

2-9-2018

Border Culture, Mexican Identity, Class, and Media Consumption: A Look into “Fresa” High School Students

Melissa Analy Santillana

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rio.tamtu.edu/etds>

Recommended Citation

Santillana, Melissa Analy, "Border Culture, Mexican Identity, Class, and Media Consumption: A Look into “Fresa” High School Students" (2018). *Theses and Dissertations*. 36.
<https://rio.tamtu.edu/etds/36>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Research Information Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Research Information Online. For more information, please contact benjamin.rawlins@tamtu.edu, eva.hernandez@tamtu.edu, jhatcher@tamtu.edu, rhinojosa@tamtu.edu.

BORDER CULTURE, MEXICAN IDENTITY, CLASS, AND MEDIA CONSUMPTION:

A LOOK INTO “FRESA” HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Thesis

by

MELISSA SANTILLANA

Submitted to Texas A&M International University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2017

Major Subject: Communication

Border Culture, Mexican Identity, Class, And Media Consumption: A Look Into “Fresa”
High School Students

Copyright 2017 Melissa Santillana

BORDER CULTURE, MEXICAN IDENTITY, CLASS, AND MEDIA CONSUMPTION:
A LOOK INTO “FRESA” HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Thesis

by

MELISSA SANTILLANA

Submitted to Texas A&M International University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Approved as to style and content by:

Chair of Committee,	Stuart Davis, PhD
Committee Members,	Jose Carlos Lozano, PhD
	Joseph Straubhaar, PhD
	Andrew Hilburn, PhD
Head of Department,	Jose Carlos Lozano, PhD

May 2017

Major Subject: Communication

DEDICATION

Para mamá y papá por haberme dado todo.

ABSTRACT

BORDER CULTURE, MEXICAN IDENTITY, CLASS, AND MEDIA CONSUMPTION:

A LOOK INTO “FRESA” HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

(May 2017)

Melissa Santillana, Bachelor of Arts, Texas A&M International University;

Chair of Committee: Dr. Stuart Davis

The border strip between the south of the United States and the north of Mexico provide an excellent opportunity to study the effects of the flow of media productions from the United States to Mexico. Many communication theories have attempted to explain the reception of transnational media flows to Latin American countries. Scholars from the cultural imperialism camp argue that the flow of culture is unidirectional from capitalist or First World countries (mainly the United States) to developing countries (also know as the Global South); other theories claim there is an asymmetrical dependence between developed and underdeveloped countries (Fejes, 1981). However, recent arguments claim audiences tend to prefer content closely related to their own cultural values (Straubhaar, 1991). Audience research has concluded there is no evidence to support the loss of cultural identity in some Latin American countries and regions according to their media preference (Straubhaar, 1991 Lozano, 1992). Nonetheless, those studies have also found that regardless of the geographical or cultural proximity to the United States or Europe, upper and middle

class audiences tend to prefer to a certain degree US media content or international programming over domestic programming.

Combining those two theoretical propositions, the purpose of this study is to look at the media consumption preferences of high school students in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas and find a relation between the cultural products they consume, their sense of Mexican identity, and nationalism. Using both methodological approaches, quantitative and qualitative, a survey was conducted with students from three different private high schools in Nuevo Laredo and a total of 22 participants were interviewed in separate focus groups. One of the most important findings of this study is that upper-middle and upper class students from Nuevo Laredo are *not worried* about losing their Mexican identity as a consequence of continuous exposure to American media. It could be argued that they are more afraid of not being able to attain the best from what their privileged geographical location has to offer in terms of cultural capital. They recognize that one of the biggest advantages of living in the border with the United States is the ability to practice while learning English and to have access to American products.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Davis, and my committee members, Dr. Lozano, Dr. Straubhaar, and Dr. Hilburn for their guidance and expertise throughout the course of this research.

I would also like to thank my friends, classmates, and everyone in the department of Psychology and Communication for helping me in every way necessary to accomplish my goals.

Lastly, thanks to my family, my mother, father, and sister for supporting my and helping me in every step of the way, and to my husband for loving me and making sure the world didn't collapse around me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
LITERATURE REVIWEW.....	3
Cultural Proximity Debates in Latin America and on the US-Mexico Border.....	3
Cultural Proximity Debates in East Asia.....	8
A Cultural Studies Approach.....	11
Popular Cultures in Latin America.....	12
Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction in the Educational System.....	15
Taste and Habitus.....	19
Hybrid Cultures in the US-Mexico Border.....	24
Research Questions.....	30
METHODS.....	34
RESULTS.....	34
Survey Results.....	34
Focus Groups Results.....	69
DISCUSSION.....	114
CONCLUSION.....	128
REFERENCES.....	130

APPENDICES

1.	NAME OF EVERY TV SHOW MENTIONED BY EACH PARTICIPANT....	134
2.	NAME OF EVERY BAND OR ARTIST MENTIONED BY EACH PARTICIPANT.....	136
3.	SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	143
4.	FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE.....	148
	VITA.....	153

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Amount of Hours Spent Watching TV Frequencies.....	35
Table 2: School and Amount of Hours Spent Watching Television per Day Crosstabulation	35
Table 2.1: School and Amount of Hours Spent Watching Television per Day Crosstabulation TV Chi-Square Tests	36
Table 3: Cable, Dish, or Satellite TV.....	37
Table 4: Video Streaming Services.....	37
Table 5: Medium of Preference	39
Table 6: Crosstab Most Mentioned TV Shows, Gender, and School	40
Table 7: Most Mentioned Singer or Band.....	41
Table 8: Traditions Celebrated in the Border According to High School Students.....	43
Table 9: TV Shows and Name of School One Way Anova.....	45
Table 9.1: Multiple Comparisons Tukey Test	46
Table 10: TV Shows and Mexicanes in Comparison to Students in the Interior of Mexico One Way Anova	48
Table 11: TV Shows and Proud of Being Mexican One Way Anova	49
Table 12: Mexican Attitudes and Daily TV Exposure One Way Anova.....	50
Table 13: Mexican Attitudes and Name of School One Way Anova.....	52
Table 14: Mexican Attitudes and Gender One Way Anova	54
Table 15: Gender and Television Shows One Way Anova	55
Table 16: Music and Gender One Way Anova.....	55

Table 17: TV Shows by Origin and Knowledge of English Language One Way Anova	.56
Table 18: Mexican Attitudes and Knowledge of English Language One Way Anova	.....57
Table 19: Music Preference Statistic	.....59
Table 20: Music and Schools ANOVA	.....60
Table 21: Language and Music Preferences One Way Anova	.....61
Table 22: Music and Gender One Way Anova	.....62
Table 23: Music Preferences and Mexican Identity One Way Anova	.....63
Table 24: Music Preferences And Traditions One Way Anova	.....65
Table 25: Mexican Culture and Music One Way Anova	.....65
Table 26: Music and Mexicanness	.....66
Table 27: Visits to Laredo and Television Preferences One Way Anova	.....68
Table 28: Visits to Laredo and Music Preferences One Way Anova	.....69

INTRODUCTION

The border strip between the south of the United States and the north of Mexico provides an excellent opportunity to study the effects of the flow of media productions from the United States to Mexico. Many communication theories have attempted to explain the reception of transnational media flows to Latin American countries. Scholars from the cultural imperialism camp argue that the flow of culture is unidirectional from capitalist or First World countries (mainly the United States) to developing countries (also known as the Global South); other theories claim there is an asymmetrical dependence between developed and underdeveloped countries (Fejes, 1981). Among those who started looking at the transmissions of dominant media to Latin America is Armand Mattelart, a Belgian sociologist, who developed two research lines to approach transnational communication flows. The first uses political economy to study the corporations and business alliances that control the production of media. The second is inspired by the notions originated by the Frankfurt School and consists of developing extensive content analysis of media productions (Rodriguez and Murphy, 1997). Mattelart influenced a line of Latin American media scholars interested in looking at the political repercussions of media domination: “In other words, the conceptualization of communication and culture as ‘instruments’ of an economic infrastructure that determined all of social life was progressively replaced by theorizing communication and culture per se as arenas where the struggle for power, dominance, and hegemony also takes place” (Rodriguez, Murphy, 1997, p. 34).

This thesis follows the model of *International Communication Gazette*.

However, recent arguments claim audiences tend to prefer content closely related to their own cultural values (Straubhaar, 1991). Audience research has concluded there is no evidence to support the loss of cultural identity in some Latin American countries and regions according to their media preference (Straubhaar, 1991; Lozano, 1992). Nonetheless, those studies have also found that regardless of the geographical or cultural proximity to the United States or Europe, upper and middle class audiences tend to prefer to a certain degree US media content or international programming over domestic programming.

Combining those two theoretical propositions, the purpose of this study is to look at the media consumption preferences of high school students in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas and find a relation between the cultural products they consume, their sense of Mexican identity, nationalism, and patriotism. Audience research studies conducted by Jose Carlos Lozano in Mexico (1992, 2000, 2006) show that generally the most inclined to consume Mexican productions in TV and film are women, especially those from low-income families and low educational level. Likewise, the demographics that are most likely to reject Mexican productions and prefer American programming and film are men from high-income families and college educated. However, this study seeks to look at the media preferences of high school students from middle to high socio-economic status and see if cultural mediations such as gender and economic status prove to make significant differences in consumption patterns. It is possible that the rejection of national TV productions among upper-class citizens could be understood as rejection for “popular” culture and “distasteful” media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural Proximity Debates in Latin America and on the US-Mexico Border

Jose Carlos Lozano (1992) investigated media consumption patterns in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, a border city with Texas. Following the assumptions of media imperialism theories, Lozano suggests that if American culture dominates Latin America then Nuevo Laredo, a city that has easy and free access to English-speaking media, would display heavily pronounced patterns of domination. He contrasted the idea of media imperialism with the theory of cultural proximity, that “audiences will prefer to watch culture on television that is as close to their own as possible” (Sinclair and Straubhaar, 2013, p.2). After surveying and interviewing high school students from three social-economical levels: low socio-economic status, students in public schools with limited access to television sets and computers; middle socio-economic status, students with moderate access to televisions and computers; and high socio-economic status, students in private schools with unlimited access to television, cable or satellite and computers with Internet access. Lozano found that regardless of class, students still preferred national television programming over American shows. These results indicate that audiences use mediations that allow them to choose TV programming more in sync with their cultural identity.

It seems necessary to take as point of departure the possibility of border audiences reacting in a differentiated and complex way to US media messages. Instead of passive, easily manipulated individuals, border residents may actively participate in the reception process. They may expose selectively to specific media and programming, and may “negotiate” the meaning of cultural products, accepting some ideological values and rejecting others according to their socio-economic status, gender and other characteristics. (Lozano, 1992, p. 51)

However, although minimal, a trend between upper and upper-middle classes was found. Students with access to cable TV and a better knowledge of the English language tend to prefer American produced media: “Social class did not account for any difference in exposure to Mexican television programs, it did make a difference in exposure to US television between upper class and middle class students, the latter being heavy consumers of US television than the former” (Lozano, 1992, p. 69). The findings indicate that upper class audiences tend to prefer American or international media more frequently than middle and lower middle classes does not support the idea behind cultural discount, the idea that “if the culture reflected in a television show or film is too different in values, ideas [...] from what an audience is used to, they will tend to reject it or discount it” (Sinclair, Straubhaar, 2013, p. 2). However, upper class students, due to their class, education, and “cultural proximity” to the United States do not see the values and ideas in American media texts too different. Yet, foreign media preferences among upper and upper-middle classes might not necessarily mean cultural identity and national identity are diluted among the members of these audiences. However, it does point to the hypothesis that mediations such as gender and educational level play an important role in media preferences.

Subsequent research about Mexican audiences has also found that gender and socio-economic status play an important role in the consumption of newscasts in Mexico. Lozano (2000) conducted a study in the three biggest cities in Mexico, Guadalajara, Monterrey and Mexico City and found that low-income women tend to prefer local news than national or international and that upper and middle class men prefer international than local news: “Social class has been seen by a great number of researchers as one of the most important factors or mediations that generate differences in consumption and appropriation of mass

media messages” (Lozano, 2000 p. 260). Hence, the findings reinforced the idea that gender and economic capital play an important role defining media preferences.

In the first study to mobilize the concept of cultural proximity, Joseph Straubhaar (1991) researched media preferences in Brazil and the Dominican Republic using as mediation the level of education. Straubhaar found that in Brazil university level audiences have significant preferences for both American and Brazilian rock music, international films, and local news. In the Dominican Republic audiences with a higher-level of education preferred American films and documentaries significantly more than less educated audiences. In both countries the highly educated audiences rejected Mexican (or regional) films, *telenovelas* and comedy, whereas lower educated audiences preferred that type of content. Nonetheless, when it came to locally produced media both Dominican and Brazilian highly educated audiences prefer political debates, news, and political advertising. Both Lozano and Straubhaar attributed their findings related to upper classes media preferences to Pierre Bourdieu’s work on the formation and maintenance of cultural capital: “The different standings in relation to the consumption of local and national/international media confirm Bourdieu’s comments about consumption as a status issue, as a distinction between social groups, and as a capacity for use and understanding of certain codes and conventions” (Lozano, 2000, p. 270). The preference for Mexican popular productions in different regions of Latin America is mostly distributed among lower-educated audiences: “Regional programs, particularly Mexican comedies and *telenovelas*, are also notably more popular with less educated, lower-class audiences, as suggested by the foregoing discussion of class divisions in audiences’ taste” (Straubhaar, 1991, p. 54).

According to Lozano (2006) empirical reception studies are very scarce in Mexico and Latin America. In particular, empirical research on consumption patterns and appropriation of foreign movies and TV shows are practically non-existent: “Studies looking at the diagnosis of American TV in Mexico have found a very significant counter offer with locally produced content” (Lozano, 2006, p.68). He argues that many studies in Latin America proclaim the subtle and complex forms in which audiences, according to their social and cultural mediations, or to their social and demographical characteristics have escaped the potential manipulative effect of media. Yet, the few audience studies made in Latin America generally discuss reception or consumption of *telenovelas* and news media without considering the wide range of genres (Lozano & Frankenberg, 2009). Lozano claims that research about media preferences in Latin America for the past 15 years has centered around cultural proximity and that studies in countries like Venezuela, Brazil, Dominican Republic and Colombia support the idea behind cultural proximity. However, all studies conclude some mediations do tend to alter media preferences.

However, cultural proximity is not uniform among audiences of one single country. Variables like social class generate important differences regarding the preference that different groups have about a particular program. Audiences that share the same language and or culture seem to be fragmented by economic capital and cultural capital like Bourdieu argued. Economic capital allows elite audiences access channels only available in cable TV, not available to popular classes. (Lozano, 2006, p. 69)

In a similar vein, Vicki Mayer (2003) conducted a case study of a media production after-school class in San Antonio, Texas (SACA). In the study she follows the media preferences of a group of Mexican American teenagers and their patterns of consumption. According to Mayer the participants are avid consumers of mass media including Spanish *telenovelas*, and pop music. From this study the author concludes that Mexican American teenagers see their

consumption of traditional Spanish television and music as a connection to their roots and as a way to identify with Mexican culture: “For Mexicans living in the United States, *telenovelas* were a way to connect to women of all ages on both sides of the border, though these networks were maintained privately through relatives and close friends” (Mayer, 2003, p.132). For the participants of this study the act of watching *telenovelas* was more ritualistic, private and usually reserved for the female members of the family; the men that were allowed to participate in this ritual had to keep quiet or leave. Female participants responded that watching *telenovelas* was a way to stay connected to their family in Mexico since they talked about the plot and characters over the phone or during family vacations.

Mexican American girls’ media preferences reflected deeply personal negotiations over cultural identity in a social space largely ignored by mass media producers. Marked by their gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, the participants I met through SACA were off the radar screen of the multinational corporations that created and distributed media with a far more affluent, and often whiter, consumer in mind. When they consumed the global text, they countered themselves as members of a much larger community of consumers. (Mayer, 2003, p. 131)

SACA’s case study demonstrates that at least for Mexican-American teenage girls in their media consumption preferences, pop music serves more as a link to the future and modernity, where *telenovelas* were the link to their past and the traditions they share with their relatives still living in Mexico. Mayer’s conclusions reflect what Lozano argues is one of the reasons why Mexican border audiences would not lose their national and cultural identity just for having readily access to American media: “If Latinos living in the interior of the United States are able to maintain their traditional cultural traits when their community is large and when Hispanic media is available, Mexican border residents may well have stronger possibilities of keeping their cultural identity intact despite the geographical proximity with

the United States. Mexican media is widely available and of course the vast majority of the total population is Mexican” (Lozano, 1992 p.23).

Mayer also indicates that while working with Latino youth, she found that media preferences tend to change depending on different interpretations and have a significant contribution to the participant’s identity and social reality. “Media reception is more than just an aggregation of readings based on gender, ethnicity, and class; it is also a dynamic process of interpretations within structural limits” (Mayer, 2003 p. 120).

Cultural Proximity Debates in East Asia

The concept of cultural proximity is not something exclusive of Latin America. It has been explored extensively in the regional markets of East Asia (Iwabuchi, 2001, 2002, 2004), making a stronger case for its validity across different regions and languages. Iwabuchi has concentrated much of his research on understanding the cultural power of Japanese media productions in the region, especially in Hong Kong and Taiwan. The scholar argues the popularity of Japanese cultural goods in East Asia since the 1980s has been mainly in part because Japan has proven useful producing “odorless” products, in the sense that media created in Japan does not strictly reflect Japanese lifestyle. For instance, technologies, pop stars and animation “do not seek to sell on the back of a Japanese way of life” (Featherstone, 1996, p. 9). Yet, recent popularity of Japanese TV shows in Taiwan, and eagerness to learn Japanese language by young people in Hong Kong seem to indicate a strong preference for cultural products from Japan by regional markets. Iwabuchi (2001) indicates this preference in Taiwan for Japanese TV dramas has little to do with Japanese traditional culture and more with Japanese modernity.

Unlike traditional culture, by which the irreducible difference of one culture from others tends to be emphasized, popular culture, though highly commercialized,

reminds Japan and 'Asia' alike of cultural similarities, a sense of living in the shared time and common experience of a certain (post)modernity which cannot be represented well by American popular culture. The ascent of Japanese dramas is closely associated with the scent of a modernity in Asia that Japanese dramas embody. (p. 56)

Iwabuchi (2001) explains that Taiwan's fascination for Japanese media products has to do with cultural and racial similarities. Although the countries do not share a language, like in the case of most of Latin American countries, the region does share other elements like "religion, dress, music, nonverbal codes, humor, story pacing and ethnic types, which all play their parts in making programs acceptable" (p. 56). Moreover, the author suggests other economic factors play a major role in the increasingly consumption of Japanese TV in Taiwan, such as the development of media industries, especially cable TV, allowing bigger audiences access to Japanese television.

Similarly, Yu, Takata and Dryland (2012) studied the importance of cultural proximity, and Japanese language in Hong Kong. The authors argue that the salience of Japanese cultural productions in Hong Kong has resulted in higher levels of Japanese speaking in the region. Drawing from the international attention to Japan's cultural products and popular culture since the 1980s, the authors claim Japanese culture has an important role in international cultural flows specifically in East Asian regions such as South Korea, Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan. In "Cultural Attraction, 'Soft Power' and Proximity: The Popularity of Japanese Language in Hong King Since 1980s", Yu et al., argue that young people in Hong Kong are eager to learn Japanese in order to better understand Japan's cultural products and enjoy what Japanese media has to offer. Japan's TV shows, music, and pop stars are incredibly popular in Hong Kong's youth populations. In surveys conducted in 2004 (Leung, M., Miyazoe-Wong, Y. & Li, W.) middle school students in Hong Kong

mentioned interest in learning Japanese language as a result of their fondness for Japanese songs, comics and animations. “Once having gained an introduction to all things Japanese through popular culture, the intrinsic value of learning the language- and their curiosity regarding Japan- stimulates them to learn more about the Japanese language, Japanese society and the country’s cultural mores” (Yu, et al., 2012, p. 323). Following cultural proximity definition, Yu et al., identify that it is not only Japanese popular culture and products that make Japanese language so important for young Hong Kong audiences, but also “the fact that the Chinese and Japanese cultures share a common heritage” (p. 329) that includes religion, values, and traditions.

The popular cartoon Pokemon (and abbreviated form of ‘Pocket Monsters’) provides an excellent example of the traditional Japanese values of responsibility, empathy, cooperation, obedience, respect for the elders and humility, all of which are also deeply rooted in Chinese society (Strom 1999). In addition, the Chinese and Japanese people’s aesthetic values vis-à-vis natural and cultural landscapes, housing, garden design, clothing, painting, decoration, and personal outlooks show marked similarities. As for food cultures, both Chinese and Japanese people show a preference for tea, rice and noodle products as their daily diet rather than Western-style dishes. (p. 329)

In that sense, Iwabuchi (2002) claims that Japanese products give the impression of cultural local intimacy, as contrasted to the bigger distance in culture that American or Western media productions offer to East Asian audiences. Hence, adhering to the preference for Japanese cultural products in the region to cultural proximity preferences. However, he has criticized the empirical validity of cultural proximity indicating that it leaves little room to investigate other key factors that might have an influence on the creation of geo-linguistic and geo-cultural regional TV markets (Iwabuchi, 2001). The author argues one of the most forgotten components in discussions on the validity of cultural proximity is the historical context of each particular region: “The study of cultural proximity, I would argue, risks [...]

the problem of seeing culture/civilization as a static and essentialized attribute, since its analysis tends to be based upon the assumption that existence of some essential cultural similarities automatically urges the audience to be attracted to media texts of culturally proximate regions without considering historical contexts or internal differences within cultural formations” (p. 57).

According to Iwabuchi (2001) cultural similarities are useful to prove general trends that can explain audience preferences for certain TV programming, but until now, cultural proximity has not been able to dissect why some television shows have better reception than others: “What sort of pleasure, if any, audiences find in identifying cultural proximity in a particular program” (p. 57). Iwabuchi suggests revising historical conjunctions where cultural proximity is associated with audience preferences for cultural products in order “to make sense of how audiences’ experience of cultural similarity” (p. 58).

A Cultural Studies Approach

Media preferences among upper and upper-middle class in Latin American countries should not be understood as an example of cultural domination through American media. Many of the upper class citizens that prefer American TV, films, and music also demonstrate a very strong and proud connection to their national culture (Lozano, 1992). Therefore, the more subtle and negotiated version of audience research in cultural studies might serve as a better option than didactic theories of cultural imperialism to understand media reception in Latin America. The rejection of national TV productions among upper-class citizens could be understood as rejection for “popular” culture and “distasteful” media.

Next I will discuss the theories and major scholars that have written about Latin America and popular culture.

Popular Cultures in Latin America

The study of popular culture in Latin America was highly influenced by two main concepts. On the one hand, Latin American media scholars have been working with Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony since the 70s –defined as a subtle means of domination– to explain ideological control and oppression. On the other hand, Michael Bakhtin's notion of the carnival has also been widely used to look at popular culture's counter-hegemonic practices (Rodriguez and Murphy, 1997). Borrowing from Antonio Gramsci, researchers interested in looking at popular culture placed their interest in the institutions in charge of disseminating hegemonic messages, more specifically the mass media. Latin American scholars argue that “social orders are maintained not only through processes of domination and exploitation, but also by the dynamics of shaping and molding the powerless concept of reality through cultural institutions” (Rodriguez and Murphy, 1997, p. 35). On the other end of the spectrum, texts like *Rabelais and His World* (Bahktin, 1968) were used to explain opposing reactions to dominant culture. Concepts such as laughter, creative play, humor, and parody are used to discuss cultural practices that would act as “mechanisms of opposition and as a means to challenge authority” (Rodriguez and Murphy, 1997, p. 35). Nonetheless, study of popular cultures in Latin America, as stated in *The Study of Communication and Culture in Latin America* (Rodriguez and Murphy, 1997) not only involves views on economic dependency and cultural imperialism, but the study of how audiences accept or reject media messages based on lived experiences (Martin Barbero, 1987).

When discussing popular cultures, Argentinian cultural critic Beatriz Sarlo (2001) claims that with the advent of television to practically every single sector of society, the popular sectors are not longer confined to their physical space in their marginalized neighborhoods. Marginalized communities use the media to “hear what is going on the city” (p. 88) and learn about cosmopolitan practices and lifestyles. She claims popular cultures have changed over time, some of the changes are that they no “longer exist in a state of purity”, and they no “no longer listen to traditional authorities”. As a result of the exposure to mass media, popular cultures have come in contact with different social sectors that they otherwise wouldn’t have access to. Sarlo indicates that television has united all fractions and subcultures on a national and international level, connecting all audiences to a single national message depending on the different cultural industries of every country. In addition, she claims the school system no longer works against the construction of a common imaginary community produced by the mass media. Media culture seems to project a “society of equals”, where everyone has at their disposal a diverse range of cultural goods and all audience get to assimilate them equally: “We can all feel that there is something of us in the media and, at the same time, we can all fantasize that we can appropriate and make use of that the media offer us” (p. 91). However, inadvertently, according to Sarlo, mass media is restructuring all the aspects that shape social identity: “Everyone [...] finds in the media a culture that seems to fit comfortably and, we are led to believe, offers to satisfy our tastes and desires. This imaginary consumption reorganizes the ways in which popular sectors relate to their own experience, to politics, to language, to the market, and to conceptions of ideal beauty and health” (p. 91).

According to Sarlo, mass media has worked to unify cultures and identities, yet there is only one real impediment to the ultimate cultural homogenization: inequality. Economic disparities are the most effective detractor in a society of imaginary equals, where everyone desires to possess the same things, but no everyone has the means to acquire those things. “Ideology constitutes us as universal consumers without regard for the fact that there are millions who are only imaginary consumers” (p. 94). She claims that the sense of exclusivity that arises from a consumerist society has debilitated what once were strong identities attached to symbolic goods. However, in this regard, mass media is also working to determine legitimization, and elites are “no longer [able to] legislate about taste with their accustomed haughty independence because there are other centers of legitimation dictating the way things should be” (p. 94).

