UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Critical media participations: media literacy and youth-produced videos from Latina/o audiences in the U.S.-Mexico border

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Communication

by

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The Dissertation of David González-Hernández is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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University of California, San Diego
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DEDICATION

To Karina De León, my amazing wife, whose unconditional love for me made it possible to complete my dissertation, and to our two daughters Camila and Andrea, who are indeed a joy and inspiration.

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David Gonzalez-Hernandez was the sole author of all material in this dissertation, and all materials listed below that have been published, submitted to journals, or are being prepared for submission.

A version of Chapter 2, in part, is intended for publication.

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Chapters

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Critical media participations: media literacy and youth-produced videos from Latina/o audiences in the U.S.-Mexico border

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Communication

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Professor Daniel C. Hallin, Chair

This dissertation tries to deal critically with the common utilization of media literacy as skilled-based initiative or participatory culture building. It raises a number of questions about the process of participation and production that have often been ignored by a media literacy research. Based on work I did directly with two communities of youth Latina/os in weekly media workshops that had real community impact, I examine the

participatory dynamics surrounding three video productions that responded to stereotypes and the topics of community service and immigration in corporate news media representations of the Latina/o community and the U.S.-Mexico border.

I look first at youth media participation in the context of afterschool and summer camp programs, and second at news media representations of the Latina/o population and the U.S.-Mexico border (2000-2012) as central to the configuration of the media landscape in the region. My aim in this context is to understand media literacy as a form of critical media participation that emphasizes the processes of production, critical thinking, power dynamics, and decision-making over the development of specific types of skills typically thought to be the core of "participatory culture."

Exploring participants' responses to the case studies through a framework of Participatory Action Research, I suggest that such efforts can help media educators achieve the pedagogical goal of enabling participants not only to develop critical thinking and question media representations or existing arrangements of power, but also to produce videos that reflect a deep appreciation for learning about media and the communities they live in.

Introduction

The story circulated in the summer of 2015 that Donald Trump, star of the television program "The Apprentice," made inflammatory anti-Mexican and anti-Latino comments as part of his presidential run for the Republican nomination.

> When do we beat Mexico at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they are beating us economically. They are not our friend, believe me.... When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They are bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people, but I speak to border guards and they're telling us what we're getting.

Although Trump's remarks were the focal point in what became "circus" media coverage or "entertainment" news instead of politics, Trump became the leading candidate of the Republican Party in the polls a week later. Since then, a list of media networks such as NBC and Univision, and other businesses (Macy's) cut ties with Trump's multi-billion business empire, while some fellow Republican candidates and others quietly questioned his remarks.

However, the massive media coverage by all outlets that codes and treats all Latino/as as actual or potential illegal invaders who will contaminate the U.S. national body was not unprecedented. The accusation against Mexicans by Trump and the subsequent media coverage echoed themes and frames such as "immigration" and the U.S.-Mexico "border." Scholars such as Chávez (2008) and Santa Anna (2002) have characterized U.S. media coverage on immigration as strongly dominated by "threat" frames and alarming reports of a "flood" of "aliens." For them, the category of otherness

and it's spectacle is still the subject of media discourse. Yet, research on news media coverage have found a “much more complex mix of frames" and also that "the historical conjuncture matters” (Hallin, 2015, 880). For example, across four decades of U.S. coverage of immigration, Benson (2013) did not find a prevalence of threat frames in any year covered.[1] But he highlighted that the changes in immigration news coverage in the United States, “decreasingly focused on jobs and the global economy and increasingly focused on racism, the threat to public order, and humanitarian concerns about immigrant suffering" (Benson, 2013, 68).

Latina/o topics often present in news media are linked to immigration and the border, and, “we have the minimal inclusion of Latina/os in general news topics ranging from political elections to the economy” (Valdivia, 2010, 68). For example, the “California Proposition 187” or the “Save our State Initiative” –a ballot initiative to establish a citizenship screening system that bars undocumented immigrants from the state’s public education systems, health care and other services- under which Latina/os became the embodiment of “illegal alien and criminal” identity acted as a kind of phantom precedent in Trump’s accusation.

Although the action initiated by Trump, would appear to simply “reflect” the society of which it is part of, this is not the case. We must notice that U.S. news media coverage is not aligned as part of a single ideology. Some of Trump’s declarations ended up in a collage of images and funny memes that was spread across the globe by “youtubers” and “facebookers.” Still, U.S. news media has endured a discourse of otherness and controversy when covering Latina/os and the border with Mexico.

[1] It must be notice that Benson only covered selected years (1974-1975, 1986, 1994, 2002-2006). The years

For example, the 2000s marked a period of media coverage controversy between the United States and Mexico in terms of their shared border. The United States was beset with particular anxieties surrounding the border. For the past years it seemed as though newspapers and television screens across the San Diego-Tijuana border were flowing with images of border fences, officials, long lines of cars waiting to cross to the United States (new strategies of inspection in post 9/11 United States), drug traffickers, reported raids, deportations, and "shady" undocumented workers.

National and local media in the U.S. and Mexico have historically been the main storytellers producing and distributing accounts and images on the border. The widespread media coverage of the border brought attention to Latino Media Studies scholars that showed how Mexicans were positioned as threatening compared to other ethnic populations. Studies that addressed the theme of Mexican immigration revealed xenophobic metaphors of war and invasion that criminalized the Latina/o body, portraying the immigrants as a threat to the "American way of life" (Chávez, 2001, 2008; Santa Anna, 2002).

Historically, the U.S.-Mexico border, has attracted advocates, artists, activists, legislators, academics and community organizers, who scrambled to make a better collaboration and to find tools and methods to support the well-being of the border population from both sides. In my case, it began with "Voices of Social Justice," produced by Abraham Lincoln High School (ALHS) and UCSD undergrad students. The video utilized YouTube as a space for posting and circulating short, documentary-style narrative intended to deliver a counter-stereotype of the struggling Latina/o youth. Since this experience, for the past four years, I have been part of a community outreach project

called UCSD Community Stations Initiative conducting several media education courses and practical media production workshops in both southeastern San Diego and south San Diego (San Ysidro), close to the U.S.-Mexico border. Both of these communities are characterized by low-income neighborhoods and a history of exclusion and oppression. A majority of its residents are of Mexican American or Latino descent. In both of these areas one can find high rates of unemployment and crime, gang activity, and low-academic achievement.

I began working with the *UCSD Community Stations Initiative* at two centers. Both the South Metro Career Center (SMCC), and Casa Familiar (CF), participated in a project colloquially called the "Triangle Project" because it connected these centers along with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) in a triangular manner. The *UCSD Community Stations Initiative* began in 2010 with a series of collaborative projects across a collective body of university representatives from campus departments and centers, and a variety of social services and cultural community-based agencies. One part of the project involved a training program with a relatively small group of undergraduates, teaching assistants and faculty scholars, with the aim to design and put into action a variety of computer-based and telecommunication activities for the community youth, as well of media education courses. I helped develop the media production courses and workshops. The first project had an immediate and remarkable impact on the students and also garnered community media attention: more than 2000 views and counting.

