing so. Mario suddenly snaps out of his day-dream when Andrea calls out his name

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and starts yelling at him and at his sister for not greeting her and being "cochi-nos" (dirty people) for not having the house clean. She is shown walking out and yelling at Mario to follow her. Her facial gestures and tone of voice are irritated. The skit closes with Mario following her out and his sister nodding her head in disagreement. Once again the Latina is displayed as not being able to get along with others. As a Latina, Andrea is hot-tempered, loud, and aggressive. Because she does not fit the stereotypical ideology of what an ideal women should be, she is presented as bitchy and rude. In the day-dream Mario is catered to, this action is presented, in the skit, as accepted and ideal — further perpetuating the idea of women as subordinates to their male counterparts. However, in reality Mario is shown being battered, reiterating the notion that Latinas are dominating, abusive, and hard to control.

The last post from Andrea was posted on February 28, 2018. The description reads: Trying To Talk To Latinas! (Happy crying emoji face and shocked face) w/ @twan @yolita.c #TeamDream. Andrea and another women are shown walking side by side and talking (inaudible) out on the sidewalk. Twan is on the phone, he looks up and sees them walking towards him. He mouths out "Oh shit." Background music begins to play Becky G and Bad Bunny "Majores". He laughs, smiles, and mouths out hi, however, this ultimately goes unnoticed by the women. Later, he tries opening the one of the doors (double door) for the women, however they disregard him and open the other door to let themselves in. Twan finally tries to act injured in the last scene as he limps by the women yet again,

however this does not grab their attention either. Finally, Twan goes back and exclaims "what do I have to do to get your attention," to which Andrea replies "you can try speaking Spanish." The women laugh mockingly, not expecting Twan to speak Spanish, however he does and states, in Spanish, that he can handle both women. The women are in shock and are now interested so they speak to him in Spanish "si tu quieres papasito" (if you want to daddy) and "mi amor" ("my love" while grunting and closing eyes). These are sexual innuendoes indicating availability. Twan then states in Spanish that he does not want either of them and continues walking. The women are offended and yell out to him "que le pasa" (what's wrong with him), "Povo!" (poor), and "Descarado!" (without shame) ending the skit. The use of Spanish language is an evident theme among Latinas, not only do they speak Spanish, but it is assumed that they are attracted to it. After realizing that Twan speaks Spanish, the women become sexually available and interested, using words such as "papasito" and "mi amor." The women are first objectified through the male gaze, Twan's view point. Then the Latinas are considered to be selfish and conceited when they do not acknowledge Twan's presence. The Latinas are not courteous to Twan, they are villainized in this regard. The bitchy Latina, as portrayed in the skit, is also a mainstream media trope assigned to Latinas.

Themes

To sum up, all three women who identify as Latinas and who are catego-rized as social media celebrities had similar themes in their skits that reinforce mainstream media stereotypes. The Latina characteristics (according to the skits) that are highlighted and reviewed are due to their popularity among the Latina social media celebrities and/or because of their perpetuated use in traditional media. Of course, all the posts analyzed needed to include the term Latina whether it be in the description, as a hashtag, or in the post itself. Interestingly, after the term Latina typically the emoji of a woman in a red dress dancing was placed. This emoji appeared in four out of the nine posts analyzed. In fact danc-ing, in general, also seems to be a reoccurring theme. Often, the Latinas in the skits were shown dancing to Latin music — such as reggaeton, salsa, merengue — or other genre of music. The music playing in the background was also some sort of Latin music, which included the use of Spanish lyrics. Reinforcing the no-tion that Latinas only dance to — in particular — Latin music, a recurring theme among these social media skits. The use of Spanish as a language was also prevalent for these Latina social media celebrities. The Latinas in the skits used various Spanish languages, whether it was broken English (English with a Span-ish accent), Spanish itself (from different regions), Spanglish, or just using words in Spanish. It is often difficult to understand which Spanish the Latinas were us-ing, sometimes it seems that they are using a Chicana (Mexican American) Spanish, Colombian Spanish, or a Caribbean Spanish. Favoring Spanish is also

prevent among Latinas when finding a person attractive. According to the skits a main characteristic of a Latina, is speaking some sort of Spanish. As noted by Gallegos, when analyzing Sofia Vergara's character, Gloria, in ABC's television show Modern Family,

> Gloria also speaks broken English with a heavy accent. Undoubtedly, she is a clear representation that fulfills the Anglo-American expectation of entertainment and objectification of Latin women … It is very hard to understand Gloria's heavy accent, thus the character has to give the audience something else to laugh about, and keep them entertained. Gloria screams in a very particular and foreign way that makes her very unique. As a result of this shouting uniqueness, it works perfectly fine for the entertainment of the white-American audiences (2012, p. 35).

Their use of ethno-national stereotypes was also prevalent among the Latinas. Their use of Latin American flags, jerseys, or wardrobe (such the chancla or sombrero) symbolize their close relation to their nationality.

All three of these Latina social media celebrities are voluptuous, meaning that they fit the typical curvy Latina body shown in mainstream media. In traditional media the exotic and sexualized Latina is being reinforced by their attire, — wearing tight and/or revealing clothes (Gallegos, 2012) — however, these Latinas are not made by anyone to wear these clothes, yet they do. As noted by Gallegos,

> … in Gloria's character, the 'Latinidad' imaginary remains in today's me-
> dia. Gloria is the typical trophy wife, besides being the exotic, sexualized
> Latina, which is highly reinforced with her attire. She wears tight jeans,
> tight shirts, and tight dresses. Moreover, her attire is characterized for us-
> ing low-cut blouses and dresses. Her voluptuousness is always showing,
> very provocative and eye-catching (2012, p. 34).