Additionally, Sarlo mentions that besides from debilitating traditional popular cultures and identities, mass media is also weakening the power the school system had to distribute knowledge and skills that used to define popular cultures. She states there was a time when popular cultures were strictly defined with clear limits, but these limits have been blurred both for popular cultures as for elites. One of the clearest examples of these vague lines between the popular and the elite is found in language. “The case of spoken language is particularly significant. For decades, speaking language ‘correctly’ was one of the school’s ideals; now the school is not in a position to transmit any ideal whatsoever” (p. 96). Sarlo indicates there is a homogenization of linguistic styles that dominates over class, social status and profession. The unreachable cultural elements that were used as a determinant of distinction are somehow obsolete, since now the vast majority of cultural elements are available to everyone: “Being distinguished for fluently speaking a foreign language is no the

same as being distinguished for having bought the latest Guns N Roses compact disc... The market's symbolism, equally accessible to all, tends to cancel out symbolism pertaining to the old regime of domination based upon difference and upon setting unsurpassable limits" (p. 96).

Sarlo talks about claims that the school system perhaps was not prepared to face the arrival of mass media. Specially in Latin America, where public school is the "site of symbolic poverty", and educators "compete against mass media that have almost complete coverage of the national territory and to which access is either free or relatively inexpensive" (p. 98). Furthermore, the school system used to bestow on young minds the symbolic goods that will later on constitute popular cultures. The school used to be a place of prestige and symbolic wealth, particularly for the popular sectors. "Today [the school] achieve(s) forms of hybridization between popular cultures and media culture" (p. 103). When discussing popular cultures, Sarlo warns to avoid idealizing uncontaminated cultures, or cultures that were only dominated by the elite, she claims there is no such thing as a pure culture. There has always been some permeation of traditions and rituals from one culture to another. However, the author indicates that the market, mainly through mass media, is now in charge of the mixing of identities and hybrid cultures: "So long as the capitalist market remains in charge of cultural policy, the processes of hybridization among old traditions, everyday experiences, ever more complex new knowledges, and media products will find that the market constitutes their true planning ministry" (p. 105).

Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction in the Educational System

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977) established there is a relation between the reproduction of cultural and social capital and the educational system, he noted that the role

of the sociology of education is to understand “the relations between cultural reproduction and social reproduction”. Bourdieu claims the educational system provides the tools and settings to perpetuate power relations among the different socio-economic classes. This assures the state institution does not work as a leveling field for all students regardless of socio-economic background. Thus, public institutions that should provide all students the same tools for success actually work to preserve social inequalities:

Among all the solutions put forward throughout history the problem of the transmission of power and privileges, there surely does not exist one that is better concealed, and therefore better adapted to societies which tend to refuse the most patent forms of the hereditary transmission of power and privileges, than that solution which the educational system provides by contributing to the reproduction of the structures of class relations and by concealing, by an apparently neutral attitude, the fact that it fills this function. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 57)

In order to further understand the tendencies, structures, practices, and rituals that contribute to the repetition of social structures, Bourdieu turns to the study of the habitus, “a system of dispositions, which acts as a mediation between structures and practice” (p. 56). He explains that this system of dispositions is attached to social and cultural background and each class or class fraction has a different form of habitus specific to their social and economic status.

Bourdieu criticizes ethnologists that base their theories on the classical assumption that the pedagogic actions conducted by the families from different social classes are the main actors in the transmission of cultural heritage, because it diminishes the function the educational system has in reproducing and perpetrating cultural capital. According to Bourdieu, simple rituals like attending a play, an opera concert, or visiting museums provide proof of how cultural capital, although in theory available to everyone, is inherited generation on generation from “those endowed with the means of appropriating it for themselves”.

Bourdieu states that those with right socio-economic background have foster social relations

and education throughout their entire life that will in turn grant them first-row seats to the acquisition of high culture: “In view of the fact that the apprehension and possession of cultural goods as symbolic satisfactions which accompany and appropriation of this kind, are possible only for those who hold the code making it possible to decipher them or, in other words, that the appropriation of symbolic goods presupposes the possession of the instruments of appropriation” (p. 57).

According to Bourdieu, the problem for students from lower social strata is that the educational system only seems to reproduce the culture of the dominant classes while it relies on families to impose the inculcation of cultural and social capital. He uses the term “substantialist atomism” to define the way structuralists of the social sciences “conceal the structural and relational conditions that generate inequality, injustice and marginalization. The person is treated as a detached atom—undoubtedly with attributes of gender, class, ethnicity” (Baker, Lynch, Cantillon, & Walsh, 2009, p. 171). Bourdieu (1977) insists that when pedagogy is designed to inculcate the dominant culture, not every student will have the opportunity or the means to receive the cultural transmission: “The appropriation of the proposed culture depends upon the previous possession of the instruments of appropriation, to the extent and only to the extent that it explicitly and deliberately hand over [...] those instruments which are indispensable to the success of the communication” (p.58). However, those indispensable instruments are unequally distributed among the students from different socio-economic background.

An institution officially entrusted with the transmission of the instrument of appropriation of the dominant culture which neglects methodically to transmit the instruments indispensable to the success of its undertaking is bound to become the monopoly of those social classes capable of transmitting by their own means that is to say that diffuse and implicit continuous educational action which operates within cultured families (often unknown to those responsible for it and to those who are

subjected to it), the instruments necessary for the reception of its message, and thereby to confirm their monopoly of the instruments of appropriation of the dominant culture and this their monopoly of that culture. (p. 58)

The most valued cultural inheritance the dominant social classes can transmit to younger generations is linguistic and cultural competence, since according to Bourdieu, elegance, naturalness, and distinction on those competences have the most value in the educational system. This linguistic/culture competence creates substantial barriers for those who have not had these values transmitted from previous generations. In order for students to achieve these competences, they need to have the tools necessary to appropriate and acquire these dispositions. Bourdieu claims the existence a sort of “setting-up for failure” kind of system in which the students will see this impossible to attain cultural and linguistic abilities and will end up rejecting schooling or obtain a negative attitude towards it. He calls this phenomenon a system of “self-elimination” for young people from lower socio-cultural backgrounds. Bourdieu argues that by converting social abilities that are only attainable through generational transmission into academic abilities educational institutions legitimate the “social order” and its ability to keep reproducing the same kind of power relations among social classes.

Furthermore, Bourdieu argues that it is through the educational system that the dominant classes are able not only of transmitting economic capital, but social capital. The dominant classes (including the middle classes) have better access to cultural capital that they use to secure an exemplary education and subsequently better career opportunities through social relations that were acquired during formative years: “The most culturally privileged find their way into institutions capable of reinforcing their advantage” (1977, p. 61). Therefore, utilizing the educational system to further perpetuate their privileged social

condition. However, the level of economic capital possessed by an individual is not directly related to their level of cultural capital: “The structure of the distribution of economic capital is symmetric and opposite to the structure of the distribution of cultural capital” (1977, p. 64). In a list of professions designed by Bourdieu to rank cultural capital, economic capital, and social capital, the ones who hold the most economic power are heads of industry and commerce, professionals, managers, engineers, and lastly, civil servants and teachers. From this list, Bourdieu (1984) would later establish that it is teachers who have the most cultural capital among the other professions: “Those sections which are richest in cultural capital are more inclined to invest in their children’s education at the same time as in cultural practices liable to maintain and increase their specific rarity; those sections which are richest in economic capital set aside cultural and educational investments to the benefit of economic investments” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 64).

In spite of that, the effectiveness of the educational system by the less dominant classes is still attached to how much social capital they have gained through their academic formation. According to Bourdieu, from two people with the same academic background but with different social, economic and cultural background, the one better connected through social relations is more likely to succeed. To obtain a well-connected network of social relations, one must also take part in sports, such as golf or tennis, and have refined tastes which are only acquired through acculturation in high society: “The habitus inculcated by upper-class families gives rise to practices which [...] are extremely profitable to the extent that they make possible the acquisition of the maximum yield of academic qualifications” (1977, p. 67), something that is many times expressed on something so arbitrary as “the right

presentation”. In other words, academic qualifications are only valuable with the right social and cultural capital.

Taste and Habitus

In *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1984), Bourdieu analyzes French society of the 1960s according to a set of competing class fractions. He theorizes that the class fractions with higher levels of cultural capital are the ones establishing behaviors, aesthetics, and consumptive practices that are in good taste as well as what is in bad taste (the popular and vulgar). To do so, he begins with a basic definition of taste in relation to the act of eating: “The dual meaning of the word ‘taste’ (...) must serve, for once, to remind us that taste in the sense of the ‘faculty of immediately and intuitively judging aesthetic values’ is inseparable from taste in the sense of the capacity to discern the flavors of foods which implies a preference for some of them” (1984, p. 99).

Bourdieu argues that there is a sort of competition for the consumption of legitimate cultural products as well as for refined cultural practices. This includes preferences for certain types of music, food, sports, literature and even hairstyles among different class fractions. Bourdieu argues that it is through taste and the consumption of certain products that different social class fractions develop a sense of identity. “The habitus enables an intelligible and necessary relation to be established between practices and a situation” (1984, p. 101). The habitus, as claimed by Bourdieu, is a set of actions shaped in a structural manner used to demonstrate agency and at the same time reproduce a social structure “observable in a social condition”.

The differentiation between different types of class habitus is achieved through the concept of taste. Bourdieu defines taste as “the propensity and capacity to appropriate

(materially or symbolically) a given class of classified, classifying objects or practices” (1984, p. 174). Taste is what produces lifestyles, the preferences for particular social rituals, which are not only limited to external or material factors, but also to body language. Taste is “a systematic expression” for individuals pertaining to the dominant social classes to express and manifest their differences between lesser class fractions. It acts as a system of classification that “generates the set of ‘choices’” that define life-styles, in which, the rarest choices and practices, those which are not available to everyone are the most distinguished. According to Bourdieu, taste is mainly associated with high culture. So it is often forgotten that there is such thing as taste of necessity, and not necessary a “direct product of economic necessity”. In the case of taste out of necessity, he claims taste is “amor fati” love for one’s destiny, and fondness for what is available. For the individuals from the poor class fractions, he argues, taste is “a forced choice, produced by conditions of existence which rule out all alternatives as mere daydreams and leave no choice but the taste for the necessary” (1984, p. 178). The taste of necessity is a negation, a lack of lifestyle, and a restriction of not taking part in exclusive rituals. While the richest fractions spend less on food and tend to prefer leaner and fresher dishes, such as vegetables and fruits. Poorest class fractions also spend less on appearance and beauty. “The art of eating and drinking remains one of the few areas in which working classes explicitly challenge the legitimate art of living” (1984, p. 179).

The spaces defined by preferences in food, clothing or cosmetics are organized according to the same fundamental structure that of the social space determined by volume and composition of capital. Fully to construct the space of life-styles within which cultural practices are defined, one would first have to establish, for each class and class fraction, that is, for each of the configurations of capital, the generative formula of the habitus which translates the necessities and facilities characteristic of that class of (relatively) homogenous conditions of existence into a particular life-style. (1984, p. 208)

According to Bourdieu, the distinction between the taste of luxury and the taste of necessity comes from opposition: “Within the dominant class, one can, for the sake of simplicity, distinguish three structures of the consumption distributed under three items: food, culture, and presentation” (1984, p. 184). The composition and amount of cultural and social capital define the habitus, which in turn define the preference in food, clothing, and cosmetics, in other words, the habitus defines the proper style for each class fraction.

Individuals from a certain socio-economic class are organized according to cultural preferences. Even among the same class, class fractions are formed according to different demographics and life-style conditions: “A class or a class fraction is defined not only by its position in the relations of production, as identified through indices such as occupation, income or even educational level, but also by a certain sex-ratio, a certain distribution in geographical space and by a whole set of subsidiary characteristics which may function, (...) as real principles of selection or exclusion without ever being formally stated” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 102).

Additionally, other elements either innate or inherited also contribute to the separation into class fractions, such as gender in the educational system. According to Bourdieu, boys are usually more inclined into sciences, and girls to literature. Another direct effect on culture is place of residency, geographical proximity to a metropolis or state capital where there are more opportunities and access to cultural events also adds or decreases cultural capital. Therefore, social class is not defined by one single parameter such as economic power, but the right combination of positions in different strata: “Social class (is defined by) the structure of relations between all the pertinent properties which gives its specific value to each of them and to the effects they exert on practices” (1984, p. 106).

Bourdieu claims that divisions between the classes are formed by the summative total amount of capital including its economic, social, and cultural forms. Those who have a professional career often come from the privileged socio-economic classes and use their economic power to perpetuate their social status through consumption of cultural goods. In opposition to them, members of the working class, spend most of their time and economic power on food and car/home maintenance. Bourdieu maintains that those class fractions which hold the most cultural capital tend to invest in education to assure their children will also benefit from having a rich cultural background. In contrast, the fractions richest in economic power dedicate their capital to ensure the transmission in economic power to the next generations. Moreover, he claims that professionals such as attorneys and doctors that usually have high cultural and economic capital invest their time in “cultural practices which symbolize possession of the material and cultural means of maintaining a bourgeois life-style and which provide a social capital, a capital of social connections, honorability and respectability” (1984, p. 122). In order to continue the divisions among class fractions, the habitus plays the role of a “system of classifications”. The habitus has the capacity to create a differentiated structure of actions and practices that translate into the development of taste and lifestyles: “Different conditions of existence produce different habitus” (1984, p. 170). This means that the socio-economic condition of any given individual will result in preference of different tastes: “The habitus is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes, which organizes the perception of the social world, is itself the product of internalization of the division into social classes” (1984, p. 170).

Additionally, Bourdieu establishes that each type of social class is always trying to define itself while at the same time defining the other class fractions. In other words, members of certain classes identify themselves in opposition to members of other classes. He argues: “Social identity is defined and asserted through difference” (1984, p. 172). It is by means of the habitus that a class occupies a certain position in the social structure and reinforces that position. Individuals attach meaning to the practices and cultural products they consume in order to reinforce their socio-economic status. So, acquiring a certain taste for perfumes, wines, foods, cars, clothes, and other cultural goods is another way to manifest distinction from the other social fractions: “The practices of the same agent, and, more generally, the practices of all agents of the same class, owe the stylistic affinity which makes each of them a metaphor of any of the other to the fact that they are the product of transfers of the same schemes of action from one field to another” (1984, p. 173).

Hybrid Cultures in the US-Mexico Border

The US-Mexico border is the territory of 1,989 miles dividing the North of Mexico and the South of the United States. There are 48 ports of entry in the border of the United States with Mexico, and according to the Texas Department of Transportation, in 2015 alone 17,415,874 people used the pedestrian bridges to visit the United States through Texas. Border residents share culture, food, traditions, and in some cases even language (*Spanglish*, or code switching from English to Spanish) from both countries. These kinds of interactions between the two countries and cultures have been subject of study for sociologist and media scholars (Gimenez, 2007; Lozano, 1992, 2000, 2006; Bustamante, 1991; Gonzalez, 2006). The US-Mexico border is often used by academics as an example of a territory where two cultures collide. Many dispute the effects and dynamics of culture and interactions between

the Mexican culture and the American way of life. The sister cities along the border share many commercial and trade advantages, as well as similar security and violence issues, health issues, and climatological weather conditions. In the same way, sister border cities share a population of residents that: “From a sociocultural point of view, the [US-Mexico] border [...] can be considered as a zone of intensification and under intensification of human mobility, not only internationally, but interethnic, which implies a multiplication of intercultural contacts and interactions” (Gimenez, 2007, p. 185).

When discussing the US-Mexico border Gilberto Gimenez, a Mexican sociologist who has worked extensively on identity and culture, argues that scholars like Garcia Canclini are overemphasizing metaphors about fluidity, fusion, and hybridity to describe the border culture, and *postmodern culture* –the notion of finding identity through consumption. He argues the border is just like any other metropolitan area.

We can see how the youngsters change their fashion from one day to another, their religious affiliation, the singers, and favorite bands, the “hit-parades”, the sex symbols, the sports heroes, the political preferences, the consumption patterns [...] Can we not see young Mexicans and Americans colorfully intermingled in Tijuana’s night clubs? Who hasn’t seen the typical border mixture that combines English and Spanish in billboards, whisky and tequila, heavy rock and “banda” music, hamburgers and enchiladas, shopping malls and mercados, the Super Bowl and Mexican soccer classic America-Guadalajara, Halloween and the Day of the Death, Madonna and the Virgin of Guadalupe? This evidently concludes: border culture is a fluid, hybrid and mestizo culture, a mix of Mexican-ness and the American way of life. (Gimenez, 2007, p. 177)

Except there are some opposing views to the concept of cultural hybridity, at least according to Gimenez, the argument presented above reflects a “poor theoretical and analytical reflection”. He claims the postmodern view about culture forcefully concludes there was a time when different cultures did not interact with each other, and there were always pure and distinct. Moreover, Gimenez wonders how is that argument valid when talking about the

interiorization of culture. The interiorization of culture, as defined by Gimenez, are socially shared representations, cognitive schemes, ideology, attitudes, beliefs, as well as the stock of knowledge of a certain social group. This concept refers to the internalized forms of culture, and the place social actors give to selective meanings and symbols. Borrowing from Bourdieu's notion of habitus, Gimenez studies the interiorization of culture to find subjective schemes of perceptions that are not necessarily present in cultural practices and rituals, or what the author calls *objectified forms of culture*: Culture appears here as an 'out there' reality, like a fluid and soluble substance that has the property of mixing with other substances of different origins, or, as a torrent disorderly dragging artifacts, products and objects of consumption from the most diverse species, all that independently from the subjectivity and experience of the social subjects (individuals and collectives) who appear to only have an exterior relation with culture" (Gimenez, 2007, p. 178).

He further claims that is precisely why Garcia Canclini, and others only use examples to demonstrate hybridity in the arts, literature, music, crafts, ignoring everything that is related to the interiorized relations and cognitive schemas such as values and social representations. Instead, Gimenez argues that each culture is situated in a certain historical and social context, what appears as hybridity finds a "significant configuration" once is defined within certain aspects of identity. He uses the subcultures of "cholos" and punks from Tijuana (two types that Garcia Canclini claims represent a "deterritorialized" intercultural border hybridity) manifested in their consumption of music and fashion styles. In doing this, Gimenez established Garcia Canclini is giving a poor interpretation to what youth subcultures mean.

But when Jose Manuel Valenzuela Arce (1988) refers to the same phenomenon as a space of identity clearly territorialized, and says, for instance, that 'choloismo' is the

expression of a subculture of the youth in the popular neighborhoods of Los Angeles between young men of Mexican descent, which then extended to the neighborhoods of these border cities following the route of migrant Mexican workers; and that this subculture imports Mexican and Chicano symbols from the United States (hybridity!) as an affirmation of their identity and as an expression of cultural resistance, he is giving us his deep interpretation in a global sense acquired by a young cultural-identity in a specific historical and socially structured context. (Gimenez, 2007, p. 180)

The overall claim Gimenez makes about hybridity is that actual operating culture based on social experiences and interactions is not a mix of cultures, but instead different cultures acting at the same time. During this process subjects choose what elements of culture they wish to adapt into their lives: “The problem with border culture is not hybridity or fusion, but how and with what effects are individuals provided with determined networks of social belonging and through their determined cultural repertoires. What we see in the border is not a ‘kaleidoscope of hybrid cultures’ (...) but the co-presence of multiple cultures and the multiplication of intercultural contacts” (Gimenez, 2007, p. 181).

Moreover, Gimenez states it is impossible to talk about hybrid cultures as a new phenomenon byproduct of globalization or modernity, since cultures have always been hybrids. But more importantly, the author warns about confusing a co-presence of cultures with hybridity, noting that although individuals interact with another culture on a daily basis or implement some aspects of this culture in their daily life, that does not mean they feel they belong to it, or that the culture represents their values, and identity: “The hybridization of cultures in the sense of the diversity of the origin of its components it is not a novelty nor it constitutes a problem. All cultures, including the traditional, are and have been hybrids in this sense, like all languages are and have been creole” (Gimenez, 2007, p. 181).

In “Cultura, Identidad y Memoria: Materiales para una sociología de los procesos culturales en las franjas fronterizas” (2009) Gimenez presents a theoretical proposal

regarding the understanding of culture, identity and memory and how these three factors are key to differentiate individual and collective identities and cultures. The author keeps using the US-Mexico border as the scenario where two different national identities and cultures interplay and remain in contact. Here Gimenez uses the term “multiterritoriality” to reject Garcia Canclini’s affirmation that borders are “scenes without territory.” The author claims borders are the place for multiple territories where cultures from diverse origins coexist. Gimenez states that the border regions are the places of the exasperated identities in conflict, where dominant identities fight to keep their hegemony unquestionable, while the subaltern identities fight for social recognition.

This theoretical proposition is important because it challenges other widely accepted concepts like the idea that border regions are “transnational spaces” where the state has lost control over the cultural dynamics of their residents. In these “transnational spaces” identities are unstable and are in a permanent process of negotiation. Scholars like Gloria Anzaldua (1987), and Garcia Canclini (1995, 2001) have claimed that border regions are spaces where culture is hybridized and made permeable: “The problem with the border culture is reduced to determine which are the effects, modifications or transformations that result, in the cultural terrain, from this intensified mobility that has led to an unheard multiplication of contacts between subjects modeled with different cultural traditions” (Gimenez, 2007, p. 186).

Gimenez states that people living in border regions are not like atoms “deprived of culture” bouncing from one side to the other and colliding among themselves, border residents carry their ethnicity and patriotism in their daily interactions. He further indicates that the problem in the border is a “problem of acculturation”, which he defines as “a process of cultural changes as the result of contacts between groups of different cultures” (2007, p.

186). Moreover, he argues that this processes of acculturation does not inevitably or readily lead move into a hybridized blurring of cultures and identities: “On the contrary, when dealing with migrations (...) a number of researchers have pointed out that the first reaction of an immigrant, even those who are willing to integrate in society and adapt to the new culture, is to defend his or herself from cultural assimilation” (Gimenez, 2007, p. 187).

In a similar vein, Jorge A. Bustamante in “Frontera Mexico-Estados Unidos Reflexiones para un marco teorico” states that the inequalities and power asymmetries of the countries that make up the border is one of the main characteristics of every border interaction between US and Mexican citizens. He believes that when the power asymmetries are exercised to the maximum, interaction becomes impossible. Bustamante explains that if within the groups there is one dominant and one repressed, the individuals pertaining to the less powerful group will tend to use their position as an identifier– the one thing that makes them *not* the other. Therefore, exacerbating more the differences in culture and identity instead of mixing them together. According to Bustamante, the relationship between Mexicans and Americans in the border produces an opportunity-problem dichotomy where the Mexican identity fights to reduce the power inequalities and at the same time take advantage of the economic opportunities for the geographic location. From that dominant-resistant relation the power asymmetry elicits an otherness feeling response to refer culturally and politically to the other side. Finding the differences in the “other” makes the individual rethink and contrast the values that make him other. The power asymmetries that characterize the border relationship produce differences in the action of the most powerful in respect to the reaction of the less powerful. Following this dichotomy, Gimenez argues that what really happens in the border is a dual reality that acts as a line of separation and contact, where the

border works as a barrier “for human flow of migrant workers and a porous space for the flow of capital; a strip of resistance to cultural interpretation and a region of intense transactions [...]” (2007, p. 192); and where the American culture will find a way to create indestructible barriers for any immigrant wishing to penetrate “its networks of primary relations”.

Research Questions

In order to approach the theoretical frameworks discussed above, and localize broader theoretical interpretations into the experiences of young high school students in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, three research questions were developed:

R.Q. 1: Are middle and upper class Nuevo Laredo high school students heavy consumers of American media contents due to their particular cultural capital and social mediations?

(Bourdieu, Cultural Studies)

R. Q. 2: Does a preference of US media contents coexist with preference of Mexican media contents due to persisting links to their Mexican culture and background? (Cultural

Proximity)

R.Q. 3: Does gender, despite same social class, account for any differences in media preferences among these high school students? (Cultural Studies)

R.Q. 4: Do Nuevo Laredo high school students seem to keep a distinctive Mexican cultural outlook on American media and traditions or do they seem to have adopted a hybrid, assimilated perspective? (Gimenez)

R.Q. 5: How Mexican do Nuevo Laredo high school students perceive to be? Are there differences in these perceptions according to their media use or their familiarity with the US?

METHODS

To have a better understanding of the types of media that upper-middle and upper class high school students in the US-Mexico border consume on a regular basis, a survey was conducted in the three most well known private schools in Nuevo Laredo with all 12th grade students (census). The mode of data collection was self-administered using the computer labs available in each school. As suggested by Fowler (1984): “the purpose of the survey is to produce statistics- that is, quantitative or numerical descriptions of some aspects of the study population” (p. 9). Therefore, a survey was selected as the easiest and fastest way to gather the most amount of data for the study in a short period of time. The surveys were conducted during the second and third week of January of 2017. The sample size was of 146 students: 36 from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo, 46 from Instituto America de Estudios Superiores, and 64 from Colegio Bilingue Royal. Participants were between 17 and 18 years of age. According to the schools’ principals, the private high schools had no more than 200 students per school

Many of the questions in the survey were taken Jose Carlos Lozano’s “Media exposure and cultural identity in a Mexican border community: The case of ‘Secundaria’ students” (1992), a PhD thesis looking at television consumption patterns of youth living in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Lozano was originally interested in looking at the relation between media consumption and national identity, specifically in Mexico’s northern border with the United States, since it is where exposure to American media is more easily attainable. Some additional questions were added including a list of 102 contemporary television shows from Mexico and the US, and one related to new streaming devices and mediums for consuming television and music. The survey method was chosen to be the most

appropriate and fastest way to get high volumes of information about the amount of exposure students have to national and American television and national and music in English.

In order to get a fuller picture of the role media consumption plays in the lives of teenagers; I expanded on the survey to introduce a qualitative component in the form of focus group discussions. To integrate the benefits gathered by both quantitative and qualitative data, a triangulation technique was utilized. “Triangulation” is what Denzin (1978) called a ‘between-methods-approach’” (Patriarche et al, 2014 p. 55), a way to account for the findings that are only achievable through the use of one method in particular. Additionally, Campbell and Fiske (1959) argue that using more than one method contributes to the validity of the study, indicating that any relevant findings are the result of the problem studied and not intrinsic to a certain method. With this attention to triangulation in mind, one focus group was conducted in each school with students who had previously taken the survey. The sessions were approximately one hour long and the size of the groups varied from six to nine participants. According to Hollander (2004), focus groups are a resourceful tool to look at group interactions, conduct several interviews at the same time, and produce in-depth stories and explanations or people’s opinions. The questionnaire for the focus groups was also taken from Lozano’s (1992) doctoral thesis, but modified to contemporary trends in cultural consumption, as well as expanded to provide more insight about their daily habits, perception of social classes, and taste. The sessions were recorded using the application voice memos on a personal iPhone. While the number of focus group sessions was low (3), the fact that all participants were from similar SES, age, and high school grade allowed for some degree of consistency in the discussion. Differences between the groups were not significant, suggesting that saturation was somewhat accomplished.

The Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M International University approved the survey and focus groups questionnaires used for this study. School administrators were provided with a consent form explaining the nature of the study. Participants were also provided with a consent form to inform them what would be asked for them to do, and that they could retrieve from the study at any time without facing any kind of retaliation.

RESULTS

Survey Results

The survey administered to every 12th grade student present during the day of the data collection from the three private high schools in Nuevo Laredo selected for the study was able to provide comprehensive data regarding media preferences for border teenagers. The results show the time they spend watching television, the types of programming they prefer, the type of music they prefer, and their attitudes towards their own Mexican identity and border residents. Additionally, the survey was meant to find significant relations between Mexican attitudes and media preferences.

Time Spent Watching Television

According to the survey results, as seen in Table 1 almost half of the participants (41.1%, n=60) said they spend from two to four hours watching television on a daily basis. The second highest percentage (33.6%, n=49) was the group who said spends from zero to two hours watching television daily, and lastly the smallest group (25.3% n=37) watch more than four hours of television a day. When divided into the schools students attend, there seem to be some significant differences among the students who attend the Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo and the other two high schools. As shown in Table 2, participants from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo reported to watch less television than students from Colegio Bilingue Royal and Instituto American de Estudios Superiores. Being that students from Instituto Irlandes were identified as upper class, while the two other schools were identified as middle class, participating in extracurricular activities and social events prevented students from Instituto Irlandes to devote too much time to television.

Table 1

Amount of Hours Spent Watching TV Frequencies

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	0 to 2 hours	49	33.6
	2 to 4 hours	60	41.1
	More than 4 hours	37	25.3
	Total	146	100

Participants were asked to select the amount of time they spent watching TV a day.

Table 2

School and Amount of Hours Spent Watching Television per Day Crosstabulation

Name of School		How many hours do you spend watching TV during the day? (Include the time you spend watching movies or shows on your computer, tablet or phone)			
		0 to 2 hours	2 to 4 hours	More than 4 hours	Total
Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Count	18	11	7	36
	% within School	50.0%	30.6%	19.4%	100.0%
Colegio Bilingüe Royal	Count	17	24	23	64
	% within School	26.6%	37.5%	35.9%	100.0%
Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	Count	14	25	7	46
	% within School	30.4%	54.3%	15.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	49	60	37	146
	% within School	33.6%	41.1%	25.3%	100.0%
	% of Total	33.6%	41.1%	25.3%	100.0%

Table 2.1

*School and Amount of Hours Spent Watching Television per Day
Crosstabulation TV Chi-Square Tests*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.297 ^a	4	.015
Likelihood Ratio	11.939	4	.018
N of Valid Cases	146		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.12.

Medium of Preference, Cable and Streaming Services

Out of the N=146 total students surveyed, 87%, n=127 students said they have cable, dish, satellite or some kind of pay TV services. As seen in Table 3, only 13%, n=19 participants reported that they do not have cable, satellite or any paid television services. Additionally, Table 4 shows that from a list of video streaming services, participants were asked to select all the services they are subscribed in their household. Of the total, 93.8% n=137 participants have Netflix subscriptions, the second most popular video streaming service was Roku with 36.3%, n=53, the third most popular service was Claro Video with 19.9% n=29 of participants claiming to have a subscription.

It is of importance to note that Netflix is an international company that allows subscribers to stream television shows and films via its website, smartphones, tablets or video game console apps. In 2011, Netflix started producing original television series and films. The monthly subscription varies from \$7.99 to up to \$11.99. The second most popular service, Roku, is a company that distributes digital media player set-top boxes. Roku partners with networks, and content providers to stream television series and films through different

channels. The digital boxes have prices that range from \$50 to up to \$130. The third most popular service in students' households, Claro Video, is a streaming service available in Mexico for \$1 a month as part of the subscription to Telmex's Infinitem Internet provider. The company was created in Brazil in 2003 with the partnership of several America Movil operators. The company belongs to Carlos Slim's Carso Group. The streaming service offers cartoons, television shows, movies, and special events.

Table 3

Cable, Dish, or Satellite TV

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	127	87.0
No	19	13.0
Total	146	100.0

Participants were asked if they had a form of cable, dish or satellite television in their households.

Table 4

Video Streaming Services

Value	Count	%
Netflix	137	93
Roku	53	36.3
Claro Video	29	19.9
Cinepolis Click	20	13.7
HBO Go, HBO Now	11	7.5

Table 4 Continued

Video Streaming Services

Value	Count	%
Blim	8	5.5
Amazon Prime	6	4.1
Vudu	3	2.1
Crackle	3	2.1
Hulu	3	2.1

Participants were asked to select from a list all the streaming services they have in their household.

As seen in Tables 5 to 8, high school students from private schools in Nuevo Laredo, generally spend more time watching television on their smartphones with 61%, n=90 of participants reporting they watch series or films on their smartphones on a daily basis. The second device most used to watch television was computers or laptops, with 35.6%, n=52 of participants claiming to use it everyday to watch television. The third favorite device used to watch television among high school students were smart televisions, video game consoles or other streaming devices such as Amazon Fire or Google's ChromeCast with 12.3%, n=18. The least preferred was the traditional television set with only 10.3%, n=15 of participants reporting to watch traditional television on a daily basis. The findings of this survey suggest that young audiences are moving away from traditional forms of watching television, and opting for more convenient avenues.

Table 5

Medium of Preference

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Almost Everyday	Everyday	Total
Television	7.5%	27.4%	37%	17.8%	10.3%	146
Computer or Laptop	3.4%	7.5%	26.7%	26.7%	35.6%	146
Smartphones	9.6%	11%	8.9%	8.9%	61.6%	146
Smart TV or Xbox, PlayStation, Amazon Fire, Chrome Cast	15.8%	14.4%	35.6%	21.9%	12.3%	146

Participants were asked to select the frequency with which they watch series or films on their TV (Antenna, cable or satellite), computer or laptop, smartphone, Smart TV or Xbox, PlayStation or Amazon Fire.

Preferred Television Shows

As seen in Table 6, the survey asked participants to name their top five television series. Although not every respondent provided the five requested shows, a list was created with all the television shows mentioned and then counted for each time a participant repeated it. The participating students mentioned a total of 107 different television shows. Out of those, 77 shows were American productions, and 12 were from other English-speaking countries such as England, Australia, or Canada. Only six shows were Mexican productions or American *telenovelas* produced by Telemundo or Univision. Students mentioned two South American productions, the Brazilian original Netflix production 3% and *Pablo Escobar el Patron del Mal*, a Colombian production by Caracol TV. Additionally, three Spanish television shows were mentioned: *El Barco*, *El Internado*, and *Velvet*. Students mentioned two different Japanese animation series: *Bleach* and *Naruto*. Some students only wrote down “anime”, so the three variations were coded as anime and counted towards that genre. Based on the results of this survey, it could be argued that female high school students tend to have a more similar taste in television series, since the most mentioned shows were girl-oriented. The most repeated television show was *Gossip Girl* with 29 students

mentioning it among their favorite. The second most favorite was *Pretty Little Liars* with 12 repetitions, *Friends* came in third with 9, *Revenge* and *The Originals* were in fourth place with 7 mentions each, and *White Collar* and *Rick and Morty* in fifth place with 6 mentions each. The first five shows mentioned as favorites were American production that air in Warner Channel, a Latin American TV channel owned by Time Warner's HBO Latin America Group. The channel focuses on airing American-produced series and films. Most of the shows air in their original English language audio, with subtitles in Spanish. In fact, among the seven most repeated television series only two, *El Barco* and *Anime*, were not American productions *El Barco* is a Spanish television show that aired in Spain from 2011 to 2013, however it was not until 2016 that Netflix Mexico added the show to its catalogue. It was also aired in Mexico through Azteca Trece in 2014.

Table 6

Crosstab Most Mentioned TV Shows, Gender, and School

Name of TV Show	Irlandes		Instituto America		Colegio Royal		Total	%
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Gossip Girl	0	8	1	8	1	11	29	12.8%
Pretty Little Liars	0	1	0	7	0	4	12	5.3%
Friends	1	0	1	3	2	2	9	4%
Revenge	0	1	1	2	0	3	7	3.1%
The Originals	0	1	4	1	0	1	7	3.1
White Collar	0	1	1	1	2	1	6	2.7%
Rick and Morty	0	0	0	0	4	2	6	2.7%
Shooter	1	0	0	1	0	2	5	2.2%
Prison Break	0	0	0	0	3	2	5	2.2%
El Barco	0	0	3	2	0	0	5	2.2%
Breaking Bad	1	0	1	0	2	1	5	2.2%
Suits	0	2	0	2	0	0	4	1.8%
Sherlock	1	0	0	1	0	2	4	1.8%
Anime	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	1.8%

Participants were asked to name their five favorite TV shows.

Preferred Music

In contrast, when participants were asked to write down their five favorite singers or music bands, a more diverse selection was reported. Participants wrote down a total of 256 different singers and music bands as their favorite. Out of those, 160 were musicians, singers and bands that either sing only in English or mostly in English. Likewise, 88 were Mexican or Spanish-speaking singers and music bands, or singers and bands that sing mostly in Spanish. There was one mention of K-pop, the Korean genre, one mention of a French singer, a German rock band, and a Japanese band. As seen in Table 7, the most mentioned artist was Ozuna with 26 students listing him as their favorite singer. Ozuna is a Reggaeton singer and songwriter from Puerto Rico; the vast majority of his songs are in Spanish. The second most mentioned singer was Maluma with 24 repetitions from students. Maluma is also identified with the Reggaeton genre; he is from Colombia and sings mainly in Spanish. The third most mentioned artist was Ed Sheeran with 21 students mentioning him as one of their favorites. Ed Sheeran is a singer/songwriter from England; his music is a mixture of acoustic pop, folk and hip-hop. Among the 11 most mentioned bands and artists there was mention of six Spanish-speaking musicians. From those, the two of the favorites were Reggaeton artists, two Mexican pop bands: Sin Bandera and Reik, one norteño band: Duelo from Roma, Texas, and one banda: Banda MS from Sinaloa, Mexico.

Table 7
Most Mentioned Singer or Band

Name of Singer or Band	Frequency	Percent
Ozuna	26	3.9
Maluma	24	3.6
Ed Sheeran	21	3.2
Justin Bieber	19	2.9

Table 7 Continued

Most Mentioned Singer or Band

Name of Singer or Band	Frequency	Percent
Drake	15	2.3
Reik	13	2.0
Twenty One Pilots	11	1.7
Bruno Mars	10	1.5
Adele	9	1.4
Taylor Swift	9	1.4
Banda MS	8	1.2
Duelo	8	1.2
One Direction	8	1.2
Sin Bandera	8	1.2
Total	865	100

Participants were asked to name their five favorite musicians or bands.

Traditions in the Border

Another section of the survey asked students to name the traditions they believe are more typical of the border region. From all the traditions mentioned, a list was made and coded for each time it was repeated. A total of 24 different traditions were mentioned. As seen in Table 8, the tradition that was mentioned the most amongst students was *carne asada*. *Carne asada* in the North of Mexico is a gathering usually performed on Sundays to grill meat accompanied by guacamole, tortillas, salsa, etc.. It is seen as a good opportunity for the extended family and friends to spend time together. The second most mentioned tradition was Halloween with 40 mentions, then Thanksgiving with 32 mentions. Interestingly, the most important tradition for students it is one typical of the region, and the second and third are American traditions. Fourth place was the Mexican *Día de Muertos* with 20 students claiming it as one of the most representative traditions of the border.

Table 8

Traditions Celebrated in the Border According to High School Students

Traditions	Frequency	Percent
Abrazo Ceremony	2	.5
Thanksgiving	32	7.3
St. Valentine's	2	.5
Carne Asada	41	9.4
Halloween	40	9.1
Dia de Muertos	20	4.6
Quesadillas con Queso	2	.5
Easter Bunny	7	1.6
Food	8	1.8
Mexican Revolution	1	.2
Mexican Independence	6	1.4
Fourth of July	1	.2
Christmas	12	2.7
New Year	5	1.1
La Feria	1	.2
A mix of traditions from US and MX	9	2.1
Visit Laredo, TX	2	.5
American traditions	4	.9
Handcrafts	2	.5
Family gatherings	5	1.1
Spanglish	4	.9
Soccer Matches	1	.2
Cinco de Mayo	3	.7
Three Wise Men	1	.2
Missing	227	51.8
Total	438	100.0

Participants were asked to mention the traditions that are more typical of the border region. A list of all the traditions mentioned was made and counted for the amount of times each tradition was repeated by each of the participants in the survey.

Relationship between Preferred Television Shows and Attitudes Towards Mexican Identity

The following tables offer a more sophisticated multi-variable analysis between media consumption/cultural activities and senses of cultural identity. For the first of these analyses, I compared the national origin of television programs for each respondent with their reported feelings about their own sense of national identity. Participants were given a list of 51 American or English-speaking television series and 52 Mexican or Spanish-speaking television shows, they were asked to rate each show using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= I never watch this show and 5= I always watch this show. The Mexican or Spanish-speaking television shows were selected from the prime time programming in networks such as Televisa, Azteca, Univision, and Telemundo. Also added to the list were some Spanish language productions streaming on Netflix Mexico (See appendix 5 for the list of Mexican television shows). The list of American or English language television series was taken from a list with the highest ratings in American television as composed by the Indiewire.com website, and a list of the best shows on Netflix as reported by Uproxx.com. Also added to the list were some prime time television shows on syndication broadcast on the most popular cable television channels in Mexico such as Sony Entertainment, Warner, and AXN (See appendix 5 for list of English-language and Spanish-language television shows).

Table 9 shows the relation between the participants divided by schools and their television preferences. Students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo reported to have the least preference for Mexican and Spanish television, as seen in Table 9.1. Students from Instituto Irlandes also showed a significant difference from the students attending the other two schools, disliking Mexican and Spanish television with the smallest standard deviation. This means that the majority of students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo in fact do

not watch a lot of Mexican or Spanish-language television, the difference might be explained because students from Instituto Irlandes have an upper class background, seen more clearly in their consumption patterns. However, when it comes to American or English-language television students from all three schools tend to have a higher preference for those contents; there is no significant difference in terms of one school consuming more American or English-language television than another.

Table 9

Descriptives TV Shows and Name of School One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Mexican and Spanish TV Shows	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	1.18	7.44306	4.104	.018
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	1.31	13.21852		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	1.28	12.42665		
	Total	146	1.27	12.04529		
American and English TV Shows	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	1.50	18.24455	.932	.396
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	1.63	24.97121		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	1.60	23.19959		
	Total	146	1.59	22.91433		

Participants were given a list of 51 American or English speaking TV shows and 52 Mexican or Spanish speaking TV shows. They were asked to rate each show from 1 to 5. Where 1= I never watch this show and 5= I always watch this show.

Table 9.1
Multiple Comparisons Tukey Test

Dependent Variable	(I) School	(J) School	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.		
American and English TV Shows	Tukey HSD	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	-6.42535	4.77604	.373	
		Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	-5.07005	5.10136	.582	
		Colegio Bilingüe Royal	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	6.42535	4.77604	.373
			Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	1.35530	4.43136	.950
		Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	5.07005	5.10136	.582
			Colegio Bilingüe Royal	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	-1.35530	4.43136	.950
	Mexican and Spanish TV Shows	Tukey HSD	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	-6.94097*	2.45738	.015
			Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	-5.45048	2.62476	.098
		Colegio Bilingüe Royal	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	6.94097*	2.45738	.015
			Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	1.49049	2.28003	.791
		Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	5.45048	2.62476	.098
			Colegio Bilingüe Royal	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	-1.49049	2.28003	.791

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Tukey test determines the significant difference is between Instituto Irlandes and Colegio Bilingue Royal.

In order to find how “Mexican” these students felt, participants were asked to describe how Mexican they feel in comparison to other students their age living in the interior (central and southern states) of Mexico. Students selected from a 5-point Likert scale in which 1= More Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico and 5= Less Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico. When the results were analyzed in conjunction with the amount of exposure to Mexican or Spanish-language television, students who feel more Mexican than students living in the interior of Mexico reported to be significantly more exposed to Mexican or Spanish-language television, as seen in Table 10. Similarly, those who reported to feel the least Mexican than students in the interior reported to have the less exposure to Mexican or Spanish television than the other groups. However, the results were similar when comparing the perception with exposure to American or English-language television, students who reported to feel more Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico, also happen to be significantly more exposed to American or English television. The group of students who reported to feel less Mexican than their counterparts in the interior of Mexico was the group least exposed to American or English-language television.

To find a relation between the level of identification with Mexican culture and the exposure to American or Mexican television, participants were asked to rate how proud they are to be Mexican where 1= very proud, and 5= not proud at all. Although there was not enough difference among those who reported to be “very proud” and “not proud at all”, and the amount of exposure to Mexican or American television to be significant, there was some difference worth noting. As seen in Table 11, the group of participants who feel “very proud” of being Mexican were also the group with the highest exposure to Mexican or Spanish-language television, as the level of proudness descends, so does the level of exposure to

Mexican or Spanish-language television. The group that reported to be “not proud at all” of being Mexican was also the group with the lowest exposure to Mexican or Spanish- language television. Contrastingly, the distribution is not as clear when compared to exposure of American or English television. The group that said to feel “very proud” of being Mexican was also the most exposed to American and English-language television. However, as the level of pride decreased, the amount of exposure to American or English television also decreases, although not enough to make for any significant differences. Also worth noting, the group who reported to be the least proud of being Mexican or “not proud at all” were the second most exposed to American and English-language television. Moreover, as seen in Table 11 regardless of the type of programing the participants are exposed to or the time spent watching television did not make for any differences on attitudes towards Mexican identity.

Table 10

TV Shows and Mexicanness in Comparison to Students in the Interior of Mexico ANOVA

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Mexican and Spanish TV Shows	More Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico	13	1.4	16.91911	2.307	.061
	2	33	1.3	11.49456		
	3	76	1.2	11.22779		
	4	19	1.3	11.71594		
	Less Mexican than Students in the interior of Mexico	5	1.2	6.26897		
Total		146	1.3	12.04529		

Table 10 Continued

TV Shows and Mexicanness in Comparison to Students in the Interior of Mexico ANOVA

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
American and English TV Shows	More Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico	13	1.9	27.88185	2.469	.047
	2	33	1.5	17.93470		
	3	76	1.6	23.54908		
	4	19	1.6	23.08401		
	Less Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico	5	1.3	9.28440		
Total		146	1.6	22.91433		

As seen in Table 10 participants were asked to describe how Mexican they feel in comparison to other students their age living in the interior of Mexico. Where 1= More Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico and 5= Less Mexican than students in the interior of Mexico. Participants that reported watching more Mexican TV shows also reported to feel more Mexican than their counterparts in the interior of Mexico.

Table 11

TV Shows and Proud of Being Mexican One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Mexican and Spanish TV Shows	Very Proud	60	1.3	13.17071		
	Proud	31	1.3	10.05629		
	Neutral	31	1.2	13.40197		
	I Am Not Proud	9	1.2	10.96332		

Table 11 Continued

TV Shows and Proud of Being Mexican One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
	I Am Not Proud At All	15	1.2	6.71743		
	Total	146	1.3	12.04529	1.371	.247
American and English TV Shows	Very Proud	60	1.7	23.64495		
	Proud	31	1.5	20.82203		
	Neutral	31	1.5	25.97393		
	I Am Not Proud	9	1.4	19.25487		
	I Am Not Proud At All	15	1.6	18.90906		
	Total	146	1.6	22.91433	.917	.456

Participants were asked to rate how proud they are to be Mexican where 1= Very Proud and 5= I am not proud at all.

Table 12

Mexican Attitudes and Daily TV Exposure One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
How proud are you to be Mexican?	0 to 2 hours	49	2.33	1.390		
	2 to 4 hours	60	2.07	1.233		
	More than 4 hours	37	2.38	1.381		
	Total	146	2.23	1.324	.817	.444
Do you think that those who celebrate American traditions like Halloween are less Mexican than those who celebrate only Mexican traditions?	0 to 2 hours	49	1.94	.242		
	2 to 4 hours	60	1.95	.220		
	More than 4 hours	37	1.97	.164		
	Total	146	1.95	.214	.270	.764

Table 12 Continued

Mexican Attitudes and Daily TV Exposure One Way Anova

How Mexican you feel in comparison to those who live in the interior of Mexico?	0 to 2 hours	49	2.69	.918		
	2 to 4 hours	60	2.75	.836		
	More than 4 hours	37	3.00	.972		
	Total	146	2.79	.901	1.346	.264
In your opinion where is Mexican culture more present, here or the interior of Mexico?	0 to 2 hours	49	2.63	.566		
	2 to 4 hours	60	2.80	.443		
	More than 4 hours	37	2.73	.560		
	Total	146	2.73	.519	1.412	.247

Participants were asked to select the amount of hours they spend watching TV on traditional television, computer, tablets or phones.

School and Attitudes about Mexican Identity

The participants did not appear to have many differences on their attitudes towards their own Mexican identity when divided into the different schools they attend. Students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo, Colegio Bilingue Royal, and Instituto America de Estudios Superiores had around the same level of proudness about being Mexican. As seen in Table 13, all students were also more inclined to think that those who celebrate American traditions like Halloween are not less Mexican than students who celebrate only Mexican traditions. The vast majority of the students agreed that Mexican culture is either the same in the interior of Mexico as in the border, or more present in the interior of Mexico. The only question in which students reported significantly different answers “how Mexican they feel in comparison to other students who live in the interior of Mexico?” Students from Colegio

Bilingue Royal reported to feel significantly less Mexican than other students living in the interior of Mexico. These results are featured in Table 15.

Table 13

Mexican Attitudes and Name of School One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
How proud are you to be Mexican?	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	2.11	1.260		
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	2.39	1.341		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	2.11	1.354		
	Total	146	2.23	1.324			.807	.448
Do you think that those who celebrate American traditions like Halloween are less Mexican than those who celebrate only Mexican traditions?	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	1.97	.167		
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	1.94	.244		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	1.96	.206		
	Total	146	1.95	.214			.314	.731
How Mexican do you feel in comparison to those who live in the interior of Mexico?	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	2.56	.809		
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	2.98	.968		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	2.72	.834		
	Total	146	2.79	.901			2.928	.057

Table 13 Continued

Mexican Attitudes and Name of School One Way Anova

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
In your opinion where is Mexican culture more present, here or the interior of Mexico?	36	2.69	.525		
Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	64	2.67	.536		
Colegio Bilingüe Royal	46	2.83	.486		
Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	146	2.73	.519	1.275	.283
Total					

When contrasting attitudes about their own Mexican identity, students from Colegio Bilingue Real ranked significantly higher on how Mexican they feel in comparison to other students their age who live in the interior of Mexico. Students from all three schools have more or less the same attitudes towards their Mexican identity regardless of the school they attend.

Gender, Attitudes about Mexican Identity, Music and TV Preferences

To make sure other mediations were not altering the perception Mexican border high school students have about their national identity, attitudes about Mexican identity were re-analyzed using gender as the independent variable. As seen in previous audience research studies (Lozano, 2000) gender and socio-economic status play an important mediation considering media preferences. Female audiences tend to prefer national media more often than their male counterparts. Out of the four questions related to Mexican identity in the survey, there was one in which female participants tend to answer significantly different than

the male participants. As Table 14 shows, female students reported to feel significantly more proud of being Mexican than the male students. However, the results do not seem to be related to female participants consuming more Mexican or Spanish-language television or having a preference for Spanish-language music, as seen in tables 15 to 16. Female participants reported to be exposed to Mexican and American television as much as their male counterparts. They also did not report any differences in exposure to English or Spanish music, although female participants had a slightly higher exposure to pop and rock in Spanish than their male classmates, it was not big enough to make a significant difference.

Table 14

Mexican Attitudes and Gender One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig,
How proud are you to be Mexican?	Men	62	1.97	1.145	4.425	.037
	Women	84	2.43	1.417		
	Total	146	2.23	1.324		
Do you think that those who celebrate American traditions like Halloween are less Mexican than those who celebrate only Mexican traditions?	Men	62	1.95	.216	.000	.983
	Women	84	1.95	.214		
	Total	146	1.95	.214		
How Mexican you feel in comparison to those who live in the interior of Mexico?	Men	62	2.69	.968	1.355	.246
	Women	84	2.87	.847		
	Total	146	2.79	.901		
In your opinion where is Mexican culture more present, here or the interior of Mexico?	Men	62	2.65	.575	2.647	.106
	Women	84	2.79	.468		
	Total	146	2.73	.519		

As seen in Table 14, female participants reported to feel more proud of their Mexican identity than Male participants.

Table 15

Gender and Television Shows One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Mexican and Spanish TV Shows	Male	62	1.3	10.47897	1.33083	0.233	0.63
	Female	84	1.3	13.12845	1.43243		
	Total	146	1.3	12.04529	0.99688		
American and English TV Shows	Male	62	1.6	23.93842	3.04018	0.306	0.581
	Female	84	1.6	22.23024	2.42552		
	Total	146	1.6	22.91433	1.8964		

Table 16

Music and Gender One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Pop and Rock in English	Male	62	3.5	1.81946	0.23107	0.008	0.93
	Female	84	3.5	1.85207	0.20208		
	Total	14	3.5	1.83202	0.15162		
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Male	62	2.6	5.31536	0.67505	0.706	0.402
	Female	84	2.5	4.63187	0.50538		
	Total	14	2.5	4.92797	0.40784		
Pop and Rock in Spanish	Male	62	2.5	2.03493	0.25844	3.252	0.073
	Female	84	2.9	2.27675	0.24841		
	Total	14	2.7	2.19443	0.18161		

Programming Preferences, English Proficiency and Attitudes about Mexican Identity

Another cultural mediation that might make Mexican high school students more prone to prefer American productions is the understanding and knowledge of the English language. As shown in Table 17, the group of students who claimed to have the lowest level of English was also the group who was significantly more exposed to Mexican or Spanish television programming. Similarly, the group who claimed to have the highest level of exposure to English was also the group of participants more exposed to American or English television, yet the differences were not statistically significant.

Additionally, Table 18 shows that there are no significant relations between the level of English and how proud the students feel about being Mexican or how Mexican they feel in comparison to other students from the interior of Mexico. However, those with the lowest levels of English tended to believe the people who celebrate American traditions such as Halloween are not less Mexican than those who celebrate exclusively Mexican traditions. As the level of English improved, more students reported that celebrating American holidays makes people less Mexican than those who only celebrate Mexican holidays.