The affordability of media production technologies, combined with the increased access to the Internet has helped this kind of video production afterschool project become a good structure for addressing the concerns of the Latina/os youth. These projects

engaged youth in a practical approach that seemingly made good on the legacy of media self-representation that has been fostered by decades of scholars, educators and practitioners seeking to center self-produced media as a tool for enabling agency and power. But looking closely, the self-produced video production was not the end in itself.

Instead, my project seeks to understand how Latina/os deal with representations circulating in mainstream popular media while living in south San Diego and near to the border. But more importantly, I am concerned with examining Latina/o youth digital media production in relationship to news media representation of Latina/os population and the U.S-Mexico Border. This dissertation intends to a) make visible the intersections of media and youth media production as participatory practice to examine what scholars miss when we study "media audiences" and, b) tries to use media participation as a route for youth civic engagement, community-building and problem-solving.

This dissertation challenges the perspective that when youth produce and circulate digital video, automatically their culture becomes "participatory." I interrogate discourses that naturalize the notion of a celebratory participatory culture while I seek to locate where social and ethnic difference matters for youth in their experiences with corporate media and media technologies. I am critically concerned with the notion of participation, which is so often leveraged in the promotion of "participatory culture" to both media practices and media texts interpretation.

This dissertation examines what processes configure the media participation approach as I seek to identify factors that motivate youth to produce and engage with peers. I analyze three manifestations of this approach. One, I examine assumptions about youth assertions related to celebratory participation and the ability to engage civically

with and through digital technologies. Two, I analyze media representation of Latinos and the U.S.-Mexico border as a particular modality that is deeply imbricated in a history of ethnic representation. Finally, I turn to critical pedagogy to examine the participation, power dynamics, practices and decision-making that are involved in the execution of media production. I look at how critical consciousness can be fostered through media participation in order to help Latina/o youth address challenging social issues in their community and beyond.

My analysis draws on participatory action research I conducted with Latina/os youth media producers in three media production workshops I facilitated at two San Diego community centers over a period of three years (2011-2014). Specifically, I discuss the teens' production of a media literacy and media production workshop. I use the case studies to illustrate some of the problems that media literacy programs and media participation overlooked when addressing civic engagement of youth who make content. In all of these cases I examine consciousness-raising (Freire, 1970) in areas such as the challenging of media stereotypes, discrimination and exclusion, and community self-representation.

In addition, the use of media technologies as *production tools* and a focus on the group *process of production* is one aspect that has received little if any attention in these broad examinations of youth engagement with media. Studying the process of production enables us to see the social differences that emerged through production that are indicative of larger social formations that made some youth more prepared to participate by virtue of their upbringing. In light of these possibilities, the process of production and

the conceptual understanding that can be acquired through reflecting on that process, ¨are hence of much greater significance than the *product*¨ (Buckingham, 1995, 11).

Why youth media production and participation?

During the past 40 years, educational researchers and practitioners have devoted considerable efforts to the development of youths' critical understanding of media as one strategic feature of literacy (Buckingham, 2003, Sefton-Green, 2005). Moreover, in the past two decades significant scholarly research has been conducted into these "literacies" for youth with the emergence of various forms of digital media. Today youth not only consume mass media (television, radio), but they also consume digital media when browsing the Internet and sharing information with other network users. Moreover, they produce and circulate media content when contributing to web pages and video productions (Ito, et. al, 2009). Kafai and Peppler sum up the widely held view that "This new media landscape suggests an extension of what critical participation means in new media literacy, extending the metaphor of ´reading the world to read the word´ (Freire and Macedo, 1987) to include writing new media texts in a digital era¨ (Kafai and Peppler, 2011, 89). The emergence of diverse forms of digital media production activities are incorporated into the educational and community spaces they inhabit.

In the study of digital media education, the process of youth media production and it relationship with power is often overlooked or implied in "media texts/products." This is, I argue, because it assumes a relationship to a tradition of media literacy where participation is treated as grassroots democracy or taking part in activities of creating alternative sources of media power.

This dissertation helps to bring cultural and critical studies of media literacy into the realm of media participation, while it contributes to our understanding of what civic engagement and power means in the age of "new media convergence." Certainly, the notion that participation in media gives a sense of "agency" that comes from experience of being in control of the production process –and of being able to represent one's own experiences- has deep roots in cultural and media studies traditions (Burn, 2007). It should not be surprising then, that participation in media literacy programs would be widely considered beneficial to the youth involved. There is a growing body of research suggesting that the experience of production can enable young people to reflect upon their emotional investments in media more broadly, in ways that are more difficult to achieve through critical analysis alone (De Block et al, 2005). As scholars David Buckingham, Jenny Grahame and Julian Sefton-Green (1995) instruct in their analysis of practical production in media education, it is very important to offer the participants a high degree of control over their video production in order to enable them to engage with the work in very close detail. In addition, they encourage participants to explore a number of themes, and to consider how the production might be appealing for different audiences.

This dissertation also helps to incorporate a critical pedagogy framework (Brown and Cole, 2001; Freire, 1970, 2000; Giroux, 1992) in contrast to much of the research on media literacy initiative, which has emphasized learning. Media literacy research has been primarily focused on skills building, training and access to technologies. Following media education scholar (Buckingham, 2005) this work shares the perspective that studying media representations and media participation can help us to understand wider

notions of learning beyond formal education. Going beyond formal education means to think about learning more than just acquisition of knowledge, and rather as a matter of creating meaning from real activities of everyday life and through relationships with people, connecting prior knowledge with informal contextual learning. As Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) have claimed –following the work of Dewey and Vygotsky-, students are more inclined to learn by actively participating in cooperative activities where they are challenged to use their critical thinking and embodied abilities.

As I already mentioned, I am primarily concerned with examining Latina/o youth digital media production in relationship to news media representation of the Latina/o population and the U.S-Mexico Border. At the core of this discussion are questions concerning young people's interaction with media and how their cultural identities mediate their media participation and engagement. I am also concerned with bringing the specific context of the community and ethnic identity into the investigation of the media literacy program. Often the community is treated as a neutral factor in youth media literacy projects. Rather than thinking of media technology as an end on to itself, we might instead include the social organizations as the key factor of the pedagogical exercise. This shift from a narrow focus on technology to a focus on a social organization approach encourages us to identify the several ways in which the community enables opportunities for participants. In doing so, I demonstrate how institutions and outreach programs were implicated in possibilities for the critical media participation of youths that may not be possible in other initiatives.