The Latina social media celebrities voluptuous bodies and minimal clothing are also provocative and eye-catching similar to traditional media Latina celebrities such as Sofia Vergara (Gallegos, 2012). Their voluptuous bodies are also suggested to be fake, by enhancing their breast or derrière. They also hyper-sexualize themselves through their use of sexual innuendos, stating Spanish terms such as "papi" or sticking out their derrière when dancing. Another common theme among the skits is that the Latinas are short-tempered. They are often exasperated when attacked or offended by comments made by other individuals in the skits. The other individuals insulting Latinas are often Latinas themselves, or other women. The short-tempered Latina portrayed in these skits is known as the spitfire Latina in mainstream media, they are classified as being unethical, hostile, aggressive in nature — similar to the characteristics that are portrayed in the skits. Their short-temper can also be identified through their tone of voice, profanity, gestures, posture and movement within the skits. They are also portrayed as bitchy, stuck-up, or rude. These aggressive characteristics are also true for the Latina spitfire, or the punishing mother. Lastly, being loud is another notable as-

pect that these social media celebrities would constantly display. In the skits it was common to see the Latinas shouting at others when they were irritated, or when they were excited. Similar to Gloria in Modern Family,

> Gloria also portrays the "spitfire" role by constantly screaming, and speaking in Spanish when she gets fed up. Being loud is one of the main characteristics of Gloria, to the point where it seems just to be her natural way of speaking. There is a misconstruction that if she does not yell, she will not be heard … The constant screaming of Gloria is not the only problematic stereotype of Latinas being 'spitfire.' Strong accent and mispronunciations are a constant cause of misunderstandings leading to conflicts, which in result leads Gloria to scream, thus the situation becomes an amusing moment. Her accent and mispronunciations are just some of the reminders that Gloria is foreign (Gallegos, 2012, p. 34).

Gallegos claims that madness is what provokes Gloria to scream, ultimately becoming very chaotic.

Overall, other stereotypical characteristics that were also displayed in the skits were purposely drawn attention to. Such as eating only (what is classified as) Latino/Hispanic food, being from the hood, creating a "fiesta," watching telenovelas, and the gender normative characteristic applied to women within hetero-patriarchal ideology.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

The analysis provided an examination on the self-presentations of three popular Latina social media celebrities. Lele Pons's posts depicts Latinas (herself) as dancers, loud, and aggressive reiterating the generalization that Latinas are uncivilized as opposed to civilized (west). Salice Rose's performance of Latinas indicate that Latinas are hot-tempered and catty perpetuating the stereotypical spitfire Latina trope. Andrea Espada's presentation of Latinas connotes that Latinas must speak Spanish and that they are naturally voluptuous similar to the reinforced notion of Latinas in mediated popular culture. The images shown in these new online platforms continue the performances portrayed in traditional media for Latinas. The following will provide in in-depth interpretation of the themes generated from the three Latina social media celebrities. As well as, illuminating the clear connection of these online performances and the mainstream media representations and possible avenue for challenging/different representations of Latinas.

Implications of Themes

Emoji

In the four posts that were analyzed an emoji of a woman in a red dress dancing was found next to or around the terms Latina or Hispanic. The emoji rep-

resents the common media trope of the dancing Latina. This Latina is seen in commercials, TV shows, Halloween costumes, etc. She has long black wavy hair, hooped earrings, a tight red dress on top and loose from the bottom, and wears red heels. The red connotes devilishness, passion, spiciness, and Spain's Flamenco ("Latin") dancing. The color red is associated with the devil in Western culture and is often assigned to Latinas. It is the opposite of saints (or pureness), the red devilish dress is tempting, sexual, or deceiving. The red dress is symbolic of an invitation for sexual intercourse, which is not liberating in this case, since sexual pleasure for women in general is something that is seen as shameful and wrong. When it comes to Latinas, the color red is for sex workers. The color red stands for passion as well, however in regard to Latinas, it is often portrayed as passion for men. To be loved by a man or to gain the attention from a man — or men. Latinas willing to sacrifice anything, even themselves (their own well-being or identity) for their passion, their passion for a man. Similar, to traditional media representation of the Latina *Faithful Self Sacrificing Senorita* which usually ends up sacrificing herself to protect her love interest, typically with a white male (Merskin, 2007). The color red attracts the human eye, for Latinas, the color red is meant to attract the attention of men for love and women to spark envy. The color red invokes passion that must be heterosexual for Latinas. The color red also signifies spicy like a red hot pepper. This trope is closely linked to the stereotype that Latinas love to cook and eat spicy foods and that they are hot like red chilly peppers. The red spiciness is also assigned to represent Latinas' attitude. The

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spitfire, hot-tempered Latina is spicy, in that sense she is quickly heated. The spicy red is not dangerous like the devilish red, which lures men only to deceive them, the spicy red is sexy. Although the spicy red is always putting up a fight (fire), it is very much tamable and can be dominated by men, which is why it is considered sexy. The Latina here is like the barking Chihuahua, or the red chilly pepper; aggressive/hot, but small in size therefore not threatening. Latinas are, through the spicy red, much like Chihuahuas or a red chilly peppers — no longer human. Latinas are meant to be like Chihuahuas, cute but can be dominated, they are also funny, and not meant to be taken seriously. Latinas are meant to be like red chili peppers often seen as a challenge to consume, men compete to consume the Latina, and Latinas compete against other women to be consumed. The red dress also symbolizes a Spanish traditional flamenco dress. Although Spaniards are typically not considered Latino/a, through the gentrification of Western media, so that the Spanish flamenco dress is often associated with Latinas. In fact, it is the traditional Spanish dress which represents the Latinas look on mainstream media. The emoji overall perpetuates the Latina look on social media sites, wearing a red dress and dancing characterizes how a Latina should look and perform.