Table 17

TV Shows by Origin and Knowledge of English Language One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
American or English TV Shows	Poor English	2	1.5	36.06245	.504	.733
	2	8	1.4	26.85942		
	3	31	1.6	24.91465		
	4	68	1.6	23.45629		
	Very Good English	37	1.6	19.16708		
Total		146	1.6	22.91433		

Table 17 Continued

TV Shows by Origin and Knowledge of English Language One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Mexican or Spanish TV Shows	Poor English	2	1.2	20.50610	2.561	.041
	2	8	1.1	9.43777		
	3	31	1.4	13.11406		
	4	68	1.3	12.72960		
	Very Good English	37	1.2	8.42080		
	Total	146	1.3	12.04529		

There was some significant difference between the participants who reported to have a good English level and the preference for Mexican and Spanish TV shows. Among those with the higher level of English language, the lowest preference for Spanish or Mexican TV shows was reported.

Table 18

Mexican Attitudes and Knowledge of English Language One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
How proud are you to be Mexican?	Poor English	2	2.5	2.121	1.627	0.171
	2	8	2.88	1.553		
	3	31	1.77	1.055		
	4	68	2.37	1.348		
	Very Good	37	2.22	1.357		
	Total	146	2.23	1.324		
Do you think that those who celebrate American traditions like Halloween are less Mexican than those who celebrate only Mexican traditions?	Poor English	2	1.5	0.707	2.907	0.024
	2	8	2	0		
	3	31	2	0		
	4	68	1.94	0.237		
	Very Good	37	1.95	0.229		
	Total	146	1.95	0.214		

Table 18 Continued

Mexican Attitudes and Knowledge of English Language One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
How Mexican do you feel in comparison to those who live in the interior of Mexico?	Poor English	2	1.5	0.707		
	2	8	2.88	0.641		
	3	31	2.58	0.848		
	4	68	2.93	0.886		
	Very Good	37	2.78	0.976		
	Total	146	2.79	0.901	1.894	0.115
In your opinion where is Mexican culture more present, here or the interior of Mexico?	Poor English	2	2	1.414		
	2	8	2.38	0.916		
	3	31	2.81	0.477		
	4	68	2.74	0.477		
	Very Good	37	2.76	0.435		
	Total	146	2.73	0.519	2.188	0.073

Music, Gender, and English Language Proficiency

To have a better understanding of the type of music high school students in Northern Mexico prefer, in addition to have them name their favorite singers and music bands, participants were asked to rate how much they listen to eight music genres. Only two of the genres listed on the survey were in English. As shown in Table 19, participants said they listen regularly or at least more often than not rock and pop in English. Participants showed less preference for Spanish-language music on a regular basis, whether it was the same genre pop and rock or more traditional Mexican genres like *norteño*, *ranchera* and *corridos*. Table 20 shows there are not significant differences between the participants' musical preferences

and the school they attend. Table 21 shows that students from all three schools tend to have a slight preference for pop and rock in English than for the same genre in Spanish.

Similar to television preferences, understanding and speaking English could be a factor for participants to prefer to listen music in English. Table 21 shows that there was not a significant relationship between the level of English of participants and their preference towards Spanish-language or English-language music. However, the same table also shows that as the level of English increases the preference for rock and pop in English also increases. Additionally, gender could also be another cultural mediation affecting the preferences among high school students. Table 22 shows there are no significant differences between gender and preference of English or Spanish music, except when it comes to traditional Mexican genres. Table 22 indicates that when it comes to preferences in English-language music, male and female participants listen to pop and rock in English with the same regularity. However, female participants do tend to listen to pop and rock in Spanish slightly more frequently than the male participants, although not enough to be significant. Likewise, male participants significantly tend to listen to the traditional Mexican genres like *ranchera*, *corridos* and *banda* more frequently than female participants.

Table 19

Music Preference Statistics

		Rock and Pop in English	Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Rock and Pop in Spanish
N	Valid	146	146	146
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		7.0479	15.0685	5.4589

Table 19 Continued

Music Preference Statistics

		Rock and Pop in English	Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Rock and Pop in Spanish
Median		7	15	6
Mode		6	18	6
Std. Deviation		1.83202	4.92797	2.19443
Minimum		2	6	2
Maximum		10	27	10
Sum		1029	2200	797

In Table 19 participants were asked to rate how often they listen to certain music genre in Spanish or English where 1= Never and 5= Always. The maximum score a participant could give to a genre is 10 points in “Rock and pop in English”, 10 points in “Rock and pop in Spanish”, and 30 points in “Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish”.

Table 20

Music and Schools One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	1.7	1.77281		
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	3.7	1.73176		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	3.5	2.00253		
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202	1.084	0.341

Table 20 Continued

Music and Schools One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	2.4	4.7955	0.624	0.537
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	2.6	5.03891		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	2.1	4.9134		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo	36	2.4	2.34825	1.977	0.142
	Colegio Bilingüe Royal	64	2.8	2.17398		
	Instituto America de Estudios Superiores	46	2.8	2.04786		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		

Table 21

Language and Music Preferences One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	Very Bad	2	2.2	4.94975	1.115	0.352
	2	8	1.7	1.72689		
	3	31	2.2	1.84157		
	4	68	3.6	1.81418		
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Very Good	37	1.8	1.70056	0.543	0.704
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202		
	Very Bad	2	1	0.70711		
	2	8	2.6	6.36817		
	3	31	2.7	5.10787		
	4	68	2.1	4.75333		
	Very Good	37	2.5	4.96368		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		

Table 21 Continued

Language and Music Preferences One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in Spanish	Very Bad	2	1.2	0.70711	0.689	0.601
	2	8	3.1	2.6959		
	3	31	2.7	2.14275		
	4	68	2.8	2.22248		
	Very Good	37	2.6	2.13964		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		

Table 22

Descriptives Music and Gender One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	Male	62	3.5	1.81946	0.008	0.93
	Female	84	3.5	1.85207		
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202		
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Male	62	2.6	5.31536	0.706	0.402
	Female	84	2.5	4.63187		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	Male	62	2.5	2.03493	3.252	0.073
	Female	84	2.9	2.27675		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		
Ranchera Corridos, Banda	Hombre	62	2.4	4.12702	6.731	0.01
	Mujer	84	1.9	3.07422		
	Total	146	2.1	3.62806		

Music and Attitudes towards Mexican Identity

A significant difference was found when analyzing the relationship between the language/genre of music and the how proud they feel about being Mexicans. The group of

students who reported to be “very proud” of being Mexican was also the group who claimed the highest exposure to Spanish-language music in general (as seen in Table 23). However, there is no significant difference between the groups who reported to be “very proud” and “not proud at all” with respect to their exposure to rock and pop in English, both groups frequently listen to music in English.

Tables 25 and 26 show that music preference does not have any significant relation to how Mexican participants feel in comparison to those who live in the interior of Mexico or where they think Mexican culture is more present. However, the group of participants who think that people who celebrate American traditions such as Halloween are not less Mexican than those who celebrate only Mexican traditions, were also significantly more exposed to music in Spanish (Table 24). Although not enough to make a significant difference, among those who believe that celebrating American traditions makes people less Mexican were also the participants more exposed to music in English.

Table 23

Music Preferences and Mexican Identity One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	Very Proud	60	3.6	2.00395		
	Proud	31	3.4	1.55819		
	Neutral	31	3.4	1.74627		
	I Am Not Proud	9	2.3	2.17945		
	I Am Not Proud At All	15	1.5	1.68184		
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202		
					.575	.681

Table 23 Continued

Music Preferences and Mexican Identity One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Very Proud	60	2.7	4.73892	2.246	.067
	Proud	31	2.1	4.35396		
	Neutral	31	1.9	5.02232		
	I Am Not Proud	9	1.7	5.54026		
	I Am Not Proud At All	15	2.4	5.44059		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	Very Proud	60	3	2.08194	2.616	.038
	Proud	31	2.6	2.23895		
	Neutral	31	2.4	2.26521		
	I Am Not Proud	9	2.2	1.66667		
	I Am Not Proud At All	15	2.7	2.19957		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		
Ranchera Corridos, Banda	Muy Orguloso	60	2.2	3.8948	1.179	0.323
	Orguloso	31	2	3.01216		
	Neutral	31	1.8	3.34503		
	No Estoy Orguloso	9	2.7	4.49382		
	No Estoy Orguloso en lo Absoluto	15	5.8	3.60951		
	Total	146	2.1	3.62806		

Students who reported to have a higher preference for Spanish music including Rock, Pop, traditional Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos and Reggaeton also significantly showed to be more proud of being Mexicans. Likewise, those with higher preferences for more modern and Americanized Pop and Rock en Espanol also had significantly higher tendencies to feel more proud about being Mexicans.

Table 24
Music Preferences and Traditions One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	Yes	7	1.4	1.71825	4.270	.041
	No	139	3.5	1.81566		
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202		
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	Yes	7	1.8	4.32049	5.155	.025
	No	139	2.5	4.88091		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	Yes	7	2.1	2.49762	2.118	.148
	No	139	2.7	2.17146		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		

Participants were asked, “Do you think that those who celebrate American traditions like Halloween are less Mexican than those who celebrate only Mexican traditions?”. Participants with higher preferences for English music showed that people who celebrate American traditions are less Mexican.

Table 25
Mexican Culture and Music One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	In the border	5	3.3	3.57771	0.16	0.852
	Same	30	3.5	2.04011		
	In the interior	11	2.3	1.68867		
	Total	14	3.5	1.83202		

Table 25 Continued

Mexican Culture and Music One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	In the border	5	2.8	8.38451	0.616	0.542
	Same	30	1.7	4.07812		
	In the interior	111	2.5	4.97973		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	In the border	5	2.4	3.11448	0.258	0.773
	Same	30	2.7	2.35767		
	In the interior	111	2.7	2.12292		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		
Ranchera, Corrido, Banda	In the border	5	2.5	4.66905	0.841	0.433
	Same	30	2.2	3.40064		
	In the interior	111	2	3.64798		
	Total	146	2	3.62806		

Students were asked where they think Mexican culture is more present, in the border or the interior of Mexico?

Table 26

Music and Mexicanness One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.	
Rock and Pop in English	More Mexican than them	13	3.9	2.55453	1.12	0.349	
		2	33	2.2			1.9886
		3	76	1.7			1.51871
		4	19	3.7			2.2439
	Less Mexican than them	5	1.1	0.89443			
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202			

Table 26 Continued

Music and Mexicanness One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	More Mexican than them	13	2.7	5.54469	1.2	0.314
	2	33	2.6	4.38122		
	3	76	2.4	5.08172		
	4	19	1.6	4.6346		
	Less Mexican than them	5	1.5	4.96991		
	Total	146	2.6	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	More Mexican than them	13	2.6	2.57702	2.126	0.081
	2	33	3.1	2.30653		
	3	76	2.6	2.03388		
	4	19	2.9	2.17508		
	Less Mexican than them	5	1.8	1.81659		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		
Ranchera, Corrido, Banda	More Mexican than them	13	2.3	4.05096	0.516	0.724
	2	33	1.9	3.55103		
	3	76	2.1	3.57663		
	4	19	2.3	3.92994		
	Less Mexican than them	5	1.8	3.28634		
	Total	146	2.1	3.62806		

Participants were asked about how they feel in comparison to other students living in the interior of Mexico, where 1= More Mexican than them and 5= Less Mexican than them.

Time Spent in the United States and Consumption Preferences

Table 27 indicates there is no significant difference in the relationship between the frequency with which participants visit Laredo, Texas, the American sister city of Nuevo Laredo, and the frequency with which they consume American or English language television shows. Likewise, there is no significant difference between the frequency with which they travel to the United States and the frequency with which they consume Mexican or Spanish language television. However, as seen in Table 28, those who travel to Laredo

more than once a week were in the group with the lowest exposure to Mexican and American television shows. This could indicate that perhaps this group does not spend a lot of time watching television. In a similar vein, Table 28 shows there is no significant difference in the relationship between the frequency in which respondents visit Laredo, Texas and the frequency with which they listen to music in English. As a matter of fact, the data from this survey suggests that not only there is no relation between the frequency of visits to the United States and preferences for American or English language music, but that there is a relationship between frequency of visits to the United States and preference for traditional Mexican music. The groups who had more frequent visits per month to Laredo were also the groups who reported to listen to traditional Mexican music more often.

Table 27

Visits to Laredo and Television Preferences One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
American or English TV Shows	More than once a week	27	1.4	15.81499		
	Once a week	58	1.6	25.0979		
	Twice a month	38	1.6	23.1545		
	Once a month	23	1.5	22.64278		
	Total	146	1.6	22.91433	1.681	0.174
Mexican or Spanish TV Shows	More than once a week	27	1.2	9.18859		
	Once a week	58	1.3	12.23341		
	Twice a month	38	1.3	10.32257		
	Once a month	23	1.3	16.20533		
	Total	146	1.3	12.04529	1.371	0.254

Participants were asked about the frequency with which they go to Laredo, Texas.

Table 28

Visits to Laredo and Music Preferences One Way Anova

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Rock and Pop in English	More than once a week	27	3.3	1.94438	2.263	0.084
	Once a week	58	2.3	1.88957		
	Twice a month	38	3.6	1.74147		
	Once a month	23	1.3	1.5141		
	Total	146	3.5	1.83202		
Rock, Pop, Ranchera, Nortena, Corridos, Reggaeton in Spanish	More than once a week	27	2.5	5.25747	1.598	0.192
	Once a week	58	2.7	5.24652		
	Twice a month	38	2.4	4.17913		
	Once a month	23	1.9	4.63404		
	Total	146	2.5	4.92797		
Rock and Pop in Spanish	More than once a week	27	2.3	2.35581	1.7591	0.159
	Once a week	58	2.8	2.15352		
	Twice a month	38	2.9	2.0471		
	Once a month	23	2.8	2.23253		
	Total	146	2.7	2.19443		
Ranchera, Corrido, Banda	More than once a week	27	2.2	4.15854	2.597	0.055
	Once a week	58	2.3	3.95574		
	Twice a month	38	1.7	2.49495		
	Once a month	23	1.8	3.28549		
	Total	146	2.1	3.62806		

Focus Groups Results

The focus groups in each of the different private schools were able to provide some deeper insight into survey responses from the students. A total of 22 high school students between the ages of 17 and 18 participated in the focus groups: 11 male participants and 11 female participants. The questions allowed participants to reflect on their cultural consumption patterns and the perceptions they have towards Mexican and American cultural goods, such as music, television, and film. The focus group results showed the regular habits

and rituals participants have while consuming different kinds of media. Moreover, participants were able to reflect in detail about issues of national identity, cultural attitudes, and habits.

The first group was composed of seven students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo, a private catholic school. The school charges 12,853 pesos (\$658.62) for students enrolling for the first time and 9,779 pesos (\$501.10) for returning students, in addition they charge 6,806 pesos (\$348.75) a month. According to the Mexican Secretary of Labor, minimum wage in Mexico is 80.04 pesos (\$4.10) per day. All the classes are taught in English, however the participants preferred to have the session conducted in Spanish, since the students said they would be more comfortable if the interviews were done in Spanish. Three of them were male, of which only one was 17 years old, and the four female students were all 18 years of age. With the exception of two of them who were not sure where they wanted to go for college, and one who said he might go to Texas A&M International University, the other five said they will attend some of most prestigious and expensive universities in Mexico including Monterrey Tec, Universidad de Monterrey (UDEM), and Universidad Anahuac in Mexico City.

The second group was composed of nine high school students from Instituto America de Estudios Superiores, a private high school from Nuevo Laredo. This group was composed of five male and four female participants. Two female participants and one male were 17 years old; the rest were 18 years old. The school charges a monthly fee of 4,000 pesos (\$200). Out of the nine participants, two students said they were going to Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon (a state university), one said Universidad de Monterrey (private university), one said Tec de Nuevo Laredo (public local university), one said Texas A&M

International University, and the rest were not sure but said they would want to go to some university outside of Nuevo Laredo.

The third group was composed of six students: three males and three females. Only one female participant was 18 years old; the rest were 17 years old. These students attend the Colegio Bilingue Real, a private high school in Nuevo Laredo. The school charges an enrolling fee of 3,300 pesos (\$169.10), and a monthly fee of 3,700 pesos (\$189.60). Out of the six participants, two said they were going to go to college to Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León [a state university], one said Texas A&M International University, two said they would be attending Laredo Community College, and one said she would be attending Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (a state university in Mexico City).

The focus group questionnaire followed the same structure for each of the participating groups. First, they were asked about their music and television preferences and how much time they spent consuming music and television. Additionally, they were asked about their favorite platforms to watch television and to listen to music, whether they preferred cable TV, open network channels, or video streaming technologies. Participants were also asked specifically if they preferred American or Mexican television, and American or Mexican music and the reasons behind it. The second section was meant to ask students about their habits as teenagers and border residents, such as the places they like to visit, stores they like to shop, and the frequency with which they travel to the United States. Participants were also asked to define the differences between snobbish *fresa* behavior and vulgar or *naco* behavior, and personalities. A third part asked participants about the advantages and disadvantages they perceived from living in the border. The fourth and final section involved questions about media preferences and national identity, students were

asked if they considered that people who reject national media productions would also reject their national identity as Mexicans.

Music Preferences

When asked about the frequency with which they listen to the radio and what type of music they listen, the majority of the students said they only listen to the radio when they are on their car, during the mornings on their way to school and then on drive back home. Four said they don't listen to the radio. However, students from Instituto Irlandes, when asked if they played music on their car, all of them said they connect their phone to the car stereo using Spotify or iTunes. They also said they use their phones to listen to music when they are home or to listen alone. Students from Instituto Irlandes only listen to the radio when driving or with their parents in the car. Only one student from Colegio Bilingue Real said she also listens to the radio during lunch with her mother.

FP 9: "I listen to the radio while having lunch, because my mom really likes to listen to the news during the meal, and since I always have lunch with her, well we always listen the news together."

The participants listed Rock, Alternative Rock, Reggaeton, "Today's Top Hits", and one of them was particularly inclined to seventies rock music. All seven of the participants from Instituto Irlandes said they prefer listening music in English than in Spanish. They claimed Spanish music sounds strange or off to them.

MP 1: "I don't know. It's just that it sounds really weird in Spanish, I don't like how it sounds, since I like classical rock, Spanish doesn't really make sense."

FP 2: "It also depends on what the songs say, I mean, in English [some lyrics] don't sound as disrespectful as in Spanish."

Q: "You just said you like Reggaeton. How do you feel in that case, we don't have English Reggaeton."

FP 1: "Well, the thing is that Reggaeton just got into fashion so we don't really put attention to what the songs says, it is more about the rhythm because they are mixing Alternative with Reggaeton. So it sounds really cool, and you just don't pay attention

to the lyrics. For example, I really like English music because of the message they have, well at least the songs I listen is because of the message, or just the music. Sometimes it's just because of how they sound. For instance, I listen to a lot of indie music and that's because I get relaxed."

FP 3: "I don't know, likewise I like they way music in English sounds a lot more than in Spanish. I feel that it also depends on the artists. I don't know. I really don't like voices in Spanish I don't know why."

Students from Instituto America, who use their phone to listen music had more specific tastes in genres like trap, Mexican hip hop, EDM, and rap. When asked if they prefer American or Mexican music, all students in group two responded in unison "American!" citing better rhythm and better lyrics as the reason for their preferences.

FP 6: "I like the rhythm more. I mean, of what I know, I like the Americans more. Of the Mexicans perhaps I only like cumbia bands or something like that. But when it comes to pop, I like American more."

MP 7: "Because of the rhythm American songs have, it's better than the Mexican, I mean, words just fit better into the song."

FP 6: "Yeah, I do feel words fit better, I sometimes would listen to a song in English, and then I hear the translation to Spanish and it just sounds weird, like it doesn't work."

MP 6: "Yeah, it just sounds really weird [in Spanish]."

MP 7: "Right, in Spanish the same lyric is repeated over and over, and in the American it changes, I mean, it has variations."

MP 9: "Lyrics are better and rhythm and... In general the singers, they are way better than the ones in Spanish. For example, Queen, Freddie Mercury."

MP 8: "Well the question was American or Mexican, but I also listen music in Spanish that is not from Mexico, they are from other places."

MP 6: "Yeah, like Shakira."

MP 8: "Most of them are from Colombia, like because of the rhythm."

When asked: "Would it be fair to say then, that it's not Spanish, but that you don't like Mexican music that much?" Mostly all participants replied "No" simultaneously.

Participants were able to recall music from the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema, stating that is what they consider to be real Mexican music.

MP 6: “Because if we are talking about Mexican music, then we are talking about like ‘Cri-Cri’ [a child’s music performer from the late 50’s].”

FP 6: “I sometimes do like to hear oldies, like the ones they used to sing in the movies.”

Four participants then agreed old Mexican music has good lyrics, and were deemed to be high quality.

FP 7: “I really like listening Mexican artist like Vicente Fernandez or Pedro Infante, Lola Beltran. Those from the Golden Age.”

When the interviewer pointed out that they were talking about a specific Mexican genre like Ranchera, and then asked if they preferred Ranchera to Pop, all of them replied they did not.

The group from Colegio Bilingue Real was more homogenous, since most of them mentioned they like music in English and Spanish, and two of them said they prefer to listen to music in Spanish. Only one participant said she definitely prefers music in English.

FP 11: “I normally listen to... I like English better. I prefer the songs in English than in Spanish. I almost don’t listen to anything in Spanish I don’t like to listen to those I prefer English.”

FP 11: “I like the rhythm better, or like I feel the songs are more upbeat or depending on the genre, but I feel like the songs have more feeling to put it like that or they have a different way of expressing.”

When asked about what they dislike about English music, two participants mentioned the content or style of the lyrics. One said that English music is more explicit with the use of explicit language. Another participant said she did not like the way music in English is written and that she prefers the way Spanish songs are constructed.

MP 10: “Something about English music is that it’s more explicit and people see that more normal than with music in Spanish, in which is very weird that a song in

Spanish might have bad words and it is very normal to see the explicit versions of English songs.”

FP 9: “I fee like with English music, they narrate as if they were talking with a person and music in Spanish I feel like its more in its composition process I feel like they dedicate more feeling to the verses and stanzas.”

Some said they dislike that Spanish-language singers are trying to compare themselves to American musicians. Some said the music just does not make sense and it has terrible lyrics.

FP 7: “[Mexican artist] are trying to compete with United States and that just can’t be done. Mexicans have different characteristics to those in the United States and they try to compete.”

MP 6: “The lyrics they use, never changes. For example, they [sing] one verse, and then another one, and then they repeat again the first one, and that’s the entire song. And then, the songs last like five minutes repeating the same thing.”

FP 5: “Sometimes I feel they just don’t make sense.”

When asked, “what do you think about Mexican bands and singers why do you like them more than Americans?” Or “Is it that you do not prefer Mexicans, like it’s more about Spanish in general like Colombians or Spaniards?”, participants said they definitely prefer to listen to music in Spanish, regardless of the nationality of the singers.

FP 10: “I think I prefer in general, as long as they’re Spanish-speakers because I feel, like for example in Latin America, songs are more upbeat. And here in Mexico, like I said before, they are more romantic and more traditional, and in Latin America now they are a little bit more modern and with more movement

MP 11: “Well I don’t see the difference; I think it depends on the band itself. There are many variations for me to say that I prefer Mexican to United States musicians.”

Participants then started mentioning some Mexican contemporary singers and bands they consider good, but they were mostly pop artists.

FP 8: “There are Mexican bands that are good, but when you balance it out, Mexico or United States, I think the U.S. wins.”

FP 6: “I feel like with everything now with globalization. [American music] it’s the most adopted. In many cultures what they adopt the most it’s what is coming out of

America. Generally, it's normal to hear that everywhere, and even more in our case because we are right here next to the U.S.”

MP 7: “It's also what gets the biggest sales.”

Among the participants there was a wide range of artists, genre, and language when listing their favorite artist. Older American artists were mentioned by both female and male participants, like Nirvana, Michael Jackson, and Queen. Among contemporary bands, participants mentioned One Republic, One Direction, Selena Gomez, Coldplay, Muse, Justin Bieber, and Shawn Mendez. Some Mexican bands were also mentioned like Camila, Reik, Mana, Luis Miguel, and Pepe Aguilar; another was the American *norteño* band, Duelo; the final two were Enrique Iglesias and Mago de Oz, both from Spain. When asked, “Why do you think people might prefer to listen to music in English than in Spanish”, they said that to them the words sound better in English, that English is the language that everyone in the world can understand.

FP 1: “I think it's because English has become a very global language. It is the one thing [language] that everyone knows, everyone understands it. So, I think that is one of the reasons. Plus, the voices from over there [U.S.] have something. Like English voices are very good singers. More talent gets discovered.”

MP 3: “Yeah, that is like the language that has become the most important in the world, and because we can understand it, we like the lyrics and the way words sound.”

Two participants said they think people rather listen to music in English because the songs are very catchy among teenagers or because they are predisposed to listen to music from American artists. One participant suggested that music had nothing to do with the popularity of American artists. She said people are more fascinated with the bodies and physical aspects of boy bands and pop sensations.

FP 11: “I feel it has more rhythm, it's catchier with people, and the songs get stuck in their heads and normally we can see it. For instance, we can listen to people who are always singing Drake's songs. He releases a new song and it's already in everyone's

head. I think people enjoy it more, and those are songs that are easier for people to sing.”

MP 9: “I think is because they are so used to the music from over there, and they are more interested in music from other places.”

FP 9: “I think that is about the physical body of singers. For example, many teenagers rather listen, not because of the music but because of the artist because they think they are good-looking, same thing with American bands like One Direction, or like Justin Bieber... so I think it’s more about stereotypes they have about their body than because of the music.”

Only one participant said that he thinks people prefer to listen to music in English than Spanish to feel superior, reasoning that if the music comes from a rich and powerful country like the United States, then people who listen to that music must be rich and powerful too. He said people who listen to music in English want to feel part of the United States following their lifestyles or culture.

MP 10: “I think because many people, not everyone [...] I don’t know, they feel like it’s something superior and think they are better for listening to that type of songs.”

Q: “Why do you think they feel better to listen to those songs?”

MP 10: “I am not sure. I feel like it’s a richer place [the United States], classier in a way, I think they want to feel, to a certain extend, part of it.”