Critical pedagogy as an approach for "utopian methodology" (Brown and Cole, 2001) helps me to identify some of the forms of informal education that occur in the

context of a community. Developmental approaches to critical pedagogy are particularly useful in my examination media literacy workshops, digital media production, and youth media participation because a central aspect of this approach is to investigate the phases in which guided youth participation in two communities settings might foster the development of critical consciousness. By guided participation, I'm referring to the process of facilitating discussions that are designed to promote consciousness raising via continued reflection and problem solving" (Fegley, Angelique and Cunningham, 2006, 8)

These concepts are often used but overlooked in the broader literature around youth and digital media production. By bringing a developmental critical pedagogy approach to bear on my examination of how media participation "culture" has been imagined as celebratory, I seek to problematize understanding of Latina/os youth media participation. I draw on critical media literacy critiques of efforts to elicit youth participations as method of civic engagement and voice. These approaches help us to think about the ways that that discourses on civic engagement in fact may be limited.

As I stated before, educational researchers and practitioners agree that fluency with new media technologies now functions as a key component in young people's everyday life and identity formation. Concerned with what has been called the participation gap, huge focus has been placed on efforts to confront the challenges of critical participation in 21st century (Jenkins et al., 2009). According to these scholars, educators and researchers should be especially interested in the ways that audiences are now becoming active and productive participants in the new media ecology because of the large amount of time youth voluntarily spend in intense interaction with different

kinds of media as they engage in highly technical practices, including video editing, writing blogs among a host of other activities across various networks.

Media scholar Sonia Livingstone has historicized this shift, noting that the current fascination with the changing media environment forces us to renew our critical gaze on the power structures, but most importantly "the academy must be critical of the optimistic hyperbole accompanying technologically mediated social change, proffering a counterbalancing pessimism in contemporary debates. As communication possibilities are reconfigured, some are further excluded or newly marginalized, with rather few among even the world's wealthy populations actually engaging in creative or emancipatory forms of participation" (Livingstone, 2008, viii). Not all youth participate in these forms of production, and media education. The poorer of them have limited media access (the original digital divide). Yet, even when they do have formal access, they do not have access to the media practices of the more advantaged (Warschauer, 2002). Henry Jenkins (2006) has generalized such discrepancies by highlighting the new hidden curriculum, driven by the informal use of digital media, which is creating a new divide between youth prepared with the skills to succeed in the new century and those left behind.

If my argument is correct, the new media intersect with old media in more complicated ways than the current discourse reveals. Most importantly, I want to demonstrate how, by bringing together theses groups around a common goal makes visible the process of critical thinking that such activity engenders. The resulting view of critical participation is, I believe a useful addition to Jenkins´ generally celebratory writing and is more pessimistic about the brave new world he describes. In the end, I

speak of the need for ¨civic engagement¨ in providing an avenue for affinity spaces to occur in afterschool programs; but –as I learned from the students´ critical participation- it is very important to frame the use of video production in a media literacy context that understands the concerns that exist within their communities, primarily for those young people who are underprivileged, experience the lack of access, and have no voice.

Meanwhile, when it comes to news media, young people are less interested in news and are less civically engaged than citizens of previous generations (Buckingham, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Wayne, et. al., 2010). And for this reason, they are often deemed to be particularly alienated from news media. What does research demonstrate to us about these pessimistic conclusions? In comparison with enormous amount of research about audiences and public of media, there has been relatively little work in youth news media consumption. Nearly all of it has been conducted in the United States, and much of it has focused on what is seen to be the youth "apparent indifference" (Buckingham, 1999) to politics and to news media, often with negative conclusions: the view of young people as merely ignorant, apathetic and cynical.

Most of the research seems to be based on the role of news media, framed in the broader lament for the apparent decline of democracy: a) the media is often seen to be blamed for the decline in political awareness because of its commercialization of driven superficial entertainment over authentic social interaction and community life; and b) on the other hand some have tried to turn this argument around, implying that young people are actively excluded from the realm of politics, and from dominant forms of political discourse. "From this perspective, young people's apparent lack of interest in politics is a rational response to their own powerlessness" (Buckingham, 2000, 202).

In general, it is fair to say that –following Buckingham- researchers have often operated with an unduly narrow conception of political understanding. If we follow the argument that young people are positively *disenfranchised* (Bhavnani, quoted by Buckingham, 2000) then we can only assume in general terms that young Latino audiences are being "significantly more" excluded from mainstream media. And yet, there has been much less research specifically on minorities –a significant segment of young media consumers (Valdivia, 2007, 2012). For example, Kristin Moran (2011) argues that mainstream media has a tendency to reify and contain Latina/o identity that is then sold back to the young people in ways that limit their agency. Moreover, Marchi (2012) has found a frustrating sentiment from young Latina/os that the majority of teen journalists are predominantly white students because most of the high schools that can afford to fund journalism programs are located in middle-class suburbs. This makes visible how class location may influence youth expectations of the usefulness of news and civic participation.

Most Media Education studies treat learning, social connection and civic engagement as the expected outcome of participation once access and the conditions for critical reflection are provided; yet the processes of these outcomes are overlooked. This dissertation seeks to add light to our understanding of how participation, critical thinking and civic engagement functions in youth digital production. I argue that youth participation in media literacy and participatory media production projects must always be understood in terms of social interaction and the community context from which they originated. Emphasis is placed on the ¨behind the scenes¨ negotiations and decision-making of the group, and the ways in which individuals' stake out identity positions

about ethnicity, social class, and the representation of low-income communities in the video production process itself.

In this sense, one of my aims is to consider how media literacy as a form of media participation results from a chain of contentions and negotiations between participants, educators and community members. Another objective is to examine group produced video in the context of broader news media representation of Latina/os in the United States. This project reports an attempt to improve the media education of various groups of youth with different sociocultural backgrounds (one media literacy workshop involves the interaction between university students and high school students). It is concerned with how media technologies are being used and asks 'how do participants produce videos about stereotypes, immigration community and discrimination?' Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what is it that these youth producers understand they are creating? What type of discussions and contentions do young media producers engage in order to represent their voice? By focusing the research on Latino youth media production and participation in the context of after-school and summer camp dynamics, this investigation explores youth production process in hopes of unraveling discourses regarding Latinidad and media in the the U.S.-Mexico border context. Young Latina/os are an important group of youth culture, and understanding the ways in which they produce new media will help provide insight into the dynamic role mass media plays in their everyday life. This study will look at Latino youth living close to the border and how they draw on media (English or Spanish, U.S. or Mexican) and other resources in their community to construct and represent their notion of the world.

Another goal of the dissertation is to explicate the media representation of Latina/o in mainstream media, including the U.S.-Mexico border. I want to argue that television, print, and online news stories are pivotal to young people's negotiations of a Latina/o sense of self. These stories and online videos about immigration, gang-members, low-achievement, and the U.S.-Mexico border convey generic mainstream expectation of Latina/os identities look like. Extending our knowledge of the news media representation as a normalizing visibility tool to the realm of media landscape in southern California, we can understand how factors such as stereotypes relate to the expression of Latina/o youth producers.