<u>Dancing and Music</u>

In five out of the nine posts analyzed, the Latinas in the skits were shown dancing to music. Typically, the Latinas were dancing to Latin music including: reggaeton, salsa, merengue, however, they could also be seen dancing to techno

or hip-hop. Perpetuating the notion that Latinas need to dance, in particular to Latin music, is a recurring theme among mainstream media representations. Latinas, as stated by Twan (a character in two of the skits), are always turning everything into a "fiesta" — this includes dancing at random times. Latinas are expected to know how to dance and are considered to be experts in this field. These dances are meant to hyper-sexualize their bodies, create Otherness, or be seen as a form of entertainment. These dances often include Latinas purposely sticking out their derriere, shaking their hips or breast, or dancing sexually/ provocatively. Many might claim that these dances include the aforementioned movements, however what makes the difference between dancing for self-plea- sure (the erotica as defined by Andre Lorde) and for self-objectification is that it is framed for the male-gaze. Similar to music videos where dancing women are purposely placed to overemphasize their physical features especially their breast and derrière. Women are then striped from their identity, they become only that of what is shown — their parts come to stand in for the whole. The Latinas are ob- jectified, because their body parts become who they are, like objects they are tangible items. These Latinas are also hypersexualized through their movements and voluptuous bodies amplifying their breast and derrière. These dances also create Otherness, the notion of being different from Western culture. They are exoticized through their Latin dances and viewed as going against the "correct" or Western way of dancing. Much like colonists would view native rituals, these dances are framed as a form of savagery. Lastly, these dances are also meant to

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be comedic. Latinas as the Other, as entertainers, entertain the audience through their dances. In mainstream media, dance serves for entertainment purposes of not only the audience but the other characters as well, in order to make fun the Latina. She is not meant to be taken seriously and her dancing serves as a justification to laugh at her. This goes hand-in-hand with Latin music that is commonly assigned to Latinas, it is prevalent in not only mainstream media but was also prevalent in the posts analyzed. These social media celebrities not only danced to any type of music, but were dance masters of Latin music. Aside from the dancing to Latin music, Latinas were also surrounded by Latin music itself. These Latinas often had urges to dance which could not be contained, as can be seen in Salice's first post where, although character one is mad, at the other individual, she (character one) decides at the end to dance with the other individual. Dancing is seen as something that is natural to Latinas. The Latinas' rhythm and body motions are seen as sexy, fulfilling the male desire. As can be seen in the second post analyzed, dancing is one of the main attributes that constitutes a Latina. In Lele's second post, she is showing Hannah how to dance merengue so that Hannah can become Latina, indicating that dancing, especially to Latin music, is a characteristic that defines a Latina. Since Hannah is learning to dance in order to be a Latina to impress a Latino, this also implies that dancing is used to gain the attention of a man. Apparently, dancing is not a skill set Latinas learn, but it is deemed as something Latinas are born with. It is also not a profession, but is only used to party or gain attention for comedic purposes or the attention of a

man. Dancing as a stereotypical trope for Latinas and is meant to symbolize their urge to party, again reiterating that Latinas should not be taken seriously.

<u>Spanish</u>

Latinas use of Spanish as a language was the most popular trope among the Latina social media celebrities, appearing in eight out of the nine posts analyzed. Although the Spanish used varied from characters, there was always some sort of Spanish language(s) used. These Latinas, similar to traditional media, would use broken English (English with a Spanish accent), Spanish itself (from different regions), Spanglish (a mix of English and Spanish), or just using words in Spanish. An example of the "strict correlation" between Latinos and Spanish, of the many that can be used, is in shows tailored for Latinos "who also speak English,"

> Not only does this announcement veil the reality of code switching and mixing between English and Spanish but it also parts from and reinforces the very notion that all Latinos speak Spanish and that while some "may additionally speak English," English is ancillary to their speaking Spanish, which in their view, is what should rightly define anyone as a Latino/Latina (Davila, 2000, p. 86).

For Lele using Spanish meant teaching Hannah to rolls her "Rs" which was a main characteristic for a Latina, for Salice using Spanish meant the mother had to have a heavy Spanish accents and was often aggressive in tone, and for Andrea the Spanish was used to please men. In the second and third post by Lele

and the last post by Andrea, favoring Spanish over English to seduce or attract a man was preferred. In the posts using the term "papi" was to please the man in the skit indicating availability. Spanish, much like dancing for Latinas, also creates Otherness and is meant to be comedic as well. It expresses that Latinas are not from here (this land), although hidden histories all say otherwise. The language Spanish in mainstream media represents immigrant, coming from other land illegally. It also symbolizes laziness to learn the nations language, English. Depending on the on context, when Latinas use Spanish it is funny because in Western culture it sounds like gibberish, or it is sexy because it sounds like a rhythm. For example, when Latinas are mad and they yell in Spanish, the Western audience and other characters hear nothingness. The Latinas are then funny because they get mad easily and no one seems to understand why. Once again, Latinas are the center of attention because they are entertaining, the clowns of the scene are foolish and the emotions they are expressing are ignored. A different example is when Latinas are speaking, particularly, to men in which case, their Spanish sounds more like a rhythm — it is sexy in this case. The sexualization of Spanish as a language is common in mainstream media similar to Latin Lover, this use of Spanish is deemed as admirable because it is exotic. This use of Spanish can only be sexy if it is used by a young good-looking Latina. As compared to Salice Rose's post where she presents a "Latina mother," as the mother her Spanish accent is strong and sounds more annoying than rhythmic. In fact, the first sentence that the mother yells out to her daughter, Salice em-

phases the last "O" to make her accent drag. Therefore, depending on who is using the Spanish language and in what context, it can either be seen negative as lazy or annoying, or it can be seen positive, as an admirable quality because it is exotic. Often the Latinas in the skits perform their accents, Lele and Salice in other skits do not have a Spanish accent and speak fluent English. Latinas, however according to the performances, cannot speak fluent English, they must add Spanish words, a Spanish accent, or mix both languages in compliance with mainstream media ideology. Therefore, English as a language is always secondary for Latinas. This accent can also be seen as hostile, as exemplified by "people from the hood" in Salice's first post. This Latina's Spanish accent is meant to be intimidating, it is meant to represent Cholo/as talking. These Cholo/as are Mexican American gangsters, who's Spanish accent is indicated to originate from their use of Spanish language and ghetto slang. Both characters in Salice's first post perform this accent through their tone of voice. It is easy to assign Latina's with the Spanish language since its exoticization is what sells in mainstream media,

> Simply put, language means money, and this equation is likely to continue to affect the correlation of Latinos with Spanish, impairing attempts to broaden the media's definition of Latinos, or at least what they sell as "Latinos" to marketers and corporate clients. After all, Spanish is the one variable that effectively attests to the "uniqueness" of the U.S. market and that sustains the

need for culture- and language-specific programming and advertising (Davila, 2000, p.89).