Television and Film Preferences

The conversation then turned to talk about television preferences, when asked if they watch TV on a daily basis half of the group from Instituto Irlandes replied “no”. One of them said sometimes, and two others said they leave it on on the background while eating or doing something else. However, when specified if they use Netflix or any other video streaming platforms they showed surprise, since they were not considering watching Netflix as the equivalent of watching television. When asked if they still watch regular TV channels, two of the male participants said they watch television only during the weekends when there is a soccer match. Two of them said they watch cartoons on traditional television. Two female

and one male participant said they also watch the national news in the morning and late at night with their family. Five male participants said they like to watch sports on TV, usually soccer matches or football games. Another said he likes watching *lucha libre* on TV. One female participant said she likes watching E! Entertainment and other fashion/celebrity culture channels. The favorite channels among participants in the first and second groups are E! Entertainment, Discovery Channel, History Channel, Warner, and TNT. Some of the specific television shows mentioned by group one and two were *Grey's Anatomy* and *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Stranger Things*, *Supernatural*, *Criminal Minds*, *the Simpsons*, *Sherlock*, *the Walking Dead*, *Orange is the New Black*, and one said, "All the original Netflix shows". One participant said she enjoys watching American legal dramas, because she wants to pursue a career in law. However, she had said earlier she wanted to go to college in Monterrey. She did not acknowledge the fact that the legal system in Mexico is completely different from the American. The participant might have been idealizing a legal career based on what she watches on American television.

FP 6: "I like watching legal TV shows, because I want to go to law school, so like *How to Get Away With Murder* and *Drop Dead Diva*, that sort of things. Like the oral trials and that sort of stuff I really like."

Participants from Instituto America were asked about the amount of time they watch television, most of them said about an hour or even less. When one of them asked for clarification as to what kind of TV, the interviewer replied they should take into account the time spent watching TV shows and movies on their phones, tablets, computers, or smart TVs. Then, they all change their answers to over two hours a day some said more than three. One of the female participants even said she likes to keep the TV screen off, "because there's nothing good on it". One of the participants said that when he does not have homework, he sometimes spends all afternoon on Netflix. While most participants watch TV in the living

room with their family, three said they watch by themselves. When asked why they do not like to watch traditional television, participants said they do not like the programming. Furthermore, Netflix and other video streaming services are better since they can watch television whenever it is more convenient for them.

FP 5: “The shows aren’t cool. I don’t like them.”

FP 6: “I feel like once you have the option of just watching whatever you want whenever you want. It’s hard to go back and think I am going to watch this at this time, because this is the only time they broadcast. I feel like it’s easier to choose between what’s available.”

MP 6: “Maybe it’s not that we don’t like to watch [traditional] television. It’s just that now we have that convenience to watch what we want, and we are not stuck to a schedule.

FP 6: “Even when the show it’s just coming out, I rather wait and then look for it once I have time to watch the new episode. That way I am not worried about not being able to do anything at the time of broadcast.”

Unlike groups one and two, all the participants from Colegio Bilingue Royal said they watch television on a daily basis. Additionally, most of them mentioned that they watch traditional cable television and open networks daily: one said only some days, and another said he watches traditional television everyday “just a little bit”, but more during the weekends (especially soccer matches). However, they said they also watch television using video streaming platforms such as Netflix or Roku and would rather spend more time watching Netflix than traditional television.

MP 11: “My favorite TV show is *Gotham*.”

FP 9: “Mine is *The Royals* It is an English TV show that’s about the monarchy and I really like it because I really like the monarchy’s history and how they were and how it is now in those countries.”

FP 11: “I really like watching *Bones* and *Criminal Minds*. More than anything I watch those because, well besides from the fact that I really enjoy them, they are related to the career I want to pursue, Criminal Justice. I feel like with those programs I am learning a little bit about the career and everything; and I really enjoy it because that’s

how I can tell that I am interested in that career and that stuff. So, I really do enjoy it a lot those types of TV shows.”

MP 9: “Also right now like there’s a lot of TV shows in English that they make into Spanish in Netflix, and there’s also *Club the Cuervos*, which is in Spanish. And it’s the one like almost everyone in Latin America is watching because it has a humor that is more about ordinary life.”

When discussing the type of Mexican programming, the two male participants who said they do watch Mexican programming on a daily basis said they only watch some *telenovelas* because either their mom or their families have them on during lunch or family time. If they had the choice, they would change the channel. Furthermore, when they are by themselves they watch other type of programming.

MP 9: “*Novelas* I watch everyday. Not all the *novelas* but some of them. Mostly when my mom is there. So, I usually stay there with her watching, or like the shows *Como Dice el Dicho* or *Lo que Callamos las Mujeres*.”

MP 10: “To be honest I only watch *Como Dice el Dicho*, or *la Rosa de Guadalupe*. I watch it everyday because when I get home for lunch that’s what it’s on.”

Out of all the three groups only one participant said she enjoys watching *telenovelas* and Mexican programming regardless of with whom she is watching. However, she did mention that it is a ritual for her and her mother to watch television together and then talk about the *telenovelas*.

FP 9: “[I watch] with or without my family, because I really like *novelas*. Before I used to like a lot the ones from Televisa, and I used to like to watch and I still like to watch because I always watch them with my mom, so we like to talk about it among each other and likewise programs like *Como Dice el Dicho* and *la Rosa de Guadalupe*.”

Participants from Instituto Irlandes said they do not watch Mexican programming other than newscasts because of the lack of generic variety and poor production quality.

MP 1: “I can have the TV on with an episode from *La Rosa de Guadalupe*, but I don’t pay attention to it. It’s just there in the background.”

Q: “What about Netflix’s Mexican shows like *Club de Cuervos*?”

FP 2: “Yes.”

MP 3: “*Narcos*.”

Q: “What about other shows in Spanish, not necessarily *novelas*?”

FP1: “*El Señor de los Cielos*.”

FP 4: “*El Barco*.”

Q: “Would you say you prefer American TV than Mexican?”

FP 2: “Yeah, I actually I really don’t watch any Mexican shows.”

FP 4: “Plus, I don’t think we have many.”

MP 2: “The only ones I’ve seen are *El Señor de los Cielos* and *La Reina del Sur*”.

(One of the participants, later pointed out one is Colombian and the other one is an American production, so none of those are Mexican shows).

Q: “Why do you prefer American TV to Mexican?”

FP 2: “I feel American TV is made better.”

MP 2: “Shows are more creative, they have better actors.”

FP 1: “More handsome”.

FP 3: “There is more mystery.”

Participants from Instituto America had a similar reaction, when asked if they like more American television or Mexican television, all the participants said they prefer American TV. Among the stated reasons why they dislike Mexican television include low production qualities, repetitive themes, and that “*telenovelas* [in particular] are overly dramatic.”

FP 6: “The most common is *telenovelas*, and I really don’t like drama. Plus, they are incredibly extravagant.”

FP 5: “It’s always the same theme, with different characters and context.”

MP 6: “It’s always the same: tragic love.”

MP 7: “At the end, it’s all about the same, when something tragic happens, it’s always on slow motion.”

FP 11: “I feel like they over exaggerate things sometimes and the dramatization or all that for me does not make sense or it seems extremely exaggerated.”

MP 10: “The drama is too phony, and there’s no good acting.”

MP 11: “I thinking acting is okay, it’s just that the story, they are always seeking to repeat it. Once one does well, they try to do the same.”

FP 9: “That’s the reason I stopped watching *novelas*, because I feel they no longer have new ideas, the *novelas* that our grandmothers watched, they want to do them again but with new actors and changing certain things or simply leaving them in suspense so they can later release a second part.”

MP 11: “Plus, if they do well, they tend to stretch it out a lot. The story loses its essence.”

Although participants did not like *telenovelas*, they did indicate a certain preference for Mexican comedy.

MP 6: “I do like Mexican comedy, for example: *La Familia Peluche*.”

FP 6: “Oh, well then *Club de Cuervos* I think is Mexican, and I do like it a lot.”

Participants were then asked about the things they dislike about American TV. They said they do not like misrepresentations of Mexico or Mexicans on American television.

Furthermore, four of them mentioned specific examples from when one of their favorite TV shows showcased Mexico in a negative way. They also were able to detect a certain level of grandiosity from American productions that they rejected and found hard to believe.

FP 6: “I don’t like when the shows talk about Mexican culture. They sometimes show things that have nothing to do [with Mexico].

FP 7: “They picture [Mexico] as a small dirty town.

FP 6: “Right, so for instance in *Teen Wolf*, in one season they travel to Mexico and literally they portrayed it as a little town on top of a hill, with a donkey wandering around, and with an ancient Aztec temple. They are erroneously portraying it.

FP 5: “They had to show the worst of Mexico.”

FP 8: “And every time they mention the border, it’s always the same image. Bridges full of undocumented, accordion music.”

MP 8: “Yeah, Norteña music.”

FP 8: “Right. And every time they mention Mexico, for example in *Breaking Bad*, Mexico is all about drug trafficking.”

Q: “Is the fact that shows are portraying Mexico in a negative way stopping you from watching?”

FP 6: “I did stop watching after that season, because I lost interest. And it really bothered me to a certain degree. That really isn’t what Mexico is, and they are only letting stereotypes get bigger.”

Q: “Is there anything else you don’t like?”

MP 8: “That they elevate themselves. They are always the heroes and the main characters, and the stronger ones.”

FP 6: “Like in *How I Met Your Mother*, they have a Canadian character and they’re always making fun of her.”

MP 6: “And also, everything happens in the US, right?”

FP 8: “Yeah, like in *Supernatural*, everything happens in the US, the world almost ends like on six different occasions and it’s always in the US.”

When participants were asked to discuss the aspects they do not like about American television, most of the students from Colegio Bilingue Royal agreed that the content is too violent or does not share their ethical values. Two of the participants made the claim that some of the contents are not apt for children. One participant indicated that the continual repetition of the same ideals or behaviors on television could lead to a normalization of improper attitudes or behaviors.

MP 11: “I feel like it has very few ethical and moral values sometimes.”

MP 9: “Well, likewise I think it’s not right that everyone can watch that because they make the behaviors they do normal.”

FP 11: “They also advertise violence, it’s like they tend to do advertising, well maybe not advertise, but they do have a lot of shows about violence in different channels. That is something they show a lot.”

FP 9: “I feel like they don’t specify the public to which it’s addressed like he said. There are many shows that they broadcast on open TV and kids can watch that, and it might affect them psychologically in the future.”

In contrast, when describing the things they like about American television, most of the participants talked about the way reality is portrayed in American shows. They all claimed reality is better covered in American TV. One female participant said that American shows do not try to hide reality from viewers. Male participants said American television is more intelligent and has better special effects and drama.

MP 11: “What I like [about American TV] is that I feel it’s a little bit more realistic; they try to be guided more by intelligence and things like that. They try to be more realistic, and that’s what I like.”

FP 9: “I feel like they don’t try to cover the reality of that’s going on. They mirror contemporary life more, and maybe not how we are meant to carry it, but some advice or how to cope with that contemporary life.”

FP 11: “I say that more than anything because like they release shows or programs that they’re really going to catch people’s attention and also because they are very explicit. They show you things as they are. For example, if in *Bones* they are doing a [forensic] incision or something like that they show you that as it is; very explicit with blood and everything.”

MP 10: “I like it because it has better drama, better effects and that makes it better, and what I like the most.”

When asked if they watch any other type of programming besides American or Mexican, respondents mentioned the British programs *Sherlock* and *Doctor Who*. Participants also said they like watching television from Spain, like the show *El Barco* and *Vis a Vis*. When participants were asked to rank where their favorites shows come from, they said US, Spain, then Mexico.

Participants had completely different reactions and feelings towards Mexican television and Mexican cinema, they like and consume Mexican cinema but they despise *telenovelas*. And some even said that they also prefer TV shows produced in Spain than any *telenovelas* produced in Mexico.

On Mexican *telenovelas*:

FP 4: “They are not well done.”

MP 1: “Bad acting.”

FP2: “I mean is the acting really, but to be honest I really do like Mexican movies.”

FP 3: “They are terrible. And the plot, I mean what is that about? Now they have episodes about everything. Really stupid things.”

Q: Why you do like Mexican movies?

MP 2: “There’s only a few but... they are good.”

FP2: “Many time it’s just national pride. You know. It’s cool that they are succeeding.”

FP 3: “They have good plots.”

FP 2: “Another thing is that it’s the same mentality.”

MP 1: “They have good jokes, and plus we get it.”

FP 1: “For many of us, it’s our lifestyle. I mean it’s not as if we can compare ourselves with Annalise Keating [*How to Get Away with Murder*], their way of thinking is very different from ours.”

While they could not relate to *novelas*, participants did say that they prefer Mexican movies, especially comedies because the jokes are more in tune with their humor, and it’s easier for them to identify with the characters since they speak Spanish like them.

FP 3: “Yes and the jokes. For instance, the Mexican movies that I had like the most are those with like the same environment like *Casese Quien Pueda, Me Late Chocolate, Nosotros los Pobres*.”

MP 1: “It’s like similar to what we live on a daily basis, so it’s cool.”

Q: “Do you watch any other television programming in Spanish either from Latin America or Europe?”

FP 2: “Well yes, TV shows from Spain are great. The Spanish is cool.”

Participants in the first group agreed that they definitely like more Mexican cinema than Mexican television. However, they said they still prefer American cinema than Mexican cinema. They tried to explain their preference saying that the style is different. When

discussing comedies, they prefer Mexican comedies than American because other styles in Mexican cinema are not good enough. However, overall they prefer American cinema.

Participants from Instituto Irlandes stated that they don't have much time to watch television, because they occupy their afternoons with a lot of extracurricular activities. Their comments explained why the survey indicated their school was the one in which students watch less television on a daily basis. Their school was organizing a convention and the female participants said they spent most of the afternoons in committee meetings. Besides staying for afterschool activities, most of them go to the gym, and attend religious gatherings in school. In addition to that, one of the girls goes to ballet, two of them used to be part of the volleyball team, one of the boys takes Taekwondo classes, and another takes guitar lessons.

Habits, Taste, and Travel

When asked about what they do during the weekends, all the participants from Instituto Irlandes agreed that they get together for house parties, go to the movies, or dinner with friends. Their favorite restaurants include typical Mexican places, such as taco or burger joints, hot wings, sushi, Italian restaurants, and American restaurants like Applebee's and Fuddruckers in Laredo.

Similarly, participants from Instituto America and Colegio Bilingue Royal said their favorite restaurants are small taco and burger joints, and some traditional Mexican restaurants. When participants were asked to name their favorite places to have lunch or dinner there were some differences between those who preferred Mexican restaurants from the Mexican side of the border and those who prefer Italian or American restaurant chains on both sides of the border. The first participants to respond named a variety of restaurants from Nuevo Laredo: mainly cheap local sushi places and traditional Mexican food restaurants

from the Mexican side of the border. When one of the female respondents replied that she likes Italian and American restaurants, two other participants made fun of her, whispering and laughing after she was done speaking. Then the male participant responded, “Any taco place would do” as if to make the point that food does not really matter.

FP 11: “I like Wings Daddy’s and La Palma, IHOP, Applebee’s, Tomatillos, Olive Garden, Jonny Carino’s and Chili’s.”

MP 9: “Any taco food truck, the first one to cross my way. It doesn’t really matter. From Laredo, I usually go with my little sister a lot to McDonald’s and from time to time I go to the Olive Garden.”

Participants were asked how often they travel to Laredo, Texas, Nuevo Laredo’s sister city, to go shopping. The majority said they go once a week, two of them said twice a month. Participants from the first group, Instituto Irlandes, were the students who mentioned to go more often to Laredo sometimes even twice a week. Most of the participants said they cross the border to have lunch with the family and visit a few stores during their short visits to the United States like Sam’s, HEB, Target, and Best Buy. They also mentioned going to the mall. From all three groups only one female participant said she did not have a visa, so she could not visit the United States. And another two said they go for a big shopping spree once or twice a year.

There was only one female participant who said she did not enjoy visiting Laredo. She said she does not enjoy waiting in long lines or having to deal with large numbers of other people.

MP 9: “I usually go every other Saturday, but if I have to go every weekend I would go if necessary. Like, in case I need to buy something.”

MP 10: “To be honest I only go when my mom feels like getting something from over there, or me. Like clothes or something. Like around twice a month.”

FP 9: “I honestly don’t like to go at all. I don’t know, I don’t think it is something fun, having to cross and all that. Even if you have SENTRI or not. I don’t like it, regularly I only go, you can say every six months, and it’s to buy school supplies,

because over there is a lot cheaper than here. But anything I need I try to find it here, and only if it's extremely necessary, something that you can only find there, I'll go. But I don't go for pleasure I go, because they forced me or because I they make me go."

FP 10: "I go visit my dad, and we have lunch over there, and sometimes I go to mall or Wal-Mart."

It was when asked about their favorite retail stores, where the groups showed some differences. Participants from Instituto Irlandes were more selective about their choices in clothing. All of the male participants said their favorite retail store was Express. One of the female participants said her favorite store was The Limited. Another male participant said Aldo and Gap. The female participants at first were having trouble recalling their favorite retail stores. Then one of them asked if the stores had to be in Laredo. When answered no. All four of them said they buy their clothes in San Antonio and Houston. Most of them claimed Zara was their favorite store, and that in Laredo they sometimes go to Joe Brand, the only luxury store in the local mall. Female participants said they do not like shopping for clothes in Laredo.

FP 2: "When we go shopping, we like to go to stores we don't have here in Laredo, that way we know nobody is going to be wearing the same thing as us."

Participants from Instituto America and Colegio Bilingue Royal said among their favorite retail stores were Holister, Forever 21, Aeropostale, Champs, Rue 21, Papaya's, Express, and Kmart. Although one of the participants had already stated that she does not like going to Laredo either for shopping or any other activities, all the participants named American chain stores when asked to list their favorite retail stores. None of the participants responded with a Mexican store or brand when talking about the stores where they like to shop for clothes, or even stores located on the Mexican side of the border.

FP 11: “I usually go to Hollister because I used to work there, but like before I would go a lot to that store, also A’gaci, Guess and Sears, those are usually the stores I go to, to search for clothes.”

FP 10: “I usually go to Forever 21, and A’gaci.”

MP 10: “I go to American Eagle and Hollister.”

MP 9: “Hollister, Aeropostale, and H&M.”

FP 9: “I really don’t have a specific store, but I like Vans’ clothes and T-shirts from Hot Topic, because they have band t-shirts that are weird to find.”

MP 11: “I don’t have a specific place; if I go to Laredo, Texas I go to the mall and visit a lot of stores. I don’t have a favorite one.”

Fresas and Nacos

When asked about what it means to be *fresa*, participants from Instituto Irlandes had several short definitions like “snob,” “picky,” “special,” “well-dressed,” and “someone who won’t hang out just with anyone.” They placed special importance on dress and speech to determine who is a *fresa*. On the opposite end of the spectrum, when asked what it means to be *naco*, the participants talked about general appearance. They said someone characterized as *naco* does not have education or class. Some disagreed, while one said appearance was the most important element, another one said education had more to do with whether someone is *naco* or not. However, none of the participants elaborated much.

FP 3: “Sometimes they dress okay, but sometimes it’s just the way they talk.”

FP 1: “They don’t have education.”

MP 2: “They don’t have class.”

FP 3: “It’s the way they talk, many times they don’t have the same education as you do, so they just don’t fit in.”

FP 2: “To me, I feel it would be someone who doesn’t have good manners. Us [students from Irlandes] Well we think *nacos* could be someone from other *colegios* [private schools]. I don’t know, here we think of *nacos*, like maybe students from IAES [Instituto America de Estudios Superiores] you know, *nacos*.”

FP 1: “The way they act, they way they are, their education.”

FP 2: “Their speech is vulgar or they dress funny or weird... I don’t know. You know just *naco*.”

Q: “What would be a vulgar attitude?”

FP 1: “It’s the way they talk, they use bad words, or strong words.”

FP 2: “Or they get themselves into a lot of trouble, like fights. I think that’s vulgar.”

Students from the second group, also had different definitions of what it means to be *fresa*, but the main definitions involved, accent, dress, and an attitude of superiority.

MP 6: “More than anything is the tone of the voice, how they dress and how they act with the rest.”

FP 6: “I feel like they act as if they were superior to the rest.”

MP 8: “Snobs.”

MP 6: “For example, there’s a party and we are all dress like we are right now, and then someone arrives wearing a tuxedo.”

FP 5: “The way they treat you. I’ve seen people who will treat you as if you were nothing.”

MP 7: “I feel like they are spoiled, pampered.”

Participants were also asked to define what is *naco*, and who would be someone characterized as *naco*. They agreed it has to do with speech, education, and dress.

FP 5: “It would be people who do not know how to use the correct vocabulary, they disrespectfully.”

FP 6: “I would only use the word *naco* to describe someone who’s ignorant or who lacks education.”

MP 7: “I would say *naco* is a lot about the way they dress, but mostly about the way they address people.”

MP 6: “Like [talking to an older person] using the word ‘*tu*’ instead of ‘*usted*.’”

FP 8: “Or men who catcall women in the street, those are the most *nacos*.”

For the most part, when talking about the way a *naco* person would dress, they described the *cholo* style from *colonias* (unregulated settlements in marginalized sectors of informal housing). However, when asked if being *naco* had anything to do with money they

all said it did not. They talk about hairstyles, like men wearing ponytails or bangs, and wearing hats to side.

When discussing what it means to be *fresa*, participants from the third group had very similar definitions as the other groups in the other two schools. They mentioned accent, outfits, fashion styles, and attitudes. However, unlike the other two schools, participants from Colegio Bilingue Royal said *fresas* treat people from lower economic classes with disdain. Some participants talked about “wannabe” *fresas*, or people who pretend to come from rich families when the reality is different.

MP 9: “That they don’t hang out with just any person.”

MP 10: “That they use the typical phrases like *osea*, and have an accent, different, or to say... nice.”

MP 11: “They have a very high self-esteem and they think they are superior to the rest of us.”

MP 11: “They really don’t have as much as they say they do.”

FP 9: “Right, yes. The show off, or they say they have but actually they don’t have anything. On the other hand, there are other people that they do have and they are *fresas*, and that’s why they feel superior to the rest of the people.”

FP 10: “I feel like they feel superior and that I think they make faces when something... when you have like something less. When you don’t have something they do have.”

FP 11: “I think it’s, because of clothing. Because if, for example, they buy something in Joe Brand, they’re like ‘oh I am wearing this’ they are showing it off, they like for people to know they are wearing brand clothing that not everyone can afford.”

Q: “Show off, they feel superior, brand clothes, accent, is there something else?”

MP 11: “They are a little discriminatory. They discriminate against those who have less.”

Participants were asked to discuss what they think characterizes a *naco* person, most of them agreed that style was a major variable of what constitutes *naco* identities. Some of the styles they described were also, fashion trends commonly associated with *cholo* style,

such as saggy pants or wearing a cap on the side or using saggy shorts. Some participants were somewhat describing people from very low economic backgrounds. They mentioned class, culture, and education as something *nacos* lack, as well as vulgar behavior.

FP 11: “Because of the way they talk, they have like... They talk in a way, I don’t know very *corriente* [vulgar]. And the way they dress also has something to do, like using pants halfway down their butt [sagging pants], or t-shirts with print like ugly, or caps and all that stuff.”

MP 11: “I feel like they’re people with very little culture and little class. I don’t think they’re poor. I just feel they have very little culture.”

FP 9: “I feel they’re persons who don’t know how to express themselves or they don’t know how to behave in moments in which they’re present, not that much because of clothes or that. Because I feel like they might not have like the resources to buy something better and it’s the only thing they have on their reach. So, to me a *naco* person is someone who doesn’t know how to behave.”

MP 10: “I think they are guided by the people around them. Because here, the usual is to go out to the streets, and that is where you play with the people who live on your street and many people are wearing the cap on the side or something like that, and since they see that. They imitate that, and if someone sees a person wearing a side cap or shorts, saggy, well they are discriminated as *nacos*.”

MP 9: “I think is the people that are normally in the streets for most of their lifetime and well they see how people outside behave and they think it’s how they are supposed to behave, because they don’t have the same education than the rest.”

Q: “Would you say *naco* and *fresa* are antonyms?”

Participants: “Yes!”

MP 11: “Although there can be *nacos fresas*. They are somewhat related.”

Living in the Border: Who Is More Mexican?

Participants were asked what they think are the differences between living in the border and living in Central Mexico. The question was phrased: “You guys said you travel a lot to Central Mexico. What do you think are the differences between living in the border and living in the interior of Mexico?” Apparently, the participants seem to think people from Central Mexico are more Mexicans because they celebrate more Mexican traditions. There is also a belief that eating typical Mexican food or living or traveling to cities that are

traditionally associated with Mexico, such as San Miguel de Allende or Mexico City, will make the citizens belong more to the country.

FP 3: “In the interior of Mexico, I think they have like more belonging as Mexicans.”

FP 4: “In the border people are used to going to Laredo.”

FP 2: “We feel that we have a culture like between Mexican and American. And in Mexico [Mexico City] I think they feel more Mexicans, like, they belong more in the country.”

MP 2: “Because of the food.”

FP 1: “I think they also trash Americans a lot, you know, like in Facebook. I have a friend from D.F. and it’s like, I mean, she is like: ‘No, Americans bye, they have no culture, and I don’t know what.’”

FP 2: “Yes because they feel more belonging in the center. And us, instead, we live it on a daily basis. We go across everyday so...”

Q: “So, you guys think kids your age from Guadalajara or Guanajuato are more Mexican than you are?”

MP 2: “I think so, because maybe they practice traditions more, they eat more things that are more traditional from Mexico or something.”

MP 1: “And for instance, you talk to them [people from the Central Mexico] about universities from the United States or different things that you have to do over here and they have no idea of what you are talking about.”

One of the female participants pointed out that another participants was not originally from Nuevo Laredo, so she might potentially have more input about the subject. The participant said she thought you could see Mexican culture more clearly in Central Mexico because there are more spaces where citizens can demonstrate their Mexican identity as compared to the border region.

Q: “Where are you from originally?”

FP 4: “Irapuato, [Guanajuato].”

Q: “Oh, well yes then. Do you think people from Irapuato are more Mexican than people here?”

FP 4: “Well what they said. There are more things to do over there as Mexican, I mean, like the pueblitos [small towns], San Miguel, Guanajuato, and those. Here you don’t do that in the border.”

When asked about the advantages of living in the border as compare to living in the interior of Mexico, most of the participants agreed that one of the advantages is the ability to learn and practice English.