I seek to understand how an ethos of participation interacts with news media representation as motivation that often lies in civic engagement. Like Jenkins and colleagues, I also look to afterschool programs and informal learning communities to take the lead in transforming educational practices to support participatory cultural practices. I too have found this to be a way to explore its educational potential that cannot be investigated under the constraints often found within formal learning settings (Bekerman, Burbules, and Silverman-Keller, 2006).

Part of my argument in this dissertation is that group-produced videos of Latina/os youth create narratives of ethnic representations that are excluded in mass media. In this way the project also contributes to Latina/os studies research that aims to critique the homogeneous forces (Valdivia, 2010). I argue that participation allows Lartina/os youth to leverage themselves as visible –both in their identities and as media makers. Yet, the practices of production suggest that what drives youth to make such

videos is structured as much by community and institutional discourses as the desire to express their voice.

Participatory action Research: toward a utopian methodology

Key components of my analysis are the three cases that appear in chapter three, four and five. These examples represent a small portion of my three-year involvement with the UCSD Communities Stations Initiative at the South Metro Career Center and Casa Familiar.

These study cases are crucial for understanding how youth participate in media literacy programs and engage with media production technologies and initiatives within the context of community centers. Like other media ethnographies which focus on a given audiences' reception with media, this approach tries to analyze the production process of media and the emergence of critical thinking.

For this portion of the research I have utilized participatory action research and workshops of the future (Jensen, 1995) methods. The methodology of the workshop on media literacy was inspired in an overall research program for the study of education and human development in the context of community.[2] Overall, this type of approach involves various phases of involvement of the investigator with the community of individuals who constitute the subject of the research. In order to develop what Katherine Brown and Michael Cole call a "positive critical theory,"[3] they locate their work in

[2] This program has been held for four decades in the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition (LCHC) from the University of California, San Diego.

[3] The term marks an attempt to surpass forms of criticism that offer no possibility for remedy within the reach of people who don't benefit from reading academic texts. Brown and Cole reject "the position of the "negative dialectician" Theodore Adorno's criticism of reform efforts, which he viewed as failures attempts

relation to critical pedagogy, communication, and technology studies.

Participatory action research involves working collaboratively with the community to identify issues that are problematic for the community and for which we jointly determine strategies to change social practices needed to overcome the problem (Brown and Cole, 2001). Today, a growing number of scholars are using participatory action research for studying marginalized small groups and addressing questions of identity and representation.

This action research complements the focus on critical pedagogy. For McIntyre (2008), participatory action research aims to promote the active involvement of researchers and participants in the co-construction of local knowledge, self, and critical awareness. The goal is to foster individual and collective social change and partnerships between researchers and participants in the planning, implementation, and dissemination of the research process and its products.

These procedures involve dialogical methods of learning. Similarly, Brown and Cole "utopian methodology" propose four phases that relate to several stances or cycles of reflective practice. In the first phase the issues that are problematic for the community and in which the researcher believes he has relevant knowledge are identified. In the second phase the researcher participates in community activities, to create a series of alternative circumstances that can hypothesize about changing practices to overcome social problems. The third phase is characterized by the evaluation of two aspects of the

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at "administrating the unadministratable." Their intention reflect an emphasis on constructing and sustaining alternative arrangements "While such efforts may be expected to fail, as Adorno asserts, they provide a crucial means through which to deepen our understanding of the world, and an empirical basis for critiques of our own theorizing-- essential goals in constructing theory as well as in reorganizing practice." (Brown and Cole, 2001,41)

second phase: whether the new conditions were created from the assumptions, and if so, whether the anticipated changes in the problem emerged. If the researcher or group of researchers and community members fail to provide the needed change or new forms of practice, they must review the process. If new forms of action were created, but did not have the desired effect, the research is again reviewed to determine what went wrong. But if new activities emerged successfully and had the desired effect, research travels to a fourth phase: the spread of these innovations to the community and the pursuit of sustainability. Herein is the methodological utopia, dissemination practices troubleshooting the entire community in a sustainable manner (Packer and Tappan, 2001).

This goal is rarely achieved, but certainly provides a critique of the theory at all levels, enabling a re-evaluation, and the start of new cycles is achieved.[4] In other terms, the notion of utopian methodology -utopia as a place that doesn't exist- carefully considers the question of why the utopia is not a reality that one can reach and an understanding of how society works. In this sense, my goals were to create a form of activity that is between the university and participants of the community, and to create a partnership that produces a highly effective video that reflected the point of view of the Latina/os young participants, and gets acceptance from some audience while at the same time getting all participants engage, and developing critical thinking. That was the promise and the compromise.

[4] Michael Cole illustrated these ideas with a series of descriptions of their projects designed to create new forms of educational work with children in after school programs, under the name of "Fifth Dimension " (Cole, 1996, 2006). This study and intervention was conducted through workshops literacy and media production in the community of San Ysidro, California, and had its starting point in these principles as part of an overall project called UCSD Stations Community Initiative, a pilot program involving a partnership between the university and the community.

Workshops of the future

This overall initiative came together with another approach, more specifically, to the work of media literacy: workshops of the future (Jensen, 1995). This model is a form of focus-group interviewing, borrowed from political organizing n Germany in the 1970s. However, by contrast to focus group this approach attempts to "explore the interests of the audience and seek emancipatory potential of the participants, so that they act in social and political processes that affect them" (González Hernández, 2007). It enables a forum for social reflexivity where all members are similar and have the same opportunities to participate actively. The workshops are designed as a process of group interaction constituted by three stages: critical, utopian and action. In the first phase groups are asked to list what they dislike about media or certain topics, is a round that opens the meeting to all kinds of reviews about an issue. The second phase, called utopian, is characterized by the group's rephrase of the critical list in positive terms, searching ideal solutions to the main criticisms arising from the first phase, imagining ideal aspects are proposed. In the third phase people evaluate possible forms of action; they develop an action list of places to start to achieve such a utopian goal. The stakes are the future (Jensen, 1995), but in this study case, the media literacy workshop had as its goal the possibility of having a support for action-production

For our workshop on media literacy and media production, participants first identified an issue from several within the notion of a community problem (critical phase), designed alternatives and proposals for action related to practices for production (utopian phase) and produced a video about their community (the action phase). In

concrete terms, these phases can be articulated with media production phases: preproduction, production and postproduction. All of them, but especially the last one, contain elements of critical participation from members.

My role was as an instructor of the workshop on media literacy and media production. This was held at Casa Familiar and South Metro Career Center. The community center and the social services administrators had the implicit expectation that the video could contain an important message to the community, and workshops were conducted during three years 2012, 2013, and 2014.