<u>Ethno-National Exoticization</u>

The use of ethno-national exoticization is a combination of all the stereo-types assigned to Latinas that make them Othered. Examples of exoticization can be seen through Latinas' performance when dancing, speaking Spanish, do-ing both, etc. Clear use of ethno-national exoticization is also expressed through secondary identity markers such as: Latin American flags, Latin American jer-seys, and other common Latin American wardrobes (such the chancla or som-brero). These items symbolize Latinas' close relation to their nationality. These ethno-national items create exoticization because they are Othered — these items are not Western therefore they are different. The chancla used in Salice's second post, the sombrero used in Lele's second post, the flags used in Lele's and Andrea's first posts purposely draw attention to the their "outsideness," indi-cating that they are exotic. Those items are common symbols perpetuated in mainstream media. For instance, the sombrero is continuously seen from Warner Bros's "Speedy Gonzalez" or Disney's "The Three Caballeros" and the chancla as seen used in Disney's "Coco" where the grandma uses the chancla as a weapon like many mainstream media Latinas. The use of their nations' flags and jerseys reinforces that these Latinas are exotic, it indicates attractiveness for men, particularly. The ethno-national stereotypes used by Latinas creates nation-al Otherness, to obtain attention from men. For example, in Andrea's first post,

when asked for a Latina, the women were quick to point out their nationalities to the man. Not only does this create exoticism, but also competition among the nations. Which Latina is better, and from what nationality is a perpetuated theme in mainstream media. What Latina has the bigger breast, derriere, or prettiest features among the Latin Nations is a common comparison. In Lele's second post, Lele dresses up Hannah in a sombrero, wraps a flag around her, and a dress which appears to be made from traditional Mexican design to emphasize their ethno-national characteristics. In order to be a Latina, Hannah had to be exotic through these secondary items that symbolize their nation for the purpose of attracting a man. Exotic items are for the purposes of attracting a man are admirable, however if these same items are not used for that purpose, then they are ridiculed. For instance, in Salice's last post one of the characters mocks and questions not only the items, but the culture itself. Expressing statements that indicate what "Hispanic" or "Latinos" do/have is unethical, or foolish, not admirable or exotic by any means. All in all, Latina ethno-national exoticization is expressed not only through their characteristics and mannerisms, but also through cultural objects.

Hypersexualization

Sofia Vergara, Salma Hayek, Jennifer Lopez, Eva Mendes, and, Eva Longoria are a few successful notable women who are identified as Latina or identified themselves as Latinas. Much of their success comes from their talent within their profession, however most of the time their talent is lost through their volup-

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tuous bodies — which then becomes their predominate form of success. Meaning that their bodies become one of their main sources of profit. This is without a doubt one of the most popular generalized theme in mainstream media, the curvy Latina. Sadly, however not surprisingly, all three of the Latina social media celebrities analyzed have voluptuous bodies. Many claim that this is the natural body type for Latinas, however, just like any other individual, Latinas come in various shapes and sizes. Latina celebrities' bodies are objectified and become commodities, a means by which Latinas can profit. Similar to the Latinas in traditional media, these Latina social media celebrities' bodies are amplified and framed for the male gaze. Through the camera lens, the focus of Latina bodies is on their derriere, breast, thighs, and waist, in particular. Latina bodies are exotically and sexually reinforced by their attire: wearing tight and/or revealing clothes. Andrea, for example, in all of her skits would wear tight clothing that revealed her curvy figure. Often, through the positioning of the camera, or throughout their movements when dancing, Lele and Salice would also illuminate their voluptuous bodies.

The positioning of their hyper-sexualized voluptuous bodies is also another common characteristic theme among Latinas, similar to that found in mainstream media. In traditional media, these Latinas are positioned by professionals/producers to purposely display their body parts, wear minimal clothing, and show more skin. For these Latina social media celebrities, they are purposely choosing to hyper-sexualize themselves by following the templates set up by traditional

professionals. Similar to Eva Longoria, as Gabrielle Solis in *Desperate House-wives*, "her body is a central marker of Latinidad conflated with sexuality; therefore, her clothing is always bright and tight fitting, for example, to show off her toned and lithe body in a way that has strong visual and erotic impact …" (Merskin, 2007, p. 330). For Gabrielle, as a Latina, this connotes availability according to Merskin (p. 330). Through their performances of sexual innuendos, the Latina social media celebrities also hyper-sexualize themselves. In Lele's and Andrea's last post Andrea using Spanish terms such as "papi" or sticking out their derrière when dancing, as previously explained. Another theme that occurred in Lele's second post and Andrea's first post is the idea of "fake" bodies for Latinas. Often, Latinas in beauty competitions such as Miss Universe are deemed to have fake bodies, the same is true for many Latina celebrities in film and television. For Latinas the "fakeness" of a body is something that should be hidden or made shameful. This sparks the notion that as a Latina, if they do not naturally have curvy bodies, they should aspire to have one by psychically altering their appearance. For these Latina social media celebrities, having, pretending to have, or aspiring to have a voluptuous body is only for the purposes of seeking the attention or attraction of a man, as demonstrated in their skits. For example, in Lele's second post, she is placing what seems to be a balloon underneath Hannah's dress on her breast. This action indicates that Lele was trying to enhance Hannah's breast for the purpose of teaching her to be a Latina in order to seduce a Latino. Another example can be shown in Andrea's first post, when the two Lati-

nas are competing in the unknown audition — the Latinas start bashing each other for having fake body parts. They are literally fighting for the attention of a man and in order to gain his attention, they resort to belittling each other claiming that their body parts are fake. Pointing out the "fakeness" of the body in the case is meant to shame the other Latina and to disinterest the man in the skit. This action indicates that Latinas voluptuous bodies are desirable until revealed to be fake. Although their bodies are already objectified, when their bodies are revealed to be made of actual objects themselves, they are no longer regarded as even objects but less than. As objects, when objectified, Latinas are treated as such, however the skits imply that when actual objects make up their bodies they are no long visible — Latinas are no longer valuable tangible items, but worthless items. Overall, Latinas social media celebrities, much like mainstream media Latinas, are predominantly identified by their voluptuous bodies. They hyper-sexualized and objectified themselves, as well as enter the frame for the male gaze — exactly like traditional media.