FP 3: “There are more opportunities, language too.”

Q: “Over there? More opportunities than here?”

FP 2: “No, here. There are more opportunities in the United States. Also, I mean language, English it’s easier for us than for people living in the center.

MP 1: “Same. I mean, people from D.F. [Mexico City] say that people from the border speak English better than them. So, I say it’s true.”

When asked if there are any disadvantages for people living in the border, the participants listed a variety of possible detrimental activities. Some participants mentioned it was hard for the economy of the Mexican border city to thrive having Laredo just across the border. Other participant started talking about traditions and customs typical of Mexico.

FP 3: “Maybe there is a disadvantage, at least here. Nuevo Laredo can’t grow because it has Laredo and we go across, I mean our expenses go to the United States and we do everything over there. So, for instances, Sam’s [The American warehouse chain had a franchise in Nuevo Laredo for a small period of time] broke because we kept going to the Sam’s that is in Laredo because we liked it. So there are many businesses that went into bankruptcy because of the same thing.”

MP 2: “Well, I think here in Nuevo Laredo there is really not much of a culture, and we are more than anything are accustomed to things from over there, the United States. In comparison to another place in Mexico, it’s that they know more stuff. [Referring to more Mexican traditions.]”

FP 1: “A clear example is that we don’t celebrate Día de Muertos, we celebrate Halloween. I mean we are the ones joining when Mexico celebrates Día de Muertos”

Q: “None of you celebrate Día de Muertos?”

FP 2: “If anything, we just eat the sweet bread and that’s it.”

MP 3: “Rarely.”

In the second group, participants from Instituto America were a little bit more pragmatic when asked about the differences between living in the border and in the interior of Mexico. Some of the positive responses were the convenience of being able to go to school in the United States, having availability to many more products, enjoying better lifestyles thanks to having a more stable economy in the border than in central states, and being able to practice by speaking English more often.

Q: “What are the differences of living in the border as opposed to living in the interior of Mexico?”

Many participants at once: “Lifestyle.”

Q: “What about lifestyle? How is it different here than in Central or South Mexico?”

MP 6: “We have it easier. For example, here a new iPhone comes out and many of us already have it, and in the interior of Mexico it takes weeks for it to be available.”

FP 7: “And if for instance, one of us wanted to go to college in the United States, she could easily go to TAMIU or LCC, and still live here. It wouldn’t be as expensive as for someone who might live more deeply into Mexico. It would be more expensive for them to live in the US.”

FP 5: “I think in Central Mexico culture is more obvious, here is too mixed with the American one.”

MP 7: “Also the economy.”

FP 6: “Yeah, supposedly the economy is stronger here.”

MP 7: “Well, in my case that I have traveled a lot to Mexico City, you can clearly see the difference in education. I feel like, sorry for saying it, but there are more *nacos* there. Sorry.”

FP 7: “I feel the mixing of cultures it’s pretty obvious here. In the borders they give more importance to making you learn English.”

FP 6: “I feel like in Central Mexico it’s an option, like if you want to you can learn English, and here you have to speak English.”

Q: “So you do think people from the border have less Mexican traditions and culture than people in Central Mexico?”

FP 6: “I don’t think is less, I just feel it’s too mixed with the American.”

MP 6: “Right, yes. There are a lot of people here in the border that celebrate Mexican traditions, like for instance, *Matlachines* sometimes dance in front of my house.”

FP 6: “Yeah, you can see it here. I was reading, not too long ago, that 94 or 96 percent of the population from Laredo, Texas is Latino, which means we share the same traditions on both sides.”

FP 5: “Maybe it’s not celebrated as big, as in maybe Mexico City, but it is celebrated.”

MP 8: “I say the only thing that changes is Halloween and Thanksgiving.”

When asked if they thought they were as Mexicans as any other student their age living in Guadalajara or Guanajuato, all the participants from the second group responded “No”, some said “I don’t think so”, one male participant in particular said he grew up in the United States during the first years of his life. He said that because he couldn’t fully appropriate the language while writing he felt he still had to learn, hinting that not being able to properly speak Spanish might be a detriment to fully embrace Mexican identity. Some participants expressed the culture from Central Mexico is so different from the one in the border that they sometimes do not understand certain words or phrases and what they signify. Only one participant said the difference in culture and traditions might not have to do with the geographic location of the border, but the size of the city. She said Nuevo Laredo is a small city with few options to practice culture.

MP 6: “Well, personally, I was born in the United States and I lived some time over there, and even when I am in 12th grade right now I sometimes get things wrong when I write or when I am talking. It’s like I am still missing something. I am trying, but I am not there yet.”

FP 6: “There are many things like regionalisms in other parts of the country, that they say over there and they get it. But when you get here you don’t really understand what it means, or it doesn’t make sense to us.”

MP 8: “We use a lot of words in English.”

MP 6: “In Guadalajara or whatever, they go to the plaza and there’s a lot of Mexican culture, here you go to the plaza and you see... *elotes* [corn on the cob].”

FP 6: “I feel it doesn’t have anything to do with the fact that we are close to the United States, I think it’s that we live in a small city, like in Guadalajara there will always be something to do everywhere.”

When participants were asked about the advantages of living in the border, most of them agreed living in the border makes it easier for them to learn English. One male participant even pointed out that the English spoken on the Mexican border is superior to the one spoken in Central Mexico. However, the group was divided when it came to quality of products from the other side. One participant pointed out that the clothes are cheaper in Laredo, in addition to having better quality and some styles are not available anywhere else. Three participants said they thought the quality of US and Mexican clothes is about the same, but the style is different.

FP 8: “The quality of the clothes is different, the one from the US than the one from Mexico, that is why I think it’s more convenient for us to go over there than to buy here.”

FP 6: “Sometimes it’s not so much that it’s made in the US or Mexico because there is a lot of clothes that are made in Mexico and are being sold in the US. It’s about the American brand, that’s what adds value.”

FP 5: “It’s been years since I’ve been buying my clothes over here because I can’t go across, and to be honest I never noticed the difference in quality. I really do like the style of the clothes. The price might be expensive, but it’s the same quality here or over there it’s the same.”

FP 8: “Also products from the market basket. For example, my parents sometimes buy some stuff, like eggs, cheese, that sort of thing here instead of over there. Because it’s cheaper to buy some things here and some over there.”

MP 6: “Groceries are cheaper here... The only thing is that the fruits over there are tastier and that kind of thing. For example, apples are juicier. The ones here are not as good.”

MP 8: “Yeah, like meat and everything.”

FP 6: “It’s probably because of the eagerness to sell to the US, maybe the best it’s sent over there and the rest stays to be sold in here.”

One participant also talked about security, and disrespect for the rule of law in Nuevo Laredo, as opposed to other Mexican cities he has visited. A few participants talked about

how they felt the border is greatly affected by the current bi-national relations between the United States and Mexico. They also commented on how they were able to notice the immigrant population has to stay in Nuevo Laredo, either because they cannot make it to the American side, or because they have been deported and do not have the means or will to go back to their homes.

MP 6: “Security. For instance, if you go to Monterrey and you skip a stop sign and five seconds later the police stop you. And here you skip a stop sign and you just get to see the police chasing them, I mean, but they always escape. There’s more security over there than here. Because here is the place where all *narco* related stuff is born.”

FP 6: “I also feel like here any problem with the relationship between Mexico and the United States affects us directly. For example, when Obama prohibited the Cuban thing, since there’s not really any border security the people that come from the United States to Mexico, well they stayed on this side and they have no rights.”

FP 5: “When this happened, the freeway here in Nuevo Laredo was infested with people.”

MP 6: “There are still many here.”

FP 8: “Yeah, that more than anything. When they deport people those end up in the borders and many times insecurity increases because they don’t have a job, they don’t have anyone.”

FP 7: “The Casa del Migrante was super full and that affected us because of insecurity. It was full, and besides more are coming, and sometimes they don’t know what to do with so many Cubans [...] and everything.”

FP 5: “You don’t know how the city is going to react, because there’s so much insecurity in this city, because we have very few policemen or they won’t patrol. I think the last time I saw a traffic police was months ago. Like not even that, can you imagine much less a policeman that should be paying attention to people who might be hungry and are capable of doing anything, they could do an atrocity.”

MP 6: “I saw in the bridge. A bus from the United States, a lot of convicts got out and they took the handcuffs off and their orange uniform, and they had them cross this way. So all the bad people come this way, and if we are already infested with bad people, more come in and they find each other.”

MP 7: “Insecurity here is too strong. As a matter of fact, my dad was robbed last week. He was robbed, they punched him, he got a lot of bruises, and they took his wallet.”

Participants were able to identify a variety of differences and similarities they have with students their same age living on the other side of the border. The vast majority of responses had to do with differences in the education system. They seem to believe students on the other side of the border have better opportunities to go to school. Participants think their American counterparts have more access to scholarships and technology.

FP 6: “I mean look at the facilities of public schools in the United States, it’s so much better than this one. And this is a private school in Mexico.”

Two of the participants, one male and one female, had spent some time living and studying in Laredo. Both mentioned they had a difficult time making friends with students who would only speak English.

FP 8: “Something that over there is extremely noticeable is, [...] well with Mexicans I got along just fine, I could make friends and everything. And with the people from over there that wouldn’t speak any Spanish I had a hard time. They were more reserved.”

MP 6: “They are very reserved. I also lived there for a while, and I felt that with Mexicans I got along better. But with those who would only speak English they were super reserved. Kind of weird, the things they would talk about. I rather keep my distance.”

Moreover, a few participants agreed that students from the other side of the border lack the education and manners they think are highly instilled in the Mexican side.

FP 8: “Over there they are too liberal.”

FP 6: “Sometimes I get scared at the way kids talk to their parents. I can only imagine myself talking like that... they way my mother would react if I talked like that.”

FP 7: “We have more family values, for example, many of us here are already 18 and our parents are like ‘calm down, what do you mean you are moving on your own? You just turned 18’. Over there, they just turning 18, and they move out of their houses immediately.”

Participants from Colegio Bilingue Royal had different response to what they think are the differences between border life and life in the interior. Only one participant mentioned means of transportation as something that is different in the border. He

complained about the lack of public transportation services available in Nuevo Laredo, pointing out that people tend to have their own car or means of transportation since public services are not as available as in the interior of Mexico.

MP 9: “Here in Nuevo Laredo, regularly, everyone, or every family has a means of transportation, being a car or bike. And in the places where there are more people, where they have more people like Mexico City or Monterrey it’s more normal for people to walk or use the subway, because it’s more economical and there’s more space because, out of all the people there are, they no longer fit with so many cars.”

However, most of the participants talked about culture and consumerism as some of the biggest differences they see between the north Mexican border and other states in the interior of Mexico. Indicating that people are able to take advantage of Nuevo Laredo’s closeness to the US to go shopping and get American products. They talked about the accessibility to American products as an advantage and sometimes a disadvantage of living in the border. One male participant mentioned that people from Central Mexico or other places from the interior of Mexico travel to the border to get American products that they cannot find in their cities. A female participant saw the accessibility to American products as a disadvantage for Mexican products. She indicated that people believe American products are better than Mexican equivalents.

MP 10: “I think there are a lot of differences because there are some American products, and in Central Mexico many people desire and want to visit the United States and that makes it special for the border.”

FP 11: “I feel like, more than anything is consumerism, because for example, people prefer to buy there [Laredo, Texas]. For instance, here in the border we have Laredo, on one side and so they prefer a hundred times over to buy an American product than a Mexican in general. Because they say ‘it has better quality’ or ‘it’s cheaper’, and they prefer clothes and all of that. Here, I feel people don’t consume the Mexican product as much, that they prefer the American more, simply because they have the opportunity.”

Q: “Why do you think they prefer it?”

FP 11: “Simply because of the quality. For example, my mom has always said that clothes have to be always from over there because the fabrics are better, and it’s cheaper or the simple fact that is prettier.”

Conversely, when asked about the differences between the border and the interior of Mexico some participants mentioned it was a disadvantage to have so many American products at hand as it would lead Mexicans to sort of discriminate against Mexican products. However, when asked what they thought were the advantages of living in the border participants believe one important advantage of living so close to the United States is that they have many different products available and the option to choose what they want to consume or where they want to go to school. Only one participant said he thought the advantages were the same.

MP 11: “We have a bigger variety of products within our reach and possibilities and different prices. Plus we have more communication and more ways to get object from other places, by having the United States close by because United States trades with almost every country.”

FP 9: “I feel like we have more options. Like for instance, in those states they go like ‘I don’t like this’ and it’s like ‘well to bad because this is all there is’ because if not they have to spend in moving to another cities or other states where they do have those things and its pricier. Instead we have the option of saying we don’t like it here, we can check over there. And over there we go a 100 percent sure that we will find it.”

FP 10: “I feel like you see more things, you look at the type of education they have over there and like you see the differences and what you prefer. [Here] you are between two options and not just staying in Mexico.”

FP 11: “I think that the best part is that they start innovating, I don’t know like. They come up with a new law or something and then people hear about it. Or things like that, like if they start renovating the tollbooths [in the international bridges] they star renovating on this side too. So, like they innovate and technology advances, something like that.”

When discussing the disadvantages of living in the border, only one participant mentioned the subject of insecurity that migrant populations trying to make it to the United States take to the border city.

MP 11: “I think one disadvantage is because of all of the people that come here trying to cross [to the American side] well here could be a place, well, insecure. A little insecure for trying to reach those people that are more vulnerable.”

In a similar vein, one female participant added that living in the border makes people undervalue Mexican made products. She said having the United States so close makes people discriminate against what is made in Mexico because they see added value to American products just because they come “from a powerful country.”

FP 9: “I feel like we undervalue the things made in Mexico, because we think that by the sole fact that it was sold in the United States it is way better than the one from Mexico. When there are many products that are made in Mexico by Mexican people and are sent over there, and United States says, ‘well no this is my product and it’s much better’. When in reality it was made by Mexican people. I think the disadvantage is that we underestimate our things and the products from Mexico.”

When asked if she underestimated the products from Mexico herself she said she actually prefers Mexican products. However, she does discriminate against Mexico because she believes there are more opportunities for people to move up in the social or economical hierarchy in the United States. However, this participant had a very romantic vision of Mexico and seems to idealize Mexican products.

FP 9: “Umm in products, I don’t think so. In opportunities, yes. Here in Mexico we don’t have as many opportunities. Instead in the United States whether you have or you don’t have the resources you can have a career or a house. And here in Mexico you don’t. If you don’t have the resources it’s very, very hard, or you can count with your hand the people who made it. But on products, I feel Mexican products are better, because over there is more like. ‘Oh okay, let the machine do it’. And here I feel they are more detailed oriented, more like ‘let’s test this’ more that people try to handle the product.”

FP 11: “I feel like here we make ourselves less because most people think like ‘over there, this is better than here’ and they underestimate themselves and to Mexicans.”

Participants were asked if they themselves underestimate their potential just because they happen to live on the Mexican side of the border. One female participant said that the only reason why she feels inferior to her American counterparts is that she thinks they will be more prepared for college once they graduate high school.

FP 9: “I do underestimate myself, more in things that have to do with school, when I think about students going to school over there I think they will graduate better prepared, but it’s not about things, but how they use it.”

Border Traditions

As stated earlier, all of the participants from Instituto Irlandes said they do not celebrate Día de Muertos; that they do not have altars in their house and that they do not visit the cemetery that day as most Mexican citizens do during the holiday.

Q: “What are the most symbolic traditions or holidays celebrated in the border?”

FP4: “Flour tortillas.”

FP 2: “Flour tortillas or *Carne asada*.”

FP1: “The *abrazo*, I feel the *abrazo* [ceremony] is something people from Central Mexico won’t recognize.”

FP 3: “Yeah the Marthas, all of that [WBCA related festivities.]”

FP 2: “They drink a lot of beer, I mean like in the border, people drink a lot of beer.”

FP 2: “Yeah I mean, me with my friends from Central Mexico. I drink whisky and nobody [in Central Mexico] drinks whisky. More like vodka and tequila.”

On the other side, they mentioned Mexican traditions are diluted in the border, and that the current political climate was not ideal. Participants felt very inclined to elaborate when asked about the disadvantages of living in the border, as compared to living in Central Mexico. Some said they felt the culture was not as strong as the one people in the interior of Mexico have. One participant even suggested, she felt the mixing was so strong; she ended up having neither an American nor Mexican culture.

MP 6: “We are not as connected to Mexican culture.”

FP 5: “We compare each other so much, that we underestimate ourselves, and that makes us look bad. We have a weak image in comparison to the Americans. I mean is a damaging comparison. It doesn’t help the Mexican population to want to better themselves to put it that way. Because we have the idea that the United States is too strong and we would never reach that point.”

FP 6: “I do think that the culture gets so mixed that I feel like one day I am going to go to South Mexico and I won’t feel Mexican because there are many things over there that they celebrate more on Mexican culture. But, obviously if I go to the United States I wouldn’t be American, so you are stuck in the middle.”

When discussing the types of holidays they celebrate, participants’ responses reflected an obvious mixing of cultures. Although, they first started listing typical holidays such as Christmas, New Year and the Mexican Independence, later on they started mentioning American holidays and the way they celebrate them. Even though, participants were eager to answer the most important holiday could perhaps be the Mexican Independence, when asked to elaborate on the way they celebrate Thanksgiving, they indicated to have the same level of commitment. One female participant said that Mexican independence was the biggest holiday in her family in which they have traditional Mexican food and get together to *dar el grito*. She also said her family was very involved in celebrating *Día de Muertos*; “Early in the afternoon we go to my dad’s house to put up an altar and then we go to my mom’s house to do another one”, she said. One of them mentioned he had never celebrated Mexican traditions as intensely as he does now because of a new family member who is big on Mexican traditions. One of the female participants said she thought many people in the border celebrate Thanksgiving; others agreed and said they also celebrate Halloween. Only one of the participants said he does not have a Thanksgiving dinner. Only one person said he celebrates sometimes, and the rest mentioned they celebrate the American holiday every year with the traditional Thanksgiving meals, including turkey, mashed potatoes, spaghetti, and ham.

One participant mentioned that the way in which they prepare and consume food is an important component to being Mexican. Among Mexican food they mentioned tacos,

tamales, and mole. Furthermore, two participants talked about the seasoning and variations Mexicans do with food.

FP 5: “We Mexicanize everything, if I could put it like that. For instance, it is a practice of mine to eat spaghetti, which is Italian, with tortilla. I just can’t help it.”

FP 6: “There are people who put salsa on everything. Sushi, I mean, soy sauce, we put jalapenos on it.”

FP 5: “For instance in food, my grandma cannot eat if there’s no tortilla or bread, and that’s how we learned. If there’s no tortilla or bread it’s not food.”

Participants also gave very detailed descriptions about food, which they think is a very different from the food from the interior of Mexico. One female participant said people in the border region had taken traditional dishes and changed them to include ingredients or foods more traditional for the north of the country. One male participant said *carne asada* was a very typical food and ritual for border residents. Only one participant said that she thought Independence Day was an important celebration, since schools have festivals and organize events so students can make presentations on the traditions and gastronomy of each Mexican state.

FP 9: “Because the rest like foods, stuff like that, we have changed it; we have added stuff that is ours. Like *sopes* originally in the states, if you ask for a *sope* well it’s tortilla with beans and cheese and here we are like “add meat, add this *guiso*”. Or with like *elotes*, their like they add *fritos* or bacon or they buy them already made or in Laredo, Texas and add American Doritos because those taste better. In the South that’s like ‘that’s gross’ *elotes* are *elotes* with mayonnaise, and cheese, and salsa. I feel like we’ve been modifying things too much.”

MP 9: “We always have one [*carne asada*] with the family. And I think that’s something that has always been in the border and that has never been lost, because it’s an opportunity for the family to be together and besides eat something that almost everybody likes that is *carne asada*.”

FP 10: “Well Independence Day too, we celebrate it a lot here, because schools also make us dress as Mexicans. And the gastronomic taste, with the typical food from every region.”

Three participants talked about festivities and traditions saying that American traditions are commonly celebrated in Nuevo Laredo; one male participant said he feels like they are in the middle of the two traditions.

MP 11: “I think that mainly the festivities here are guided more by American traditions although they take some of the Mexicans; but it’s like intermediate, and besides I feel that here, things are a little bit pricier because we are more far away from everyone, while over there things are cheaper and we could say there are more handmade products, than by factories or something like that.”

FP 10: “I feel like [in the interior of Mexico] they take more into account the Mexican festivities. We do here also but traditions in the United States are like very influential here where we live.”

One female participant said southern Mexican states are more connected to Mexican roots and traditions and they abstain from celebrating American traditions or following the American lifestyle. This female participant in particular tended to romanticize culture in south states: she thought of Oaxaca as place where women still cook traditional Mexican food and do not use modern electronic appliances like microwaves.

FP 9: “I think you can start looking at the differences in the south states for example Oaxaca, Guanajuato. Because customs or festivities from the United States. Well us in one way or another we have taken them but I feel like for example in cities like Monterrey, Tijuana, everything that is to say the border and Mexico and Sinaloa have also taken [the traditions] and they are not in the border. But because they see at what border states are doing and they think that’s cool. Yet, in states like Oaxaca, and those they don’t adopt it, because they are deep-rooted to Mexican culture. The other thing is food, because over there, the ladies cook. Here I feel like everything is more like, ‘I’m hungry’, and it’s like ‘oh well heat something up’ or ‘use the microwave’ anything we already have it like in packages, and over there they don’t. So I think food changes a lot.”

Importantly, all the participants in the third group said they feel less Mexican than other students their age living in the interior of Mexico. Two participants said the reason they feel less Mexican is that they do not celebrate Mexican festivities or follow the same Mexican traditions as other people in the interior of Mexico. One female participant said she

feels less Mexican because she does not like traditional Mexican dishes. Only male participant said he have not given much thought on what makes a person Mexican.

MP 9: “I think I feel a little bit less Mexican because I am not much of a fan of following traditions from Mexico. But it is not because I don’t want to; it is because that is not a thing in the border.”

FP 9: “I feel like less because they like, in those towns or states like the parents and grandparents, inculcate Mexican traditions since they are super little, instead here in the border I feel like parents and grandparents are more, modern, and they don’t... We now have an option to chose ‘yes I do want to celebrate *Dia de Muertos*’ etc, so that’s why I feel a little less Mexican.”

FP 11: “I also feel less Mexican for the fact that I do consume more American products and I also, like many festivities I don’t like to celebrate them and I don’t like food, for example, *pozole*, *tamales*, I don’t like them. That’s something why I feel less Mexican because of that.”

MP 11: “I actually don’t care. It’s the same to me. I have never thought about who is more Mexican. I don’t have a definition on how a Mexican person is. I know I am Mexican.”

One male participant said that a disadvantage of living in the border is that he feels less Mexican. More explicitly, he said that living in the border makes him feel he celebrates more American traditions and is not as in touch with his Mexican roots as older family members. He also said the general public do not think of the border region as a Mexican territory or that is not in the collective imaginary of Mexico like Mexico City or Monterrey.

MP 9: “I think one disadvantage is that you feel less Mexican.”

Q: “Did you just figure that out with our talk? Or is it something you’ve always known?”

MP 9: “I say that because of what I see in my family. My grandparents have many traditions about la Virgencita [Virgin of Guadalupe] and things like that. And really, well I feel less Mexican because here in the border I am more close to the traditions from over there.”

FP 10: “I feel like since we are more to the sides of Mexico they don’t pay as much attention because the cities that really matter are those in the center.”

Q: “Like legislators and authorities are the ones paying less attention to the border or whom are you referring by they?”

MP 10: “I mean by I am talking about they way other people see it. They see Mexico and they think about Monterrey or Mexico City, and they don’t think about Tamaulipas.”

While discussing the disadvantages of living on the border participants mentioned traditions being potentially being lost. One participant said he feels like people on the border don’t pay as much attention to traditions as people in the interior of Mexico. One participant who had previously said she is religious claimed that catholic traditions are still observed in local parishes on the border though she agreed that traditional Mexican festivities are not celebrated as much.

MP 11: “I feel like here in the border we lose the importance of the traditions we celebrate and we really don’t pay much attention to any tradition.”

FP 9: “I feel like the one that we do have a little bit more, it’s the *Día de Muertos* or the religious ones, like the celebrations of Saint Jude, the Virgin of Guadalupe I think those are the only ones.”

Mexican Identity

Once participants were questioned about their music preferences they were asked if they thought about rejecting their Mexicanness or losing their national identity through heavily listening to English-language music. Then again, in order to give them time to reflect, towards the end of the interview they were asked one more time if they thought heavy consumption of English-language music and television would make someone reject their national identity. The first group had different reactions as to what it means to listen a certain music style.

FP 4: “Maybe it was that way before, but now. Now, everything is changing a lot. Now they do a lot of collaborations, for example J Balvin and Justin Bieber did a song together and it sounds really cool. It’s really cool, it makes you feel great as a Mexican, as Latino that he is working and collaborating with someone Hispanic.”

MP 3: “I was thinking the same. The thing is that, just because someone likes music in English doesn’t mean you will have to change your personality or something like that. I don’t think someone can say: Well, because I listen to music in English, I am

American. That doesn't have anything to do with it. That person is still Mexican, that doesn't change anything."

In the second group, all the participants agreed it would be a wrong statement to make about Mexican audiences. They used themselves as an example of someone who likes American music but still loves his or her country. One participant even mentioned, she thought liking American or English music was a very common thing worldwide, but the geographical proximity to the United States contributes even more to their cultural preferences. She claimed culture in the border region has mixed American and Mexican traditions in a way that is very peculiar and specific to the region. Some participants, particularly the male participants, said they feel extremely proud of their nationality, regardless of the type of cultural products they consume. They do not feel the two concepts are mutually exclusive.

MP 7: "Really, that is just something wrong. I like listening music in English, but I would even defend my country. I feel 100 percent Mexican. Truly, I am really proud of my heritage."

FP 7: "I feel like whatever you listen to or whatever you do, whatever you think. You are Mexican, and you will protect that."

FP 6: "I think one of the characteristics here is that you were born in Mexico, and you feel Mexican, independently of the traditions or customs from others. You feel Mexican and you defend that."

FP 5: "No, because one might have tastes or preferences for the traditions of other countries, but that doesn't mean you are negating your homeland or your nationality."

FP 6: "I believe, that besides that is something very peculiar for the border, where two cultures get mixed, so even if we weren't living in a globalized world. We would still listen to a lot of what they listen over there, because we are stuck in the middle. Yet, that doesn't mean we are less Mexican."