I see this dissertation as one method for determining meaningful uses of digital media production in Latina/os youth community contexts. Some of the goals of this research reach beyond the dissertation. The ultimate objective is to sustain media production activities in community sites with a critical approach to media production that re-centers the process of production as the site of potential learning and extension.

Latina/os: use of the term

I have chosen to use the phrasing of Latina/os rather than Mexican-American or Chicano youth. The later terms carries important sociopolitical connotations, evoking the efforts of cultural citizenship. In contrast Latina/o, has been adopted as a self-referent by many Americans of Hispanic descent a way to denote their sense of a pan-Hispanic solidarity that cuts across national and ethnic lines (Gutiérrez, 1995). Additionally, the term most often used by the mainstream news media has been included by many scholars and activists in favor of more inclusive nomenclature, essential to visualize the dynamics that shape their representation in the United States (Moreno, 2011). The term Latino best

illuminates the important thread of the overall argument I am making about youth and media participation.

Above all it was the term that the participants at Abraham Lincoln High School (ALHS) and Casa Familiar used to represent themselves and others during the period that this study was conducted. In each of the three case studies the participants used the term "Latinos" on their video as an identity marker, I took my cues on language from them. Some of the participants were quick to point out my use of the term "Mexican-Americans" as a very narrow notion of their community. To these youth "Latinos" was a word with more inclusive feeling and broad implications, and that they identify with it.

An outline of the dissertation

The five chapters that follow explore these broad concerns through detailed accounts of media visibility and media literacy workshops/production practices in the U.S.-Mexico border. The first chapters offer a theoretical and contextual framework of the media participation and media landscape at the border region; the next three case studies situate media participation and production practices I examine in action. Each case study attempts to address the particular areas of concerns for the Latina/o youth, although each raises a number of further issues and questions that I had not necessarily foreseen. Inevitably, there is a certain degree of overlap in terms of the situations that are raised by the media production processes; although I have found it productive to compare the different ways in which issues are raised in different contexts.

My role in these case studies varied between that of instructor and that of observer. In one case I attempt to adopt the role of moderate observer (Chapter 3), trying

to maintain a balance between an "insider" and an "outsider" role (Spradley, 1980). In the other two cases I effectively initiated and guided the projects in collaboration with site coordinators, and took the leading role in instructing the basic skills during the first days of the workshops. I was therefore very much a participant observer (Buckingham, 1995), and take full responsibility for the limitations of the guided participation I describe.

Chapter 1 guides readers through the approaches that treat youth participation in digital media as an inherently optimistic participatory culture or an inconsequential endeavor. The objective of my analysis in this chapter is to consider the possibilities and constraints of youth media participation in media literacy programs. I try to disentangle the threads that tie together digital media and participation and expose areas where we, as scholars, need to look closer: social processes, institutions, critical thinking, participation gap. I begin by discussing prevailing discourses that posit media participation culture as optimistic and active. I then examine the ways in which media educators have engaged with these participatory discourses, advancing perspectives on practical media production and collaboration. In particular, I focus on the way these approaches in media literacy can be studied as a form of media participation. I confront the participatory culture framework by integrating analyses from critical media literacy scholars, and communication studies that challenge assumptions that for youth, having a voice is necessarily equivalent to an optimistic view on gaining rights or resources for their community.

Chapter 2 presents the news media coverage of the Latina/o population and the U.S.-Mexico border in the last fifteen years as central to the configuration of the media landscape. In this chapter I examine the news media coverage as a way to provide a

framework to understand and compare the historical and structural discourses and circulation of images in order to argue that the media landscape frames the Latina/o population as a threat to the public order and security. I describe how this coverage has reinforced the image of region of southern California as a place of fortified border fences, long lines of cars waiting to cross to the United States, drug traffickers, and "shady" undocumented workers. I discuss how this coverage on the Latina/o population and the border generates a sense of *estrangement*. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the constraints or "downsides" of the media landscape in order to make a case that this media and new media representation matter to people in the process of media participation. In order to go beyond close textual readings of media forms we must work across media platforms to make sense of the context in which audiences experience, engage and participate in media.

Chapter 3, 4 and 5 take us deeper into the realm of media participation. These chapters put into play the questions and concerns of the previous chapters through media literacy and media production workshops with Latina/o youth producers. Chapter 3 deals with how high school and undergrad students, two groups with different social class and ethnic backgrounds work together to produce a video in the context of an after-school program in South East San Diego. I analyze how intercultural contentions over voice, identity, and stereotypes played a central role in media participation and production between UCSD undergrads and Latina/o ALHS students. I discuss how in this thoughtful and often contentious process we identified critical media participation that naturally arise as central to the goal of a successful product for which all of them are being held accountable as the price of participation.

Chapter 4 deals with young Latina/o participants who are producing their own points of views about the San Ysidro community and news media. In this chapter I provided a narrative account of my experience as an instructor in a media literacy and media production workshop at a San Ysidro social service and community center, where the media process of production led to a shifting perspective for all the members involved in media production process. Through a detailed analysis of the media production choices made by the group, I illustrate how each of the three young media producers changed in their dispositions toward media and the city administration in ways they had not expected. I consider two specific contested representations that emerged in production over the U.S.-Mexico border region: the contention between San Ysidro youth and news media corporations, both from San Diego and Tijuana; and the contention between inclusion and exclusion (discrimination) to the U.S. from young Latina/os due to their Mexican roots.

Chapter five extends this focus on the politics of media participation in media literacy and media production programs. In this chapter I will attempt to illustrate the critical and creative work that emerges from media participation, and the conditions for dialogue and discussion by a group of young Latina/o media participants. In this chapter I show the possibilities and constraints of youth participation in media production, where at the height of coverage in immigration students tackle the difficult task of self-representation against news media coverage of the border and San Ysidro. Through a detailed analysis of the production choices made by the group, I illustrate how the process of producing a video about immigration and Latina/o community laid bare some of the downsides of discrimination, deprivation of rights and lack of resources.

In all these study cases (Chapter 3, 4 and 5) these young media producers are finding themselves in conflict with mainstream media corporations, both English and Spanish speaking media, who are covering the south of San Diego in very narrow ways (Chapter 2), and local municipal administration.

In my conclusion, I will return to my key term of critical media participation. I want to explore some of the implications of the potential I will be discussing in this dissertation for media education and civic engagement. I will be returning to a core claim: that media participation needs to be studied at various levels with neither optimistic nor pessimistic positions. I reiterate the value of media participation projects but offer an approach to include community participation, and an emphasis of the production process over the final product as the site of agency.

In sum, while many scholars have studied youth digital media production pedagogy, far fewer have considered the relationship between positions on youth digital media production, the media landscape of a region, media participation processes, and raising-consciousness.

Chapter 1.