Spitfire Latina

The spitfire Latina is classified as a Latina who is confrontational, quick to talk-back, and short-tempered. The spitfire Latina is a common stereotypical trope in mainstream media. Not surprisingly, another common theme among the Latinas social media celebrities is that they are confrontational, quick to talk-back, and short-tempered — in short they are performing as spitfire Latinas. Their short-temper can be identified throughout the skits by their aggressive tone

of voice, profanity, threatening gestures, intimidating postures and movement. For instance, in Andrea's second post, Andrea is shown yelling at her boyfriend but her non-verbal gestures indicate that she wants to physically harm both her boyfriend and her boyfriend's sister. She is close to their face and points her finger at both of them. Later, when Andrea calls out for her boyfriend, her facial features look sinister, as to threaten him if he does not listen and do as she says. The same facial features can be found on Lele in her third post when addressing Twan's remarks. Another example can be found in Salice's first post analyzed which included two people from the hood who exert all the characteristics aforementioned. Both characters performed by Salice are hostile and assign the spitfire traits to Latinas. The Latina social media celebrities are also portrayed as bitchy, stuck-up, or rude. In Andrea's last post the Latinas go beyond being short-tempered or confrontational (where they were triggered by other individuals whether indirectly or directly), these Latinas were plain rude. In the skits, the Latinas were shown to be extremely self-centered, so self-centered that they no longer acknowledge other individuals. These aggressive characteristics are meant to indicate that Latinas do not know how to behave and are barbaric. Their actions also indicate they are from a lower class — lower class individuals are deemed as trashy, uncivilized people — in this case Latinas are from a lower class status. Latinas as lower class individuals can also be portrayed with the correlation between "people from the hood" and using the hashtag Latina. The spitfire Latina's actions can also be seen as comical. Yet another trope where the

Latina acts out in order to gain attention, therefore becoming the entertainment of the particular scene. The spitfire Latina can be seen as a threatening individual who should be avoided or be taken as comedic because her actions are not taken seriously. Her sassy attitude make her not only funny but desirable. Latina's feistiness is considered sexy because it is not seen as a true threat that is it meant to be punished (with sexual connotative meaning implied). Throughout the skits, the Latina social media celebrities were constantly arguing or being aggressive toward other individuals, women in particular, verbally and non-verbally. All in all, Latina spitfire attributes are meant to be natural, therefore it is always expected for a Latina to behave this way. The spitfire characteristic becomes normalized and at times accepted throughout performances.

<u>Another Kind of Exhibitionism</u>

The final social media trope that was continuously displayed by the Latina social media celebrities was being loud — whether yelling, shouting, or simply by talking loud, the Latinas in the skits were often exerting these particular characteristics. It was not a matter that Lele, Salice, or Andrea were loud women who happened to be Latina, more so it was purposely made that these Latinas were loud in the skits. Being loud was displayed when the Latinas were excited or angry. For instance, in Lele's last post when she greets Andrea into her home both are loudly greeting each other because they are happy to see each other, however as noted by Twan, this is a common stereotype among Latinas being loud for no special reason. This also goes hand-in-hand with Latinas starting a fiesta

for anything, their loudness indicates that a party is going on. Much like the generalization that Latinos (in general) love to stay up late to host parties and play loud music, Latinas are part of that community and embody that culture by being loud. The excited loudness can also be regarded to gain attention, to be heard. The Latinas are also loud when they are angry. As previously demonstrated, Latinas get aggravated very quickly throughout the skits, therefore are constantly raising their voices. For example, in Andrea's second post she can be heard raising her voice at both her boyfriend and his sister after she becomes upset that no one greeted her. This yelling is not one of the party trope, but instead fits the spitfire trope. This loudness is meant to be annoying and be seen as aggressiveness. Once again, in this sense, Latinas are barbaric and hard to work with. As compared to the excited loudness which is meant to gain the attention, the angry loud is meant to send people away. Similar to other women of color, this loudness is closely linked to the characteristics of an animal that cannot be tamed. Women of color, through their loudness are not professional, but instead are savage, they are people (if that) who cannot be domesticated, therefore do not fit the logic of patriarchy. Latinas' loudness, whether out of excitement, or anger is informal, suggesting that Latinas are incapable of having normal interactions.

Following or Challenging Professional Templates

The stereotypical themes found within the posts of Latina social media celebrities are the same stereotypical tropes found in mainstream media. In

mainstream media the, "stereotypical behavioral characteristics assigned to Latinas include: [addictively romantic, sensual, sexual, and even exotically dangerous, self-sacrificing, dependent, powerless, sexually naive, childlike, pampered, irresponsible, they mispronounce words, they speak Spanish, they are Catholic, they are impulsive dancers, they are known for 'cooking up a spicy storm,' and they are comprised of bright colors, rhythmic music, and olive or brown skin" (Merskin, 2007, p. 328). After reading the aforementioned list I think about Anita or Maria in the musical *West Side Story*, I do not think about all the individuals who identify as Latinas in my life. The Latinas in my life are complex and much more than any stereotype could hope to define. Although the motive as to why these Latina social media celebrities continue to perpetuate the stereotypical tropes assigned to Latinas cannot be determined through this study, there is a clear connection however between stereotypical tropes, more follows/views/likes, equal more money. As noted by Davila,

> Ultimately, the fact remains that any media developments regarding the representation of Latinos are likely to be affected more by the numerous interests "jumping on the bandwagon" of the Hispanic market than by the ways in which Latino communities conceptualize themselves or their identities (2000, p. 86).