Likewise, participants from Colegio Bilingue Royal responded that one thing does not have anything to do with the other. They mentioned it had more to do with taste and current trends. One participant mentioned that the overwhelming exposure via television and the

Internet of American cultural goods might have something to do with the kinds of preferences that people have or their tastes in music.

FP 11: “I don’t think so. I feel like it doesn’t have anything to do with rejecting your culture. I think that more than anything it has to do with you just having a preference to listen music in English but you are not leaving your culture aside.”

MP 9: “I think it’s more because of the popularity of the Internet and television, because normally all the programming is from the United States and well, the thing that is most seen there is music from there, and well that’s what we watch.”

MP 10: “I think it is just taste.”

FP 9: “I think it is trends.”

FP 10: “I also feel it doesn’t have anything to do.”

In the first group during the last question, participants were asked if they thought that the combination of listening to only English music, or watch only American TV shows and movies would make people lose or reject their Mexican identity. All the participants agreed that people do lose their Mexican identity because of the overwhelming exposure to American culture. Additionally, participants mentioned they do not celebrate Mexican traditions as much or as intensely as people from the center, which makes them feel as if they were not expressing their Mexican identity.

FP 2: “Yes, because we guide ourselves many times, following the American lifestyle and our stereotypes are guided according to the American lifestyle, not the Mexican one.”

MP 3: “Yes, because to consider yourself Mexican you should also consider traditions, I mean, like food for example. For instance, *Día de Muertos* and that kind of stuff, if you are only doing American things and stuff like that, you would only be a Mexican born citizen. So yeah, because you are more involved with American things.”

However, participants in the second group had a very different reaction when asked the same question. Overwhelmingly, they all said it does not have anything to do with their Mexican identity. Furthermore, they claimed consumption of American cultural products it is

a choice they consciously make in order for them to practice English. One participant said and the rest agreed that it might represent a problem only if they were actively rejecting Mexican productions. She claimed sometimes it is matter of lack of good programming.

FP 6: “I feel like it depends on what’s the intention. Because sometimes you just don’t like anything of what they are showing here right now. But if I were to say specifically, I’m just going to watch American shows and only hear American music, then yes that would be a problem for the one who does not want to specifically to hear or watch anything that comes from his or her country.”

FP 5: “Sometimes they listen American music to learn English, for fluidity.”

FP 6: “That doesn’t mean you are going to avoid at all cost to watch something else.”

MP 6: “It’s just that it helps you to develop. Well I used to play online games and I would only go to the ones from the US, and I talked to a lot of them on Skype, and it helped, I did lose the anxiety of speaking English.”

Q: “I had asked you before if you thought the people from Central Mexico were more Mexicans than the people from here. And you said yes. So do you think it has nothing to do with the things they listen to or what they watch on TV? It has more to do with the location?”

FP 6: “It has to do more with how close you are to traditions, it’s not so much about the place where you live. It could be that you can live here, but you are super attached to your roots and you celebrate all the celebrations like they would do it in the South. But at the same time, people here around those dates. I don’t feel it’s the same as in the South, and that’s why I say they are more attached to the roots in the South.”

MP 6: “It depends on each person. Like there are some people here that dress in *guayaberas*, and if you go to the South you see they all look the same, with a white shirt *guayabera* and white pants.”

FP 5: “Well I don’t think they are more Mexican than us, I just think there is a mixing of cultures and that’s it. Dress and that stuff, and yeah because of globalization and that.”

MP 6: “I think regardless we are going to defend our country.”

FP 6: “Maybe it’s hard to be as attached as the Mexicans from the Center because of globalization and the fact that we are in the border. But, I don’t think is making us less Mexican. At the end of the day you were born somewhere, it’s your nationality and I do feel very much identified with that, despite the fact that well English, when I learned English I would only listen music in English and I tried to practice fluency, and now I really like hearing the movies in English, because sometimes the Spanish dubbing it’s too exaggerated, like the voice it’s not coherent with the person, so I rather listen to the original audio.”

MP 7: “I do like Mexico, I am American, but I love Mexico so much.”

One of the participants also mentioned that regardless of the kinds of products they consume Mexicans will continue to hold their values.

FP 5: “I think it’s what we said earlier. In spite of having a mix of everything, what prevails in you it’s the Mexican part. You can feel as American as you want, or Chinese because the Anime, or whatever, at the end of the day we are Mexicans, that is always present.”

MP 6: “I’m American. I was born over there, but I really like to be here. I prefer Mexico over the United States.”

FP 6: “I feel like in Mexico, we are all very friendly, very united.”

MP 6: “Crossing the border it feels different, they even treat you differently.”

FP 6: “In the United States you can clearly see the difference between white people and the people that comes from other countries.”

FP 8: “[Being Mexican] it’s being a friend.”

FP 5: “Small things, simply, like saying ‘please’ and ‘thank you’. I think that when I went to the US, you couldn’t feel the warmth.”

Something remarkable happened in the third group, where more participants claimed to watch and listen to Spanish-language music and television. Interestingly, it was precisely the participants who had previously reported that they consume a lot of American television and English-language music who said at this point that they do not think consumption of American television or music will make you lose your identity; those who mentioned to be less exposed to English-language material said they do think some Mexican identity is lost. One student even used himself as an example of someone who consumes a lot of American television but still manages to keep his Mexican identity. Another student said she thought nationality was stronger than taste, and that one thing has nothing to do with the other. A third student said that cultural preferences would not affect identity, because the family is also a very strong mediation against media influences.

MP 11: "I don't. Well because I haven't. I do prefer to watch those things from the United States, but at the same time I do love the country and I don't feel I am different from the rest."

FP 11: "I would say no, I mean the fact that you prefer something American won't make you change your nationality. That won't make you American you will always be Mexican. The fact that you have a different taste won't make you change."

MP 10: "I also agree, it's no; because here is all your family."

MP 9: "I don't think so because, at the end of the day we were born here and we will live here for the rest of our lives, and we have to get used to the things from the country and not so much to look for things from other countries."

Only one female participant, who had previously mentioned to have high exposure to Spanish-language television and music said consumption of American cultural goods affects to some extent the ability to keep a Mexican identity, especially for border residents where Mexican traditions and festivities are not as strong as in other parts of the country.

FP 9: "I actually think they do. Because like I said before, they think only what's coming from [the U.S.] is good and they don't give Mexicans or Mexican products a chance to demonstrate they are good. Based on the fact alone that they have already chosen what's coming from the United States."

DISCUSSION

As stated in the literature review, proponents of cultural imperialism have argued that ideology, culture, and identity gets diluted as transnational corporations dominate “the networks through which cultural commodities circulate- film, television, advertising, publishing products, education and tourism”, (Mattelart, 1983, p. 39). As a counterpoint, proponents of cultural proximity rebut this approach by presenting “the intuitively appealing notion that people will gravitate toward media from their own culture (Ksiazek, Webster, 2008, p. 485). These two theories convey opposing concepts. On the one hand, the flow and availability of American cultural productions in Latin American countries is overwhelming (Gonzalez, 2006), especially within cable television and film industries. On the other hand, cultural theorists (Hall, 1980) have argued cultural mediations play an important part in the audience decision to either accept everything coming from media, reject the messages entirely, or negotiate some meanings. So, one of the most important questions for this study is to what extent can cultural products (namely music and television) influence in the construction of identities, although there have been many attempts to find a solution, the answer remains debated. Nestor Garcia Canclini (2001) poses the question in manner apropos to a region like the US-Mexico border: “What kinds of literature, film, and television are capable of narrating the heterogeneity and coexistence of several codes within a group and even in one individual subject?” (p. 94) especially in a globalized world where identities are being reconstructed and interconnection has become unavoidable. To start with, there is not one single instrument that will precisely measure the elements that make up individual or national identities and there is no way to empirically prove that the messages received from the media have a direct impact or effect on audiences’ decision making. Media scholars can tirelessly analyze the contents of media programing, song lyrics, TV show episodes, movies,

and magazines, to deconstruct messages and reach to all sorts of conclusions. Whether they find that racial or ethnic stereotypes are being perpetuated, or an obvious lack of minority representations, or overwhelming depictions of violence, there is no way of telling how much of a direct impact media alone will have on audiences' belief, attitudes, or decisions.

Therefore, the purview of this study is limited to how high school students in the Mexican side of the US-Mexico border perceive messages from the media, and if media productions have any influence on how young upper-middle/upper class Mexican students establish their identities. In this study, questions of national identity and belonging are based on how students perceived their Mexicaness or how different do they perceive to be from other students living in Central or South Mexico. The survey results were able to provide statistical insight into the type of media upper-middle and upper class students in the Mexican side of the US-Mexico border consume as well as their medium of preference to watch television and listen to music. Additionally, the focus groups were useful to get descriptive information, and specific responses about the thought processes that go into deciding which type of TV programming or music genres are worth the students' attention.

Based on the responses students gave on the survey when asked to name their top five television shows, I conclude that the vast majority of the television programming high school students from a middle an upper class social status are consuming is American. Less than 10% of shows mentioned came from Mexico. Also worth noting, respondents listed the same number of British television shows as Mexican. They, however, also listed shows from Brazil, Spain, Canada, and Australia. Moreover, the two shows mentioned the most by the students were *Gossip Girl* and *Pretty Little Liars*. *Gossip Girl* is a TV show that aired from 2007 to 2012 on the CW about privileged teens living on the Upper East Side of New York.

The protagonists of the show attend a prep school; the plot of the show follows the lives of two rich girls and their dramatic love stories. “Take a dip in the life of luxury”, says the show description in the IMDB website (IMDb.com, n.d.). *Pretty Little Liars* is another CW television show that has been airing since 2010. The show follows the lives of four upper middle class girls who begin to be threatened by an anonymous blackmailer and have to work together to find out who is sending the threatening messages to them before and jeopardizing their perfect lives. The two shows might only resonate with the female students who can identify with protagonist of the shows or aspire to live lives of luxury as in *Gossip Girl* or a more exciting, scary high school experience as in *Pretty Little Liars*. In terms of musical taste, from the responses students gave when asked to name their top five singers or bands were a lot more diverse. Furthermore, Mexican or Spanish-language artists were mentioned with much more frequency than was the case with Mexican/Spanish language TV. Out of the 15 most mentioned music artists, nine were English-speaking bands or artists and six were Spanish-speaking. However, from the complete list of music artist mentioned only 35.5% of the artists were Spanish-speaking music artists. Therefore, the majority of the music upper-middle and upper class high school students prefer is either American or from an English speaking country.

Additionally, from the information gathered in focus groups some differences in preference are slightly visible between the three schools. As mentioned earlier, although the schools selected for this study are private, some are more prestigious and expensive. The most expensive school, Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo, was one of the schools where all the students said they do not like watching Mexican television programming other than the news. Likewise, students from the second most expensive school, Instituto America de

Estudios Superiores, also said they do not enjoy watching Mexican television. Students from both schools said the Mexican television shows “were not good”. They all said *telenovelas* are repetitive in terms of themes and characters, and it has become a sort of satire to watch because they are overly dramatic, and the acting is terrible. On the other hand, some of the students from most accessible school, Colegio Bilingue Royal, said they do like watching *telenovelas* and Mexican television. Although most of them do it as a ritual with their mothers, they said they do like the shows. However, the students did recognize that the genre of *telenovelas* exaggerates dramatic story lines and the acting lacks quality.

Yet, when it comes to the type of program students watch on Netflix, participants from all three schools mentioned American or British programs with the exception of *Club de Cuervos*. As for music, students from both Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo and Instituto America de Estudios Superiores said they prefer to listen to English or American music than Spanish or Mexican. For these students, music sounds “weird in Spanish”, others said the rhythm in American music is better, or that songs in Spanish “don’t make sense”. However, some students from Colegio Bilingue Royal had preference for Spanish music, while others enjoyed music in both languages. One student said they prefer any song as long as it is in Spanish pointing out that the music from Latin America is “more modern and with more movement”.

Based on the results presented here, we can also argue that upper-middle and upper class students are spending a lot more time watching television programming in video streaming platforms (namely Netflix and Roku) than on the traditional television set. Additionally, it seems that those students who watch Mexican programs only do it on the traditional television set as part of a ritual during lunch or part of the time spent with older

family members. As for music, the participants of this study reported different ways of listening to music. Some claimed they only listen to the radio during the drive to and from school, while students from the most exclusive school said they hook up their phone to the car to be able to listen to the music they like. One student from Colegio Bilingue Royal said she listens to the radio in her house with her mom, while some said they play music on their computer. In this case, the economic status might play a factor, in the sense that students who own their own car to drive to school or commute with other students who own a car can connect their phone and be able to choose the music they want to hear. Whereas, those students who have to travel with their parents to school they have to listen to the morning news in the radio.

Analyzing the survey results to see if there is any relationship between attitudes about Mexican identity and the types of media upper-middle and upper class students are exposed to, some interesting findings rose to the surface. First, students who have more exposure to television shows either in English or Spanish (arguably those who spend more time watching television) are also those who consider themselves more Mexican than the students living in the interior of Mexico (as illustrated in Table 10). However, there was not a tendency to feel less Mexican by those who are more exposed to American television. Moreover, there was not any significance found when using the exposure to American or English-language television and Mexican or Spanish television as the independent variable and the level of proudness about being Mexican. Even though, the vast majority of the surveyed participants reported having high exposure to American and English-language television shows, they also mainly reported to feel proud and very proud of being Mexican. When it comes to music, there was only one variable in which the language of preference for music made a significant

difference when compared to cultural attitudes. Students who reported to be the most proud about being Mexican were also the ones with higher exposure to music in Spanish. Yet, the statistical findings of this study did not reproduce any relation between the exposure to English-language music and cultural attitudes about Mexico. These results show that there might be a relation between those who are more exposed to television or music in Spanish and those who are “more proud of being Mexican”. Yet, being exposed to more American or English music or television does not have any relation to being “less or more proud” of being from Mexico or any other cultural attitudes about Mexico.

Moreover, when students were asked in focus groups if they thought someone who listens only to music in English would lose their identity as Mexicans almost all of the students said it would be a wrong assumption to make. Students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo said that people cannot change their personalities just based on their taste and that listening to American music would never make someone American by pointing out that “one thing does not have anything to do with the other”. Additionally, students from Instituto America de Estudios Superiores were the most vocal about how their taste and preference in music does not mean they have lost any part of their Mexican identity. Some even claimed to be willing to proudly defend their country while still preferring to listen to music in English. One student also said that having preferences for music or even traditions from another country would not negate nationality or love for homeland. In a similar vein, students from Colegio Bilingue Royal said the tendency to listen more music in English than in Spanish was mostly because of trends or taste. It did not equate to putting your own culture aside. Nonetheless, there was one student who pointed out that the main reason why someone would listen to music in English rather than Spanish was to distinguish from others or feel

superior. “[They] think they are better for listening to that type of songs”, he said. “I feel like it’s a richer place, [the United States], classier in a way. I think they want to feel, to a certain extent, part of it”.

Nevertheless, when participants were asked if they thought a Mexican person could lose his or her national identity by consuming American television in addition to American music, there were some mixed reactions. Students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo said people do lose their Mexican identity. Yet, when they were giving explanations as to why they only mentioned lifestyles and traditions. One student said that for those who were more involved with American traditions and food, the only thing that would make them Mexicans is the fact that they were born in Mexico. Another student said she felt less Mexican because she follows an American lifestyle, and not the Mexican. In addition students from this school placed particular importance to traditions, they felt less Mexican for not being able to celebrate Mexican traditions as extensively and rigorously as Mexicans in the Center or South. On the other hand, students from Instituto America de Estudios Superiores reinforced the sentiments they had mentioned when asked the same question but about music. This group of students said they purposely consume American music and television to practice and perfect their knowledge of the English language. They, like the students from Instituto Irlandes, also said embracing or rejecting Mexican identity it is more a matter of following traditions. Likewise, students from Colegio Bilingue Royal (or at least those who had claimed to watch American television and listen to English-language music) reported that they do not think that would make anyone less Mexican. One student said that even though he likes American TV he still loves his country. Another student said that difference in tastes does not change one’s nationality. One student said media preferences

might influence identity if the person does not follow Mexican traditions. However, there was only one student who said that making the choice of preferring American music and television than Mexican sets the tone for everything else. She said making those choices means there will be a preference for everything that comes from the United States and a tendency to reject Mexican productions, either cultural or actual goods.

Based on the survey results and the conversations with students there is no reason to believe there is a direct or indirect relation between consumption of American media and cultural attitudes about Mexican identity within this particular group of students. Students think that national identity is more accurately depicted in those who follow and celebrate traditions. There are however, some concerns from the students themselves about not being able to maintain Mexican traditions or celebrate them as effusively as other Mexicans who are more attached to traditional Mexican culture.

There have been some debates over the preference for English-language media having more to do with audiences who have a better understanding of the English language (Ksiazek, and Webster, 2008). In my case, the survey results did not show a significant relation between students who have a better understanding of the English language and the students who prefer to watch American television. However, there was a significant difference when comparing English proficiency and preference for Mexican or Spanish television. Those students with the lowest level of English were the most exposed to Mexican or Spanish television. Likewise, students with the highest level of English proficiency were the least exposed to Mexican or Spanish television. Furthermore, music preferences and language proficiency do not seem to have a significant relation. It appears that regardless of the level of competency in English students hold a wide variety of musical preferences.

Additionally, the results did not find any significant relation between the frequency with which students visit the United States and their preferences of American media. Moreover, in the focus groups most of them expressed going to Laredo, Texas with their family as often as once a week or at least once a month. They all said they go to Laredo with their family to buy things for the house or personal goods, visiting stores such as Target, Wal-Mart, or Best Buy. Not all of them go shopping for clothes. Students from Instituto Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo said they rather buy their clothes in San Antonio or Houston so that no one else can be seen wearing the same thing. However, students from the other two schools mentioned a good deal of retail stores located in the local mall in Laredo. In addition, the majority of students from all three schools said they spend their vacations mostly in Mexican cities or beaches. Although, some said they do vacation sometimes in the United States, either for fun or to visit family, it is more common for them to travel in Mexico. In general, English proficiency does not have a relation with preferences for American or English media, but it does for Mexican or Spanish television. Students with the lowest competencies in the language are watching Mexican or Spanish television with more frequency than those who have better knowledge of the English language.

The findings presented here are not too far from other contemporary studies looking at the same problem. David Gonzalez Hernandez (2006) launched a similar study in which he was looking at the arguments between television programming and audiences' capacity to escape ideological reproductions in the context of Tijuana, the Mexican side of the US-Mexico border. Gonzalez was interested in exploring how young people in Tijuana interpreted the television programming available in the border highlighting the legitimating role of American television as entertainment. He considers the border as territorial space

where oppositions are strongly felt due to the opposing sociocultural conditions of the city, immigrant vs. Tijuana natives, American vs. Mexican. Although, he studied a significantly older population of 18-23 year-olds, some conclusions were similar. Gonzalez argues that young people in Tijuana differ from older adults in the sense that young people are projecting economic and social growth into the construction of identities in which they can take the best influences from the United States. While, “adult people from Tijuana keep the culture from the interior of the country that has been inherited to them” (Gonzalez, 2006, p. 171).

Gonzalez claims young people in Tijuana identify themselves with change and are willing to build an identity based on a sort of cultural pragmatism with the final purpose being to have access to a better quality of life. This is similar to what students in Nuevo Laredo are trying to achieve by relentlessly exposing themselves to American media in order to practice their English. Moreover, Gonzalez found that young people from Tijuana have associated American television with entertainment, play, and education. But most importantly being able to understand the language and culture from the United States it is one of the requirements to obtain everything that is possible and “good” from American entertainment. “It is explicit then, that those who do not know English are opposed to entertainment, education and understanding, a dysphoric intersection” (Gonzalez, 2006, p. 172). His conclusions indicate that the audiences that understand and process American culture through television oppose those who do not have the cultural capital to appropriate it or the right codes to decipher its meanings. The author also analyzed perceptions about Mexican and American television, he found there is a collective understanding in which American television equates variety, in the sense that audiences feel there are more options in terms of genre and diversity of plots and characters on American television. Gonzalez found that in

regards to television contents American television is associated with better signal or reception and greater variety of programs, genres, and style. While, Mexican television is associated with poor signal reception, and a limited variety television shows.

Returning to the literature that inspired the present study, one could arguably make the case that cultural capital as defined by Bourdieu and cultural proximity as coined by Straubhaar might be opposed concepts. One could also argue that those who lack cultural capital would turn to the most available, similar or known sources of culture found in local media. However, Straubhaar (2007) claims that the two complement each other: “Cultural proximity builds on cultural capital, but is a separate dimension of identity” (p. 202). He further explains how cultural capital is the universe of knowledge that allows audiences to decide which media is more appropriate and would be a better source of culture and information whereas cultural proximity is when a person makes use of their cultural capital to consume certain types of media. Straubhaar (2007) stated, “Forms of cultural capital, in terms of what people know about other countries and cultures, can lead them toward or away from cultural proximity, the tendency to prefer media products from their own culture or the most similar culture” (p. 203).

According to Bourdieu (1984), school is the main source of cultural capital and family the second. In the case of upper-middle and upper class high school students from Nuevo Laredo, it seems as if the schools have placed a great deal of importance on English proficiency leading students to seek to absorb and appropriate American culture through every means possible including the media. However, it is worth mentioning that some of the students who reported to consume more Mexican media such as *telenovelas* said it was part of a ritual they perform with their mothers or older family members. This corroborates

Bourdieu's positioning of the family being one important part of cultural capital. As mentioned by Straubhaar, "Differences are particularly evident in families' daily routines and their daily cultural consumption. Various families emphasize different levels of culture—some very local, some national, some global" (Straubhaar, 2007 p. 203). The concept could arguably be compared to those students in this study who prefer to shop in San Antonio or Houston, Texas, who are encouraged by their families to travel and acquire goods as far away from Laredo as possible. These students have already learned that purchasing products from other parts of the United States will allow them to distinguish themselves from those who cannot afford to make a trip to bigger cities. An equal value could be placed on media that few would understand because is in a language that they do not speak, like American or British television shows, being that Straubhaar argues media in itself is a source of cultural capital. Martin-Barbero (1987) claims there are many elements, which form the cultural capital that work as mediations to either chose the types of media that are worthy to consume or to intervene while reading the messages coming from mass media.

Straubhaar says television is also a source of cultural capital but the relationship is more complex than just a direct effect on preferences, values and ideas do not determine media choices or interpretations, "other sources of cultural capital also mediate choices for mass media. The interaction is complex" (p. 204). In a study conducted in Brazil from 1989 to 2005, to study cultural capital formation and its relation to television choices, his team conducted 160 in-depth interviews with audiences from different socioeconomic backgrounds. He defined elites as those who "engage in international travel, learn foreign languages, and have access to satellite and cable television, to computers and the Internet" (p. 207). Straubhaar argues elites whether (upper-middle or upper class) aspire to follow a

globalized lifestyle by consuming media and traveling to Europe or the United States. Although the study was conducted more than ten years before the present one and in a different country with a different language, similarities between upper-middle and upper class Brazilians and Mexicans in terms of media preferences and habitus are strikingly close. Straubhaar claims that wealthy fractions in Brazil have a cultural capital base that leads them away from a strictly national cultural identity. He mentions that one of the biggest distinctions between middle class and upper-middle class is based mainly in English language proficiency. Middle class Brazilians are more prone to consume TV Globo's *telenovelas*, while upper-middle class will be more likely to tune into MTV. Straubhaar (2007) posited "The upper class is characterized by a number of globalized attributes: language skills, particularly in English, higher education, including study abroad or aspirations to do so; international travel, particularly to the United States or Europe, interest in US or European lifestyles; knowledge of those lifestyles; identification with European standards of beauty [...], more likely to be aware of American or European brands" (p. 211).

Those qualities and aspirations make elites look for international media that will go according to their qualifications and knowledge of global culture. Therefore, upper-middle class Brazilians were the most likely to watch American films or American channels available in their cable TV or satellite TV packages. Brazilians from an upper middle class background also placed great importance on being able to speak English, making it one of the most important cultural mediations Brazilian audiences rely on when making their media choices: "Taking English classes is common among the upper middles class, *de rigeur* for their children. English and access to information through it are seen by many in the upper middle class as a crucial tool to be acquired. However, for most of them, it also remains a

crucial barrier that ultimately reinforces their use of national media, particularly *telenovelas*, music shows, variety shows, etc. and so on that are part of the broad national cultural capital” (p. 212).

Furthermore, upper class Brazilian youth, do enjoy regional and national music such as Brazilian urban rock or funk: “These elite youth reflect the power of social structure in the very different access that their cultural and economic capital gives them to be global” (p. 244). In addition, Straubhaar points out that the main reason why upper-middle and upper class Brazilians would be more inclined to consume more global cultural goods than working class Brazilians it is because they have accumulated the cultural capital, the language skills and the knowledge that allows them to enjoy and understand global media. Not to mention, elites possess the capital means to pay for cable or satellite television.

There is no reason to believe upper-middle and upper class Mexican students from the Mexican side of the US-Mexico border have different intentions or ways of appropriating American culture than upper class young Brazilians.

CONCLUSION

One of the overarching ideas of this study is that upper-middle and upper class students from Nuevo Laredo are *not worried* about losing their Mexican identity as a consequence of continuous exposure to American media. It could be argued that they are more afraid of not being able to attain the best from what their privileged geographical location has to offer in terms of cultural capital. They recognize that one of the biggest advantages of living in the border with the United States is the ability to practice while learning English and to have access to American products at a much cheaper price than what it would cost someone living in the interior of Mexico. Despite the fact that most of students recognized that one of the traits that makes someone more or less Mexican is celebrating Mexican traditions, they proudly declared they also have a Thanksgiving dinner every year and grew up trick or treating and dressing up for Halloween. Generally, the students perceived themselves as proud Mexicans or just as Mexican as any other student in any other part of Mexico regardless of their taste in media. They claimed their rejection of Mexican television does not come from a negation of their roots or heritage. Furthermore, they described Mexican television as distasteful, with bad actors and repetitive themes that have been exploited over the years. Moreover, this social group has unlimited access to cable television and video streaming platforms which are becoming increasingly popular among teenagers and young people in Mexico. They have left the traditional television format to favor the new ways of watching, using Netflix as their main provider of content. With the impressive amounts of television series and movies available to them through platforms such as Netflix and Roku, it is no surprise to find there is a wide variety of shows among everyone's favorite. When "good, quality" cultural proximate productions are available like

the original Netflix Mexican production *Club de Cuervos* they agree to give it a chance, as opposed to the traditional *telenovela*.