Examining Media literacy as Media Participation: Toward a critical participatory culture

> As Latinos continue to be shut out of traditional media, their creativity is migrating to the Internet, blurring the distinction between producer and consumer. Latino participation online is significantly higher than in mainstream media or PBS. Of the top 50 single-focused YouTube channels with the most subscribers, 18% are produced by and/or feature U.S. Latino content creators. And even with little support, some of the most important new media innovators, such as transmedia pioneer Jeff Gomez, are Latinos. *The Latino Media Gap*

During the course of my research I encountered several data like this through literature review, national studies designed to describe a situation of Latino media participation. Universities and non-profit organizations carried out most of these studies. Their main purpose is to identify challenges and opportunities to promote an "inclusive media landscape." Commonly, these studies specified that Latinos participation in professional media production is extremely limited and that their creativity and visibility are migrating to the Internet.

My goal in this chapter is to examine the position taken among many scholars in media education that these kinds of video productions are inherently descriptions of a participatory youth culture. One of my central assertions is that some media scholars, educators and practitioners have uncritically advanced a celebratory perspective of youth digital video production and circulation.

As I suggest in this dissertation, I share this interest in the potential of digital media when placed in the hands of marginalized and minority youth. However, as I have already pointed out, I believe the dominant discourse about youth production is praise. There is a naturalization of the connection between digital media content production and a culture of participation.

The boundaries of participatory culture

There is a considerable corpus of academic work on participatory culture that contains a very optimistic and celebratory tone and a type of positive assessment of youth empowerment and its social implications. However, several academics consider that Jenkins' model on participatory culture is too important to allow a placid scholarly examination.

For example, political economist Christian Fuchs (2014), one of the main critics of the participatory culture model states that Jenkins has not sufficiently problematized the concept of participation. He argues that Jenkins' model ignores its roots in political science and democratic theory, and doesn't address questions about ownership of media institutions, media economic gains and the distribution of material goods.

Fuchs makes observations that suitably introduce an aptly to my own argument. Jenkins' writings "read much like a celebration of participatory culture, as a structure that allows consumers to participate" in the creation and distribution of goods (Fuchs, 2014, p. 58). Fuchs' observation emphasizes the disregard of the "downsides" of participatory culture.

Aaron Delwiche and Jennifer Jacobs Henderson's "The participatory cultures handbook" (2013) is key example of texts that have contributed to the "optimistic" discourse.

> One only need visit a local coffee shop or public library to see that people of all ages and backgrounds are increasingly active and engaged in participatory networks. Citizen around the world create and distribute messages via online and interpersonal networks at rapid and ever-accelerating rate. Armed with inexpensive tools for capturing, editing, and organizing, people tap into a vast ocean of real time data and multimedia content to promote personal and political interests. Functions once monopolized by a handful of hierarchical institutions (e.g. newspapers, television stations, and universities) have been usurped by independent publishers, video-sharing sites, collaboratively sustained knowledge banks, and fan-generated entertainment. To date, communication scholars and media literacy educators have focused primarily on the implications of participatory creative cultures, but this is one aspect of a much larger cultural movement. (Delwiche and Jacobs, 2013, 5)

Delwiche and Jacobs introduce a point that is central to my argument in this chapter: Whereas in other times citizens once experienced the world through monopolized institutions, nowadays one only need to visit a local coffee shop to see how citizens participate in the creation of worlds through the democratic uses of media. Jenkins explained his model in terms of framing:

> This approach differs dramatically from what I call pessimism. Critical pessimism, such as media critics Mark Crispin Miller, Noam Chomsky, and Robert McChesney, focus primarily on the obstacles of achieving a more democratic society. In the process, they often exaggerate the power of big media in order to frighten readers into taking action. I don't disagree with their concern about media concentration, but the way they frame the debate is self-defeating insofar as it disempowers consumers even as it seeks to mobilize them (Jenkins, 2006, 258).

Here Jenkins suggest that participatory culture is defined in terms of empowerment instead of victimization. That said, the point of Fuchs over the

"downsides" of participatory culture is inextricably linked to this focus of what is media doing to us directly or indirectly in terms of economic crisis, the exploitation of users, and concerns about privacy violations and surveillance (Fuchs, 2014). For him, the idea of participatory culture "is a rather harmless concept mainly created by white boys with toys who love their toys"

I'm adopting a different perspective in this study. Instead of considering the participatory culture as a theme of celebration for optimists or inconsequential to analysts of political economy affairs –trying to avoid this kind of Eco's "apocalyptic or integrated*"* dualistic narrative-, I will consider the relevance of the participation in media as a revealing case through which we can deepen our understanding of the forms of interaction between youth audiences and media, and critical media participations. I argue as a practitioner of media education, that if we want to better understand the emergence of participation in media and the relevance they have acquired in today's new media ecology, we must study this concept in the context of communication processes, media production decision-making, and power dynamics that have shaped the digital audiovisual landscape. We can understand the current relevance of media participation, its difficulties and challenges, if we consider that this phenomenon, of so little scope for the observer of the macro, is rooted in a series of communication processes and production practices -many times ignored in studies that assume agency of users or audiences in text products or content.

In my analysis of digital media and media education studies, very often scholars ignore important aspects of participation. As I reviewed some studies, I identified important issues:

1. *The process is more important than the product*. Although media production activities may seem more pertinent to the domain of a self-expressive and aesthetic exploration approach to media education, they also engage participants in negotiations and contentions, many critical, creative, and ethical. As I show in what follows, when new media educators focus on the link between user-generated content and participation, they may miss issues such as negotiations, contentions, and decision-making on the choices made by youth in the production process. When media scholars study media content, they risk overlooking nuanced production processes and social contexts that shape what youth produce and what the producers learn (Halleck and Taub-Pervizpour, 2011). Abstracted by the appeal of a final video product, media educators too often fail to assess the outcomes for youth involved. In light of these possibilities, the process of production and the conceptual understanding that can be acquired through reflecting on that process, ¨are hence of much greater significance than the *product*¨ (Buckingham, 1995, 11).

2. *The critical aspect of participation is obscured*. While I find much to admire in the "participatory culture" literature, I find it lacking in its adherence to the meaning of "critical" in the context of the term "critical participation." There appears to be a slippage in usage, in which the critical side of participatory culture is obscured if not erased. The objective of my analysis then, is to think of media literacy projects as forms of participation in order to expose areas where young people could develop critical dispositions toward media production. I begin by situating media literacy projects as the place where participatory culture can be achieved. I examine the ways in which digital media scholars have engaged with a celebratory participatory discourse, advancing media

production projects as if they were inherently participatory, often using the discourse of developing skills.