Perhaps, not surprisingly, media productions are likely to follow stereotypical trends in order to get more views in order to make more profit, and less likely to make productions for Latinas. In the digital age Latinas now have the opportunity

to make our own productions, to be producers of their own content and present themselves in a different contexts that goes against the stereotypical tropes of mainstream media. However, regardless of the digital advances and potential empowerment these platforms can offer, the most popular Latina social media users are still perpetuating the same stereotypical tropes assigned to Latinas. Possibly these Latina social media celebrities might be continuing these performances to jump on the Latina market bandwagon in order to make a profit. This could be the reason why these Latina social media celebrities became celebrities in the first place, because they are selling the stereotypical tropes of Latinas, they are selling themselves. They become commodities in order to follow the logic of capitalism.

Jenkins (2003) noted how digital productions in online platforms shifts amateur films (see Zimmerman), from private in to public spaces. Amateur films are different from commercial media because they are "made low budget, produced and distributed in noncommercial contexts, and generated by nonprofessional filmmakers" (Jenkins, 2003, p. 564). However, online digital productions now offer amateur filmmakers an ability to " directly reshape their material" and become more like commercial media (Jenkins, p. 564). They are now intended for the larger public and they attempt to reframe the domestic/family life into scripted narratives for the public, moving the distribution of these productions beyond the scope of just friends or family. Amateur films were once the practice of everyday life, it was the tactic used to navigate around the commercialized me-

dia, now in the digital age, amateur films (such as the Instagram videos) are more likely to follow the templates of the professionals in Hollywood.

As observed in this study, these ethno-national performances are a part of the spectacle, distancing themselves from the amateur films, while assimilating to commercialized media practices and forms. Everyday life, the mundane activities in it, was once a space away from factory, ridge systems, and consumerism. Virtually nothing can escape the logic of capitalism, this is true for the performances on Instagram, who are trapped within the logics of capitalism because of the framework in which they are found. This is even more true for the Latina social media celebrities self-presentations who are knowingly/deliberately posting ethno-national performances. Maybe there is nothing really new here. In 1944 Horkheimer and Adorno were observing "culture today is infecting everything with sameness" (p. 41) referring to media (film, radio, magazine, etc.). Horkheimer and Adorno argue that American culture is homogenous (p. 42). When exploring specifically the radio, the authors state that even productions that try to move away from mainstream media are sucked into capitalism, similar to Vaneigem and Fisher, who later show how subcultures are pulled into the spectacle and sold back to us. As Horkheimer and Adorno explain,

> They confine themselves to the apocryphal sphere of "amateurs," who, in any case, are organized from above. Any trace of spontaneity in the audience of the official radio is steered and absorbed into a selection of spe-

cializations by talent-spotters, performance competitions, and sponsored

events of every kind (1944, p. 42).

This can be said for those productions that unknowingly or carelessly fall into the

logic of capitalism, however the same cannot be said for those individuals who

purposely produce stereotypical images — such as the Latina social media

celebrities on Instagram.

In order to illuminate a possible avenue to counter hegemonic practices

and shed light on a possible form of empowerment that challenges mainstream

productions, this section will explore two examples of challenging conventional

representations. The first from Spike Lee's movie *Girl 6* bell hooks notes how this

movie moves beyond the phallic cultural norm. In *Girl 6* issues of "identity forma-

tion, sexual agency, feminist resistance, unrequited longing, etc." are examined

(hooks, 1996, p. 19). The story is focused on a black woman's dream to gain

stardom and her struggle for attention. Through her journey to stardom the audi-

ence is exposed to the objectification, racism, and sexism black women have to

undergo in order to make it in the industry. Girl 6, as the lead character is identi-

fied through her profession as a phone sex operator, however, her overarching

depiction indicates that phone sex operator, is solely her job and it is not to plea-

sure men. The audience can also view how femininity is constructed,

As the film progresses we witness the myriad ways Girl 6 makes herself

over to become the desired object. Her constant changing of outfits, hair-

styles, and so on, reminds viewers that femininity is constructed, not nat-

ural Femininity, like phone sex, was invented to satisfy male fantasy. It is

there to affirm the realm of the masculine, of phallic power (hooks, 1996,

p. 14).

In the end, Girl 6 decides not to objectify or hyper-sexualize herself for the male

gaze in order to make it in the industry. Instead Girl 6 never fulfills her dreams,

but she also does not lose her agency nor her identity. hooks claims that Lee's

overall objective is resistance, which is key to change Hollywoods' productions

regarding race, sex, and class (p.19). *Girl 6* is meant to remind us that women

continuously struggle to create a space where they can freely express their sex-

uality and sexual voices and where female sexual identity and performance can

be represented in their diversity and differences (hooks, p.19).

A more contemporary example is from the Television show *Vida,* which

according to Reyes-Velarde and Ali (Los Angeles Times) tells "stories true to their

lives" and "the show turns the tables on stereotypes." *Vida* is a show centered on

Latina's lives in Boyle Heights. Two sisters who return to their childhood commu-

nity (Boyle Heights) to manage their recently deceased mother's bar end up

learning about their mother's hidden sexual orientation. These Latina sisters are

more complex than their initial presentations, emphasizes their unique character-

istics that go beyond generalizations. Their mother's lover, another Latina, also

plays a role in their decisions for the bar and through her character and her char-

acteristics the topic of sexuality is explored in the show. The show also highlights

the gentrification of Boyle Heights, a struggle that the many Los Angeles com-

munities are dealing with in reality. Another Latina in the show voices her opin-

ions about the "White-washing" of the community. Through these Latina charac-

ters and their community, topics of culture, sexuality, and politics that deal with

issues regarding Latinas are explored, topics that are typically not seen in main-

stream media. These Latinas are multifaceted and go beyond stereotypical rep-

resentations. These two examples show that more sophisticated and nuanced

forms of representation are possible in popular cultural forms.