The students who participated in this study consume media that will help them make statements about their taste, their lifestyles and their identity. Not everyone is watching the same show or listening to the same artists, among themselves they make cliques or differentiate themselves by the style they like: there is the girl who likes anime and k-pop, the boys who enjoy British police dramas, the group of girl friends who still watch *Gossip Girl* and *Pretty Little Liars*. Although, there are some favorites like *Sherlock* or “all of Netflix’s original shows” as they said, they set out to find the one thing they identify with and stick to it: legal dramas for the girl who wants to go to law school and *Bones* and *CSI* for the one who wants to major in Criminal Science. This study was not able to find any losses in terms of national identity or cultural attitudes about Mexico from upper-middle and upper high school students who are overwhelmingly exposed to American television and music. Furthermore, those who have been living their entire life in the border have probably been exposed to the same amounts of American productions since they have been able to consume media. However, they are armed with a variety of mediations that help them deconstruct the messages coming from American media. They know it is obvious that the end of the world is not going to happen in New York every single time, and that negative and stereotypical depictions of Mexico or Latin American are nothing more than that, stereotypes. They have chosen which negative or imaginative story lines to forgive, and the plots that are plainly deal-breakers who would make them stop watching.

REFERENCES

- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Baker, J., Lynch, K., Cantillon, S., & Walsh, J. (2009). *Equality: from theory to action*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1968). *Rabelais and his world*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In J. Karabel & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Power and ideology in education*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. New York: Routledge.
- Bustamante, J. (1991) Frontera México-Estados Unidos. Reflexiones para un marco teórico. *Estudios sobre las Culturas Contemporáneas*, 5(11), 11-35.
- Campbell, D.T., & Fiske, D.W. (1959). Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-multimethod Matrox. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81-105.
- Featherstone, M. (1995). *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity*. London: Sage.
- Fejes, F. (1981). *Media imperialism: An assessment*. *Media, Culture & Society*, 281-289.
- Fowler, F. J. (1984). *Survey research methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- García Canclini, N. (2001). *Consumers and citizens: globalization and multicultural conflicts*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press.
- Giménez, G. (2007). *Estudios sobre la cultura y las identidades sociales*. México, CONACULTA-ITESO.
- Giménez, G. (2009). *Cultura, identidad y memoria: Materiales para una sociología de los*

- procesos culturales en las franjas fronterizas. *Frontera norte*, 21(41), 7-32.
- Gonzalez Hernandez, D. (2006). En busca del entretenimiento: television y audiencia juvenil en la frontera norte. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, 5, 157-179.
- Gossip Girl (n.d.) In Internet Movie Database. Retrieved from http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0397442/plotsummary?ref_=tt_stry_pl
- Hall, S. (1980). Encoding / Decoding. In: Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe, and P. Willis (Eds). *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972–79*. London: Hutchinson, pp. 128–138.
- Hollander, J. A. (2004). The Social Contexts of Focus Groups. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 33(5), 602-637.
- Iwabuchi K. (2001) *Becoming Culturally Proximate* in B. Moeran (Ed.) *Asian Media Productions* (pp. 54-74). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Iwabuchi, K. (2002). *Recentering globalization: popular culture and Japanese transnationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Iwabuchi, K. (2004). “How “Japanese” is pokémon?”. In Tobin, J (Ed.) *Pikachu's global adventure: the rise and fall of Pokémon*. 53–79. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ksiazek, T. B. & Webster, J. G. (2008) Cultural Proximity and Audience Behavior: The Role of Language in Patterns of Polarization and Multicultural Fluency, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 52:3, 485 — 503
- Leung, M., Miyazoe-Wong, Y. and Li, W. (2004). Hong Kong's secondary school pupils' attitudes towards learning Japanese as a regular school subject—a pilot study. *Japan Studies Journal (Nihon Gakkan)*, 8, 141–148.

- Lozano, J. (1992). Media exposure and cultural identity in a Mexican border community: the case of "Secundaria" students. PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
- Lozano, J. (2000). El genero y el nivel socioeconomico como mediaciones en el consumo de noticieros televisivos en Mexico. *Zer Revista De Estudios De Comunicación*, (9), 259-276.
- Lozano, J. (2006). Consumo y apropiación de cine y TV extranjeros por audiencias en América Latina. *Comunicar CO*, 67-72.
- Lozano, J., & Frankenberg, L. (2009). Theoretical approaches and methodological strategies in Latin American empirical research on television audiences: 1992—2007. *Global Media and Communication*, 149-176.
- Martín Barbero, J. (1987). *De los medios a las mediaciones. Comunicación, cultura y hegemonía*. México: Editorial Gustavo Gili S.A. Versión revisada 1991.
- Mattelart, A. (1983). *Transnationals & the Third World*. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey.
- Mayer, V. (2003). Searching for Media Consumption and Cultural Identities. *In Producing dreams, consuming youth: Mexican Americans and mass media*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.
- Patriarche, G., Bilandzic, H., Jensen, J. L., & Jurisic, J. (2014). *Audience Research Methodologies: Between Innovation and Consolidation*. New York: Routledge.
- Rodriguez, C. & Murphy, P. (1997) The Study of Communication and Culture in Latin America: From Laggards and the Oppressed to Resistance and Hybrid Cultures. *The Journal of International Communication*. 4(2), 24-45.
- Sarlo, B. (2001). *Scenes from postmodern life*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.

- Sinclair, J., & Straubhaar, J. (2013). *The Dominant Markets- Brazil. In Latin American Television Industries*. London: Palsgrave Macmillan.
- Straubhaar, J. (1991). Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 39-59.
- Straubhaar, J. D. (2007). *World television: from global to local*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Texas Department of Transportation. (2015). *Texas-Mexico International Bridges and Border Crossings*. Retrieved from <https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/iro/international-bridges.pdf>
- Yu, X., Takata, K., & Dryland, E. (2012). Cultural attraction, 'soft power' and proximity: the popularity of Japanese language in Hong Kong since the 1980s. *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 29(3), 315-336.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Name of Every TV Shows Mentioned by Each Participant

Name of TV Show	Country of Origin
Breaking Bad	United States
90210	United States
Law & Order: Special Victims Unit	United States
Blindspot	United States
Bones	United States
Boy Meets World	United States
Brooklyn Nine Nine	United States
Cake Boss	United States
Chasing Cameron	United States
CHEATERS	United States
Community	United States
CSI	United States
Dance Moms	United States
Designated Survivor	United States
Desperate Housewives	United States
Dexter	United States
Dr. House	United States
El Precio de la Historia	United States
Elementary	United States
Fashion Police	United States
Friends	United States
Futurama	United States
Gilmore Girls	United States
Girl Meets World	United States
Glee	United States
Gravity Falls	United States
Grey's Anatomy	United States
Hawaii Five-O	United States
Homeland	United States
Jane the Virgin	United States
Juegos Mentales	United States
Keeping Up With the Kardashians	United States
Lie to me	United States
Los Restauradores	United States
Lost	United States
Malcolm el de en medio	United States
Mom	United States

New Girl	United States
Padrinos Mágicos	United States
Pawn Stars	United States
Power Rangers	United States
Pretty Little Liars	United States
Prison Break	United States
Project Runway	United States
¿Quién da más?	United States
Red Shoe Diaries	United States
Red vs Blue	United States
Reign	United States
Revenge	United States
Rick and Morty	United States
Sala de emergencias	United States
Scorpion	United States
Scream	United States
Shadowhunters	United States
Shark Tank	United States
Shooter	United States
Sons of Anarchy	United States
South Park	United States
Steven Universe	United States
Stranger Things	United States
Suits	United States
Switched at Birth	United States
That '70s Show	United States
The Fosters	United States
The Fresh Prince	United States
The OC	United States
The Office	United States
The Originals	United States
The Returned	United States
Two Broke Girls	United States
Under the Dome	United States
Unforgettable	United States
Voltron	United States
White Collar	United States
WWE	United States
Cazadores de tesoros	United States
Gossip Girl	United States
Black Mirror	United Kingdom
Chewing Gum	United Kingdom
Doctor Who	United Kingdom

My Mad Fat Diary	United Kingdom
Sherlock	United Kingdom
Skins	United Kingdom
Downtown Abbey	United Kingdom
El Barco	Spain
El Internado	Spain
Velvet	Spain
La Familia P. Luche	Mexico
La Reina del Sur	Mexico
La Última Palabra	Mexico
Los Capitanes	Mexico
¿Qué culpa tiene el niño?	Mexico
Señorita Pólvora	Mexico
Pablo Escobar: El Patrón del Mal	Colombia
Orphan Black	Canada
Stoked	Canada
Vikings	Canada
3%	Brazil
Dance Academy	Australia
Nowhere Boys	Australia

Appendix 2: Name of Every Band or Artist Mentioned by Each Participant

Name of band or artist	Language spoken in songs
30 Seconds to Mars	English
AC/DC	English
Adele	English
Aerosmith	English
Artic Monkeys	English
Amine	English
Audioslave	English
Austin Mahone	English
Avenge Sevenfold	English
AVICII	English
Bas	English
Bee Gees	English
Beyoncé	English
Birdy	English
Blake Shelton	English
Bon Jovi	English
Brad Paisley	English
Bruno Mars	English

Calum Scott	English
Capital Cities	English
Caravan Palace	English
Catfish and the Bottlemen	English
Chance the Rapper	English
Chaos Chaos	English
Chicago	English
Chris Brown	English
Christina Perri	English
Sia	English
Clean Bandit	English
David Guetta	English
Demi Lovato	English
DJ Snake	English
DJ Tiesto	English
DNCE	English
Dua Lipa	English
Elena Siegman	English
Ellie Goulding	English
Elvis Presley	English
Eminem	English
Evan Craft	English
Fall Out Boy	English
Fifth Harmony	English
LMFAO	English
Foster the People	English
Fun	English
Galantis	English
Gary Jules	English
Girl Generation	English
Good Charlotte	English
Gorillaz	English
Grace VanderWaal	English
Green Day	English
Guns N' Roses	English
Halsey	English
Hillsong	English
Honne	English
Ice Cube	English
Imagine Dragons	English
Incubus	English
Iron Maiden	English
Jake Miller	English

James Arthur	English
John Coltrane	English
John Legend	English
John Mayer	English
Jonas Brothers	English
Journey	English
Justin Timberlake	English
Kansas	English
Katy Perry	English
KISS	English
Kygo	English
Lady Gaga	English
Lana Del Rey	English
Led Zeppelin	English
Lil Wayne	English
Line Way	English
Linkin Park	English
Little Mix	English
Lorde	English
Luke Bryan	English
M83	English
Major Lazer	English
Marshmello	English
Martin Garrix	English
Martin O'Donnell	English
Michael Bublé	English
Michael Jackson	English
Miley Cyrus	English
Muse	English
My Chemical Romance	English
Neon Trees	English
Niall Horan	English
Nickelback	English
Nicki Minaj	English
Nirvana	English
Of Monsters and Men	English
One Direction	English
Panic! At the Disco	English
Pierce the Veil	English
Portugal. The Man	English
Post Malone	English
Queen	English
Radiohead	English

Red Hot Chili Peppers	English
Redfoo	English
Rihanna	English
Rolling Stones	English
Sam Smith	English
Selena Gomez	English
Shawn Mendes	English
Simple Plan	English
Skillet	English
Sleeping with Sirens	English
Slipknot	English
Smashing Pumpkins	English
System of a Down	English
Tame Impala	English
Taylor Swift	English
The 1975	English
The Beatles	English
The Killers	English
The Kooks	English
The Maine	English
The Rasmus	English
The Strokes	English
The Weeknd	English
Thomas Rhett	English
Three Days Grace	English
Three Doors Down	English
Tim McMorris	English
Troye Sivan	English
Twenty One Pilots	English
Twice	English
Tyga	English
U2	English
Wage War	English
Walk the Moon	English
Wye Oak	English
X Ambassadors	English
Years and Years	English
Young Thug	English
Zayn	English
Coldplay	English
Earth, Wind & Fire	English
Maroon 5	English
Ariana Grande	English

Justin Bieber	English
Hoodie Allen	English
Kanye West	English
Migos	English
Jason Mraz	English
Ed Sheeran	English
Dave Matthews	English
J Cole	English
The Chainsmokers	English
Drake	English
Alesso	English
OneRepublic	English
Zedd	English
Alberto El Milagro	Spanish
Alejandra Guzmán	Spanish
Alejandro Fernández	Spanish
Alex Zurdo	Spanish
Anuel AA	Spanish
Arcángel	Spanish
Ariel Camacho	Spanish
Bad Bunny	Spanish
Banda El Recodo	Spanish
Banda Limón	Spanish
Belinda	Spanish
Bryant Myers	Spanish
Café Tacvba	Spanish
Calibre 50	Spanish
Camila	Spanish
Chayanne	Spanish
Chicos de Barrio	Spanish
Christian Nodal	Spanish
C-Kan	Spanish
CNCO	Spanish
Comando Exclusivo	Spanish
Coscolluela	Spanish
Darell	Spanish
Don Omar	Spanish
Duelo	Spanish
El Poder del Norte	Spanish
Enrique Iglesias	Spanish
Farruko	Spanish
Funky	Spanish
Generación de Adoradores	Spanish

Gerardo Ortíz	Spanish
Ha*Ash	Spanish
Hombres G	Spanish
Intocable	Spanish
J Balvin	Spanish
Jesse & Joy	Spanish
Jesús Adrián Romero	Spanish
Joan Sebastian	Spanish
José Madero	Spanish
Juan Gabriel	Spanish
Juanes	Spanish
Julieta Venegas	Spanish
K-Paz de la Sierra	Spanish
Kevin Roldán	Spanish
La Adictiva	Spanish
La Quinta Estación	Spanish
Laura Pausini	Spanish
León Larregui	Spanish
Límite	Spanish
Los Cadetes de Linares	Spanish
Los Cardenales de Nuevo León	Spanish
Los Claxons	Spanish
Los Huracanes del Norte	Spanish
Los Invasores de Nuevo León	Spanish
Los Plebes del Rancho	Spanish
Lucah	Spanish
Luis Fonsi	Spanish
Luis Miguel	Spanish
Mago de Oz	Spanish
Maná	Spanish
Marcos Witt	Spanish
Matt Hunter	Spanish
Mon Laferte	Spanish
Morat	Spanish
Ñengo Flow	Spanish
Nicky Jam	Spanish
Pablo Alborán	Spanish
Panda	Spanish
Paty Cantú	Spanish
Paulina Rubio	Spanish
Pepe Aguilar	Spanish
Pesado	Spanish

Prince Royce	Spanish
RBD	Spanish
Ricardo Arjona	Spanish
Río Roma	Spanish
Romeo Santos	Spanish
Sin Bandera	Spanish
Tropicalísimo Apache	Spanish
Yandel	Spanish
Yuridia	Spanish
Zoé	Spanish
Maluma	Spanish
Ozuna	Spanish
Reik	Spanish
Cartel De Santa	Spanish
Banda MS	Spanish
Daddy Yankee	Spanish
Edith Piaf	French
K-pop	Korean
Rammstein	German
Ricky Martin	English and Spanish
Wagakki Band	Japanese

Appendix 3: Survey Questionnaire

Name of your school

- a) Colegio Irlandes de Nuevo Laredo
- b) Instituto America de Estudios Superiores
- c) Centro de Estudios Superiores Royal

How old are you?

Gender

- a) Male
- b) Female

With which frequency do you watch TV shows or movies in the following devices:

Television (Antenna, cable, satellite)

Everyday, Almost everyday, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never

Computer o laptop

Everyday, Almost everyday, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never

Smartphone

Everyday, Almost everyday, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never

Smart TV o Xbox, PlayStation, Amazon Fire, ChromeCast

Everyday, Almost everyday, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never

Do you have cable TV, dish or satellite TV?

Select all the video streaming services you are subscribed to:

- a) Netflix
- b) Blim
- c) Vudu
- d) Claro Video
- e) Crackle
- f) HBO
- g) Cinopolis Click
- h) Roku
- i) Amazon Prime
- j) Hulu

How many hours do you watch TV on a regular day?

Select how often you watch each of the following channels.

XEFE 2 (Televisa): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

KGNS 8 (NBC): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

KLDO 27 (Univision): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

XHBR 11(Canal de las Estrellas): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

XHNAT 12 (Multimedios): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

XHLNA 21 (Azteca 13): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

XHLAT 7 (Azteca 7): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

KXOF 39 (FOX): Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Write down the names of your five favorite TV programs

Do you prefer to watch open TV, cable TV, or video streaming devices?

Open TV

Cable TV

Video Streaming (Netflix, etc.)

Select the frequency with which you watch the following programs:

The Walking Dead Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

1. **The Big Bang Theory** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

2. **Game of Thrones** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

3. **Modern Family** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

4. **Grey's Anatomy** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

5. **Fear the Walking Dead** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

6. **The Voice (American version)** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently
Everyday

7. **American Horror Story** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

8. **American Idol** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

9. **Criminal Minds** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

10. **NCIS** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

11. **Arrow** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

12. **The Flash** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

13. **Family Guy** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

14. **The Simpsons** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

15. **Gotham** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

List taken from: <http://www.indiewire.com/2016/05/most-watched-tv-show-2015-2016-season-game-of-thrones-the-walking-dead-football-1201682396/>

1. **Narcos** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

2. **Stranger Things** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

3. **Sense8** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

4. **House of Cards** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

5. **Bloodline** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

6. **Luke Cage** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

7. **Jessica Jones** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

8. **Master of None** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

9. **Daredevil** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

10. **BoJack Horseman** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

11. **Orange is the New Black** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

12. **Unbreakable Kimmy** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

13. **Jane the Virgin** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

List taken from: <http://uproxx.com/tv/best-netflix-original-series-right-now/11/>

1. **La Rosa de Guadalupe** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

2. **Un Camino hacia el destino** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

3. **El Señor de los Cielos** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

4. **Que Culpa tiene Fatmagul** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

5. **Hechos Noche** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

6. **Escape Perfecto** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

7. **Anonima** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

8. **Simplemente Maria** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

9. **Sueno de amor** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

10. **Corazon que miente** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

11. **Pasion y Poder** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

12. **Bajo el mismo cielo** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

13. **La hora pico** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

14. **Las noticias por Adela** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

15. **Hechos** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

16. **Lo que callamos las mujeres** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

17. **Antes muerta que Lichita** Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

From: https://www.nielsenibope.com.mx/uploads/topten_marzo.pdf

What other TV shows do you watch either on TV or video streaming programs (Netflix, Blim, etc.)

Write down the last five movies you saw at the movie theater.

How often do you go to the movies?

- a) More than once a week
- b) Once a week
- c) Twice a month
- d) Once a month
- e) Once every other month

What are your top five favorite channels?

Select the frequency with which you listen to the following types of music:

English Rock Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

English Pop Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Rock en Esp Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Pop en Espanol Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Ranchera o Nortena Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Banda Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Corridos Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Jazz Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday
Reggaeton Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

List your five favorite music bands or artist:

When you watch movies at the theater how often are they American movies?
 Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

When you watch movies at the theater how often are they Mexican movies?
 Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

How good is your English?
 Very bad Bad More or less Good Very Good

Select how important it is for you to celebrate the following traditions and holidays:

Halloween Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
Dia de Muertos Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
San Valentin Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
Pascua Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
5 de Mayo Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
16 de Sept. Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
Thanksgiving Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
12 de Dic. Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
Navidad Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant
Dia de Reyes Very important Important Neutral Unimportant Definitely unimportant

How often do you go to Laredo, TX?
 Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently Everyday

Where were you born?
 City State Country

How many years have you spent living in Nuevo Laredo?

If less than 10 years, where did you live before?

What is your father's level of education?
 Middle school, high school, university, master's degree, doctoral degree

What is your mother's level of education?
 Middle school, high school, university, master's degree, doctoral degree

What characteristics should someone have to be considered a Mexican?

If you could pick your nationality, in what country would you have like to be born?

How proud are you to be a Mexican?

Very proud Proud Neutral Not proud Not proud at all

Do you think those who celebrate US traditions like Halloween or Thanksgiving are less Mexican than those who celebrate only national holidays?

Yes No

Why?

How Mexican do you feel in comparison to Mexican youngsters living in the interior of Mexico?

More Mexican than them

As Mexican as them

Less Mexican than them

In your opinion where is Mexican culture stronger, in the interior of Mexico or here in the border?

In the interior Here in the border The same in both places

What customs or traditions do you consider to be more representative of Mexican culture in this border city?

Appendix 4: Focus Group Questionnaire (Spanish)

Date:

Name of school: _____

Names of students

1: _____	Age: _____
2: _____	Age: _____
3: _____	Age: _____
4: _____	Age: _____
5: _____	Age: _____

1. Que tanto escuchas la radio durante el dia, y que tipo de musica prefieres?
2. Escuchas mas el radio, o otros programas como spotify or itunes?
3. Por que les gusta mas la musica norteamericana que la mexicana? Que es lo que les gusta? Y lo que nos les gusta.
4. Por que te gusta mas la musica mexicana o en espanol que la musica norteamericana?
5. Que opinas sobre los artistas o los grupos mexicanos?
6. Que opinas sobre los cantantes o grupos Americanos?
7. Donde y con quien escuchas la radio?
8. Donde y con quien escuchas Spotify o itunes?
9. Por que crees que la gente escoge o decide escuchar musica en ingles que en espanol?
10. Crees que las personas que prefieren escuchar musica en ingles han perdido su identidad nacional o rechazan su mexicanidad?
11. Que tanto ves la tele diariamente o Netflix, etc. y con quien?
12. Que tipo de programas te gustan mas?
13. Por que te gustan mas los mexicanos que los americanos?
14. Por que te gustan mas los americanos que los mexicanos?
15. Que es lo que no te gusta de la television mexicana?
16. Que es lo que no te gusta de los programas americanos?
17. A donde salen de vacaciones?

18. Que les gusta hacer en las tardes?
19. Cuales son sus restaurantes favoritos, comidas, bebidas?
20. Con que frecuencia van de compras? Cuales son sus tiendas favoritas?
21. Que significa fresa?
22. Cuales son las caracteristicas de una persona fresa?
23. Que significa naco?
24. Cuales son las caracteristicas de una persona naco?
25. Cuales crees que son las diferencias entre vivir en la frontera y vivir en el interior de Mexico?
26. Que tan mexicano te sientes en comparacion con los chicos de tu edad que vive por decir en Guadalajara o Guanajuato?
27. Cuales crees que son las ventajas de vivir en la frontera?
28. Cuales crees que son las desventajas?
29. Cuales son las costumbres o tradiciones mas importantes que se celebrant aqui en la frontera?
30. Que semejanzas y diferencias crees tener con los estudiantes del otro lado de la frontera?
31. Crees que las personas que solo ven tv en ingles y escuchan musica de EU han perdido su identidad como mexicanos?
32. Que significa ser mexicano?

Appendix 5: List of TV Shows from which Participants Could Rate Their Level of Exposure

List of Spanish-language TV shows from which participants could rate their level of exposure

1. La fiscal de hierro
2. Antes muerta que Lichita
3. Que culpa tiene Fatmagul
4. La hora pico
5. A cada quien su santo
6. Un camino hacia el destino
7. El Chema
8. La Querida del Centauro
9. El Bienamado
10. Mujeres de Negro
11. La Fan
12. La Candidata
13. Lo que callamos las mujeres
14. La Doña
15. Vino el amor
16. Silvana sin Lana
17. Hechos
18. Club de cuervos
19. Una familia de diez
20. Rosario Tijeras
21. Bajo el mismo cielo
22. Sin rastro de ti
23. La jugada
24. Tres Veces Ana
25. Sin senos si hay paraíso
26. Como dice el dicho
27. El Señor de los Cielo
28. María de todos los ángeles
29. Todo o nada
30. La vida en el espejo
31. Pasión y Poder
32. Don Francisco
33. Están entre nosotros
34. Celia
35. Escape perfecto
36. Boom
37. Señora Acero
38. Mi adorable maldición
39. Caso Cerrado
40. Acción Deportes Televisa

41. Doble Sentido
42. La Rosa de Guadalupe
43. 40 y 20
44. Master Chef Junior
45. Vis a Vis
46. Hechos Noche
47. Anónima
48. Los Heroes del Norte
49. Simplemente María
50. Sueño de Amor
51. Corazón que miente
52. Las noticias por Adela

List of English-language TV shows from which participants could rate their level of exposure

1. The Walking Dead
2. The Big Bang Theory
3. Game of Thrones
4. Modern Family
5. Greys Anatomy
6. Fear the Walking Dead
7. The Voice American Version
8. American Horror Story
9. American Idol
10. Criminal Minds
11. NCIS
12. The Flash
13. Arrow
14. Family Guy
15. Empire
16. Super Girl
17. Simpsons
18. Gotham
19. Scandal
20. How to get away with murder
21. Black-ish
22. Once Upon a Time
23. Marvel Agents of SHIELD
24. The X Factor
25. How I Met Your Mother
26. Americas Next Top Model
27. Teen Wolf
28. The OA
29. Supergirl
30. DC Legends of Tomorrow
31. Two and A Half Men

32. Supernatural
33. Superstore
34. Narcos
35. Stranger Things
36. Sense8
37. House of Cards
38. Bloodline
39. Luke Cage
40. Master of None
41. Jessica Jones
42. Daredevil
43. BoJack Horseman
44. Orange is the New Black
45. Unbreakable Kimmy
46. Vampire Diaries
47. American Crime Story The People v O.J. Simpson
48. Santa Clarita Diet
49. The 100
50. A Series of Unfortunate Events
51. Westworld

VITA

Melissa Santillana received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication from The Texas A&M International University in 2011. She entered the Master's in Communication program specializing in Border and Latin-American Media Studies at Texas A&M International University in January 2015 and received her Master of Arts degree in May 2017. Her current research interests comprises studying the correlation between fiction media and negative perceptions about border residents and border cities; on how high and middle classes in developing countries (such as Mexico) create "taste" and set the standard for "good" and "tasteful" media and entertainment that discredits or lowers the value of national media, and praises American and European programming, and the use of tactical and radical media by feminist activist in Latin America. Ms. Santillana works the Spanish Editor at the Laredo Morning Times and as a Research Assistant for the Department of Psychology and Communication at TAMIU. Ms. Santillana may be reached at 511 Shiloh Drive, Apt. 16, Laredo, TX 78045. Her email is melybee14@gmail.com.