3. *More than the individual: the community at the center.* In his turn away from the passive and anomic media audience framework, Henry Jenkins advocates for shifting the focus from individual expression and experience to community collective involvement and processes of learning, connection, and social engagement. The learning of new digital literacies has the potential to develop higher order cognitive and social skills in addition to technical and conceptual knowledge through collaboration (Cole and Distributed Literacy Consortium, 2006). Thus, collaboration acts a valuable mean through which participatory culture is created as a desired learning outcome (Joseph and Cznarnecki, 2013). To Jenkins and his colleagues, collaboration is defined as working respectfully together in teams, formal and informal, exercising flexibility and willingness to make compromises to complete tasks and develop new knowledge (such as through video production).

4. *Not all participate*. Not all youth participate in these forms of production, and media education programs. The digital divide has mostly referred to the gap in access to technology in U.S. schools and libraries. The goal over the last twenty years was to provide every student access to networked computing. At least in the United States most of that challenge has largely been met: the majority of students have access to the Internet through schools (Jenkins, 2009). However, even when the poorer of students have formal access, do not have access to the media practices of the more advantaged (Warschauer, 2002). Henry Jenkins (2006) has generalized such discrepancies by highlighting the new hidden curriculum, driven by the informal use of digital media, which is creating a new

divide between youth prepared with the skills to succeed in the new century and those left behind –in addition to those who can't articulate what they learn from their participation. A new gap has been emerging, he argued, the *participation gap*. This participation gap takes the digital divide to the next level. The gap between what students with full broadband access at home can do and what students can do when their only access is through the public library or a school computer lab, where there are often constraints in time use, access to certain sites, and limits on their ability to store, download and upload material.

Here I am particularly interested in the impact of media literacy programs in the promotion of digital youth "participatory culture." I bring the work of media educators David Buckingham, Henry Jenkins, and Henry Giroux into the discussion to provide a framework with which to critique the calls for "new media skills" made by supporters of youth video productions and the prevalent discourse of participation. Finally, I use the theoretical approaches introduced by new media scholars Nico Carpentier and Mizuko Ito to help me problematize the phenomenon of educators eliciting youth "participation" through digital media production. By bringing these contributions to bear on the scholarship on digital media and learning, I want to put forward an idea of a critical media participation that could be done when the adequate methodological circumstances are set up.

My challenge to this approach grows out of an interest in tracing the development of media participation as a form of pedagogy that engages youth in a reflexive dialog with their roles as media producers and the social contexts in which they operate: southern San Diego, close to the U.S.-Mexico border.

An important foundation of my argument in this dissertation is the critique of the traditional model of media literacy that is precipitated through participatory culture discourse. Throughout this chapter I seek to show that when educational and funding institutions create opportunities for youth media production, youth can express themselves in ways that can be representative of their agency. My interest is how can we design interventions that teach and encourage participants in video production collectively and that can put forward a model of critical media participation that address the needs and rights of the youth.

The prevailing debate among media educators that media participation involves practices of democracy and visibility to youth through production presents a particular challenge for many Latina/o youths, whose condition of minority makes this challenge even more difficult to achieve. They have other needs and identity themes related to discrimination, health, housing, and transportation, among others.

Media literacy and practical production

My first aim in this chapter is to examine the ways in which media literacy programs have tended to provide a narrowly celebratory account of participation, which fails to address the process of production along with many broader social and cultural dimensions. Looking at texts that have contributed to digital media literacies, I consider the ways in which media literacy initiatives have been discussed in terms of participation –a concept that undergirds power assumptions about the relationships of youth with media and production. Indeed I am not arguing against the value of media literacy and production initiatives. Quite the contrary, my research with youth has led me to believe

that Latina/o youth tend to have a much more casual and intimate relationship to media and production.

I agree with media literacy advocates who point to the importance of media literacy programs during the past several decades. Jenkins, for example, writes, "students also must acquire a basic understanding of the ways media representations structure our perceptions of the world; the economic and cultural contexts within which mass media is produced and circulated; the motives and goals that shape the media they consume; and alternative practices that operate outside the commercial mainstream" (Jenkins et al, 2009, 20). However, I seek to show how generalizations made about their learning skills or "participatory culture" tends to obscure the nuances of participation and civic engagement.

In 2007, prominent media scholar David Buckingham stated that the relationship between the media and education has always been the focus of both hopes and fears. He cites the "optimistic" claim made by Thomas Edison that motion pictures would "revolutionize" learning and ultimately make teachers superfluous.

> Similar claims were made about radio and television in the mid-twentieth century; yet they were also challenged by those who saw these media as a dangerous threat to the work of teachers and schools (Buckingham, 2013, 10).

For at least the last decade, we have seen similarly polarized views on digital media. It is condemned, like television, for creating distraction and superficial thinking, while at the same time it is eulogized as a means of creating more authentic, effective and

student-centered learning.[5] He makes a proposal that is fundamental to my own argument here: in the digital media era, media education does not begin "from the view that the media are necessarily and inevitably harmful, or that young people are simply passive victims of media influence. On the contrary, it begins from students existing knowledge and experience of media, rather than from the instructional imperatives of the teacher… Rather than seeking to protect children from media, it aims to develop their *understanding* of, and *participation* in, the media culture that surrounds them" (Buckingham, 146; following Bazalgette, 1989). The Buckingham model emphasizes the centrality of the socio historical context, and the resulting impact on expectations for youth participation in civic life.

At the same time, Twenty-First Century media literacy is thought to be remarkably participatory when compared to past generations. However, media production or practical media production traditionally have been left outside of the field of media literacy, and even outside the field of media studies in general. Buckingham (2003) suggests that this happened because of two things: a) the pervasive belief that student media work lacked scholarly merit, mainly because it was seen as reproductions or

[5] This discussion of the presumed effects of new media connects to longstanding discussions of media literacy and new media literacy. The emergence of media education dates back at least to the early 1960's (Goodman, 2003) in response to the rise of mass media. Since then, the academic literature reveals that media literacy education is a multifaceted and contested phenomenon his umbrella definition is widely quoted throughout the literature. However, it lacks specificity, that is, it cannot provide much detail to people who want to design educational strategies" (Martens, 2010, 2). On the conceptual level, some agreement exists. In 1992, the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy defined media literacy as "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in a variety of forms" (Aufderheide, 1993, 20). The aim, thus, of media literacy is to enable audience members to reflect systematically on the processes of reading and writing, to understand and to analyze their own experience as readers and writers" (Buckingham 2003, 41). The principle or way to do it, according to Buckingham, is to follow Vygotsky's dynamic model "zones of proximal development" where dialogue between the teacher and student is central to the learning process. The zone of proximal development model, therefore, has several important implications for media literacy. "It is through reflection that students will be able to make their implicit 'spontaneous' knowledge about the media explicit, and then –with the aid of a teacher and o peers- to reformulate it in terms of broader 'scientific' concepts" (Buckingham, 2003, 142).

imitations of dominant media ideologies; and b) the "technicist" emphasis on production skills that overlooks the process and meanings of media makings. Kafai and Peppler (2007) have pointed out that today media educators still seem to emphasize in their research critical analyses over production: reading over writing. They follow Buckingham (2003) when arguing that even with the acknowledgement of convergence culture by media educators, there has been no proper understanding of what this might mean for media production in general, more specifically on how we can discuss the numerous dimensions that are involved in producing new media artifacts in a coherent manner.