Instagram, similar to other social media sites, provide a space for the "av-

erage citizen" to participate in the interaction of media (Jenkins, 2003). Participa-

tory culture provides a platform where social media users can "archive, annotate,

appropriate, transform, and recirculation of media content" (Jenkins, 2003). It of-

fers an opportunity for individuals to challenge mainstream media representa-

tions. For Jenkins, reminds us of,

> This ability to exhibit grassroots cultural productions has in turn fostered a
>
> new excitement about self-expression and creativity. For some, these
>
> grassroots cultural productions are understood as offering a radical alter-
>
> native to dominate media content, providing space for various minority
>
> groups to tell their own stories or to question hegemonic representations
>
> of their culture (2003, p.555).

CONCLUSION

Overall, these Latina social media celebrities self-presentations continue the stereotypical image of sexy, bitchy, loud, spitfire, dancing Latinas, which ultimately continues to serve as a justification for narrow predispositions. These self-presentations on new media include: assigning Latinas to an emoji of a dancing woman, dancing impulsively, speaking Spanish, their ethno-national exoticization, voluptuous (fake) bodies, the spitfire Latina, and the loud Latina. The Latina social media celebrities self-presentations on Instagram are the same stereotypical representations for Latinas shown on mainstream media, throughout time. Although these new platforms offer the opportunity to challenge popular mediated culture's perception of Latinas, unfortunately these self-presentations on Instagram are similar to those images which can be changed. The characterizations for Latinas that emerged among the Latina social media celebrities' self-presentations were place into already existing themes and frames assigned to Latinas in traditional media representations. There were clear similarities among the popular Latinas performers self presentations. Although there were minor differences in the presentations in terms of narratives, cinematic styles, and delivery, the overarching presentations of Latinas remain similar to both themselves and traditional representation of Latinas.

These findings relate back to the theoretical groundings of this research. For the practice of everyday life, a tactic which can be used to navigate through strategies set up by professionals, social media platforms (such as Instagram)

can be the tactic used to navigate around the strategies or traditional media representation produced by professionals. In the analysis, however, it is clear that these Latina social media celebrities are simply following the templates set up by professionals, they themselves become the professionals on digital spaces. If everyday life in pre-digital modernity was co-opted by consumerist culture, this is even more true now in the digital age. When focusing on performances, this analysis shows how these Latina social media celebrities are performing femininity, ethno-national exoticization, and stereotypical tropes assigned to Latinas in traditional media. These popular Latina performers continue the representation of mainstream media performances which ultimately reinscribe heteropatriarchy. Why continue to perform the same generalizations. Lastly, these Latina social media celebrities are self-branding because they are selling their performance of a generalized Latina. The more they sell what is socially and culturally accepted the more likes, the more views, the more followers, the more hits, hence the more likely advertisers are willing to sponsor their content.

New media producers, regardless of the revolutionary potential, who produce mainstream ideologies through simplistic presentations of Latinas ultimately support the hegemonic power of White heterosexual, males. These Latinas purposely perform generalizations of Latinas, — sometimes knowingly acknowledging the stereotypical trends — yet they do not seem to understand or care about the effects these stereotypical depictions have on Latinas overall. Therefore, any opportunity for success is solely for the individual Latina, and not Latinas or the

Latina culture in general. The Latinas in these Instagram skits were purposely depicted expressing exaggerated characteristics that are seen in traditional media. It is important to understand that if individuals continuously produce generalizations (misleading/slanderous information) based on Latinas' race, class, and gender, eventually individuals will not expect much of Latina culture or of Latinas themselves. This continuous dehumanization within media presentations will encourage Latinas to underestimate in their potential in professional settings and internalize their oppression. The continuous generalized performances of Latinas in online platforms is problematic because it continues the uninterrupted reinforcement of hegemonic femininity, "post-colonization," and the socially constructed expressions of gender roles. The presentations of Latinas in new media only serve the ongoing subordination of Latinas in society. Individuals should critically analyze messages to decode/deconstruct the racist and sexist ideologies attached to these productions.

As suggested in the discussion section, individuals are capable of creating productions that challenge mainstream media representations of Latinas. Another example social media users can implement — aside from the examples of *Girl 6* and *Vida* — is taking @smash_thepatriarchy's approach. This Instagram account provides an intersectional feminist outlook gender identity, language, and culture. @smash_thepatriarchy challenges binary ideologies in society and celebrates intersectional feminism art and ideas. @smash_thepatriarchy emphasizes the marginalization women or people of color encountered in society. Social media is

a platform where individuals can implement what @smash_thepatriarchy does on Instagram. Social media users can provide a broader presentation of the Latina identity, based on their experiences; especially Latinas who now have the possibility to be producers of their own content. It is simply the producer's responsibility to provide this depiction.

Limitations

A limitation in this study was that there are some aspects of the skits that were not emphasized or analyzed. Since the main purpose of this research was to analyze Latina social media celebrities self-presentations, the aspects highlighted were for the purposes of discussing that subject. Therefore, another limitation is not highlighting the aspects that were not shown in these skits. As Hall would state, what is not there is just as important as what is there, meaning what was not shown in these productions might reveal other implications that were not discussed in this research. Another limitation of this study is that the particular Latina social media celebrities who were analyzed happened to be following a comedic pattern. Their skits were intended for comedic purposes. Although this does not change the encoded messages attached to these presentations, it does suggest that the similarities found may be because all three Latinas have a similar purpose — to make light of those very stereotypes (or as argued in this study for capitalistic purposes). Unfortunately, these are some of the top three, if not the top three, Latina social media celebrities meaning that they might gain their

fame by following a comedic pattern. Additionally, these findings are only implica-

tions; therefore, the Latinas' social media celebrities might have other motives as

to why they decide to perform a certain way, aside from what is implicated in the

study. This implication is partly based on the choice of method, sample, and pre-

ceptive this study took. Lastly, this research only looked at popular Latina social

media celebrities which can be a limitation when looking at regular social media

users self-presentations. The Latinas analyzed are typically women who are

comedic, it would be interesting to research Latinas who are not focused in com-

edy.

Future Research

For future research I recommend looking at this same study through mul-

tiple perspectives. Such as interviewing the Latina social media celebrities to ask

what their motives are for their self-presentations — these motives might be simi-

lar to the one suggested in the research (money) or others, such as (comedic)

purposes. This study can also be analyzed through the audience perspective,

researching what the intended audience thinks about these performances. Are

Latinas the intended audience and if so are they looking at the images on social

media as reflections of their desired selves? Another recommendation for a fu-

ture study is to analyze this same study through a quantitative approach. It would

be interesting to quantify the amount of times these stereotypical presentations

appear in order to analyze is redundancy as compared to mainstream represen-

tations of Latinas. A study such as this might would find these stereotypical themes are utilized in social media as much as they are in popular culture. Another study recommend for future research is analyzing the mise-en-scène of the skits produced by these Latina social media celebrities. It was noted in this study that the locations in the skits were always geographically ambiguous. These scenarios could have taken place anywhere in the world. Lastly, it is recommended that research on other Latinas social media users on Instagram — who may not necessary be celebrities — to analyze their self-presentations on social media. This type of study would widen the scope of Latina social media self-presentations in general. It would add to the discussion as to why other Latina social media users who are perpetuating the same Latina stereotypical tropes are not as successful as these social media celebrities. If these users are not reinforcing the similar depictions of Latinas and are not successful, it might signify why these Latina social media celebrities are so popular.

<center>Call to Action</center>

Since these new online platforms offer the opportunity to be creative producers of our own content, it is vital for Latina social media celebrities and users, in general, to produce content that challenges mainstream representations of Latinas. Latinas, as well as other marginalized groups such as Chicanx, can potentially use social media as a tool to revolutionize and decolonize their self-presentations. Latinas should use Instagram to promote their own artistic culture,

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sexuality, race, identity and cultural productions which can offer a critical examination of heteropatriarchy, hegemonic practices, and nationalism. Individuals should work to debunk the stereotypical meanings assigned to Latinas in any social setting or media production and society as a whole, and should work to deconstruct intersecting oppressive ideologies. Living in the digital age, social media users should have the responsibility to critically analyze the self-presentations, performances, and representations produced on social media. To create civic value we must be aware heteropatriarchy is reinscribed in these productions.

APPENDIX A

a. https://www.instagram.com/p/Bd-3e7rjh4e/?taken-by=lelepons

https://www.instagram.com/p/BVfkBgWjTuW/?taken-by=lelepons

The first post analyzed by Lele Pons was posted on January 15, 2018 although the same post with the same caption was posted on June 18, 2017. The comment to this post reads: When a Latina meets another latina (emoji of the shocking face, a red dressed woman dancer, and the letters VE) w/ @andreaespadatv @hannahstocking (tag a friend) #tb

b. https://www.instagram.com/p/BelloWSFHTR/?taken-by=lelepons

The second post from Lele Pons was published January 10 2018. the description reads: Matchmaking a Hispanic and an American (red dress women dancer, happy crying emoji) w/ @hannahstocking @marioruiz @sebas (tag a friend)

c. https://www.instagram.com/p/Baha6XLDbiP/?taken-by=lelepons

Lele Pons's last post is captioned: Nothing like a LATINA (women dancing red dress, smiling sinister emoji with horns, kiss face enoki) w/ @andreaespadatv @twan @4kpapi (tag a Latina). This post was uploaded on October 21, 2017.

d. https://www.instagram.com/p/BV8ktS1F8oi/?taken-by=salicerose

This post was published on June 29, 2017. the description reads: When two people in the hood break up … (around ten crying laughing emojis) IM SO DONE HAHAHAHA #salicerose #hispanic #latina (red dress women dancing).

e. https://www.instagram.com/p/Bapq8bnlp81/?taken-by=salicerose

The second post by Salice was posted on October 24, 2017. The caption reads: When you tell your Hispanic mom to shut up or disrespect her in anyway ……. (emoji of a heel) HAHAHAHA #salicerose #latina #hispanic

f. https://www.instagram.com/p/BYMwiOmFJyi/?taken-by=salicerose

The last post analyzed by Salice Rose is captioned as: When your friend comes to your Hispanic household & is in for a BIG SURPRISE! (Emoji of a pizza slice, a chicken leg, and a bowl of soup) HAHAHAHAHA! #salicerose #hispanic #latina #food (emoji of a sad face then around 12 crying happy faces). This video was uploaded August 24, 2017.

g. https://www.instagram.com/p/BfbFvOxhggF/?taken-by=andreaespadatv

The third Latina analyzed was Andrea. Her bio reads: ANDREA ESPADA Comedy|| Proud Latina (the letters C & O in a box)|| Ferran's Mom (email emoji sign) ardreaespada.booking@gmail.com (hands pointing downward) Watch my new parody video (link attached). The post analyzed of Andrea was post February 20, 2018. It is captioned as: Competitive Girls "Be Like" (happy crying emoji and shocked emoji) (Tag A Girl Like This)

h. https://www.instagram.com/p/BYnwsjZBa4H/?taken-by=andreaespadatv

The second video analyzed by Andrea is captioned as: Dating a Latina. Salienda con una latina. W/ @marioruiz @erubeydeanda (old film camera emoji) @4kpapi (Space) Full Video On Facebook (link in bio) emoji of hand hold up one finger. This video was posted on September 4, 2017.

i. https://www.instagram.com/p/BftFLuqB-HP/?taken-by=andreaespadatv

The last post analyzed from Andrea was posted on February 28, 2018. The description reads: Trying To Talk To Latinas! (Happy crying emoji face and shocked face) w/ @twan @yolita.c #TeamDream

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