Media educator Sefton-Green (2006) observed that the dialogue in media education and education research shifted in the last twenty years; from one focusing on media effects on audiences, to one emphasizing the empowerment of participants because of the potential of non-professional media producers, especially youth. Jenkins (2006) states that media production and creative writing are more commonplace in the age of participatory culture.

These statements resonate with traditional focus of educational researchers and practitioners on youths' critical understanding of new media as one key aspect of media and digital literacy (Buckingham, 2011, Ito et al., 2010). Media education scholars have pushed for the integration of media literacy and production to educate youth about the construction of media and meaning making. To Buckingham (1995, 2003), Sefton-Green, (1994, 2006), Jenkins (2006, 2009), Orozco (2010) and Kafai and Peppler (2011), media production as participation is a key component in new media education. These scholars have been interested in how individuals use audiovisual technologies to represent themselves, how they communicate with others and produce meaning.

Two tendencies of media production have framed most of these studies. First, media production studies are often driven by political questions: the hope is that participation in media production enables a more democratic media environment, or a more democratic society (Buckingham, 2011; Curry Jansen, Pooley, Taub-Pervizpour, 2011; Jenkins and Thorburn, 2003). A second theme of participation and media production research is driven by educational questions or how production and participation relates to new media literacies (Jenkins, 2009; Ito et al, 2009; Livingstone, 2003).

According to Mimi Ito and her colleagues (2009) the majority of young people are already contributors and producers of media when one considers social networking and blogging sites. She differentiates between friendship-driven activities characteristic of “messing around” (e.g. sharing information on social networking sites) and interest-driven activities characteristic of “geeking out” (e.g. providing information to blogs, designing animation and contributing with video productions).

Buckingham pivots off earlier accounts of the literacy metaphor to extend the notion of literacy beyond its original application to the medium of writing. He observes that many educational conceptions of literacy tend to define it in terms of a set of skills and competencies. Today’s definition of literacy is more than reading and writing. He himself once defined media education as "the process of teaching and learning about the media: Media literacy is the result -the knowledge and skills that students acquire " (Buckingham, 2003, p. 4). However, a later definition of media literacy as “the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts” seems more succinct. In a broad sense, then, literacy is not only a skill but also an act of individual

cognition in diverse social contexts with different technologies.

Buckingham argues that literacy also contains a critical dimension "When we describe somebody as a 'literate' person, we do not simply mean that he or she is able to read and write. Particularly in an educational context, the notion of literacy generally implies a more reflexive approach: in this broader sense involves analysis, evaluation and critical reflection. It entails the acquisition of a meta-language – that is, a "means of describing the forms and structures of a particular mode of communication."

Buckingham introduces a point that is central to my argument in this chapter: Whereas media literacies during the 1990s experienced learning through readings of texts, the new media literacy relies on creative production and participation, thus, more democratic and critical uses of media.

Kafai and Peppler (2007) used the term "platform model" of teaching and learning about media production to describe studies that have predominantly focused on youth's experiences producing media on one particular platform (i.e. television, radio, newspaper, etc.), and mostly within the classroom context (Booth, 1999; Loveles, 1999). The term was used to emphasize the non-consideration of this perspective in preparing youth for the new "convergence culture" (Jenkins, 2006), a "shift away from the previous platform model where students were taught explicitly about music, film, or television, and toward considering how these platforms are increasingly overlapping and enabling new functionality" (Jenkins, 2011).

While the concept of "participatory culture" has given us a better depiction of what convergence culture and media literacy looks like, the work in media education remains mostly agnostic about the processes in which media-making is mediating

production by social contentions. Henry Jenkins, during a conversation about participation and politics at the symposium "On Empowered and Impassioned Audiences in the Age of Media Convergence,' recalled how his concept has become an "empty signifier often used in very superficial ways by all kinds of groups that want to entice our participation but do not want to give up any real control. And I fear I have contributed to this phenomenon by moving between descriptive and normative definitions of participatory culture without always being as clear as I should be" (Jenkins and Carpentier, 2013, 2).

The work has less to say about how the social relationships between different sociocultural groups. For example, underserved and privileged groups negotiate construction of a common narrative while producing a video. Moreover, while the concept of "participatory culture" may be "useful for constructing a shared agenda amongst researchers, educators, technology producers, and policy makers, it's often unclear what concrete forms of social belonging are being negotiated or what sorts of privileges would go along with membership" (Sims, 2014). The limited research tends to show a correlation between deliberation/discussions of different groups, learning or generating powerful new perspectives on public issues, and openness to alternative points of view (Fishkin and Lushkin, 2004; Furstenberg, 2004). Hence, there is an opportunity to capitalize on the fact that youth already have control of the video production and it is therefore present a process that anyone, regardless of media experience, can be involved with.

Digital Media Literacies as a form of Participation

> So what is the place of practical media production in media education? What differences should we expect to find between practical production in media education and the more "instrumental" approach? What is the relationship between practical media production and the critical analysis of the media? Is production simply a means of acquiring conceptual understanding of the media –or is it an activity that can be pursued in its own right? And, more importantly, what are students expected to learn from making their own media products? David Buckingham, 1995

To begin with, there are no single answers to the questions posed by Buckingham above. As Sefton-Green (2006) has noted, there are diverse historical origins of media education and, of course, of media educators themselves. Media education, as I'm using the term, not only involves teaching about media, but teaching through media. However, as I noted before, to be critical and participatory, media education must also involve some kind of systematic reflection, not merely upon the content of media texts or forms, but also on the social contexts in which they are produced and consumed. In "media production" terms, this systematic reflection means a closer look to the relation between critical analysis ("theory") and practical production.

David Buckingham, Jenny Grahame, and Julian Sefton-Green (1995) have differentiated four versions of practical media production in education. These scholars attempt to understand how different ways of participating in making media are meaningful to students. Yet, as they noted, what usually happens -in practice- is that these "four" versions often co-exist and overlap.

The first, the "self-expressive" version, relates to individual creativity and the aesthetic possibilities of audio-visual media (including radio, photography, video). For example, in this version, teachers usually are inclined to focus on the media's potential as

means of bringing student's "authentic" out-of-school cultures into the classroom (rap music, family photos, and so forth). The second version refers to the use of practical work as a "method of learning", which sometimes is carried out though very "instrumental" or technology-based production. For example, media production can support students' learning on a whole range of curriculum areas (e.g. media production can help promote social and communication skills). The third version is what media industries and higher education have established as "vocational training." This version is concerned with the acquisition of technical abilities and with the reproduction of conventional structures of professional practice. Finally, the fourth version views practical work as "deconstruction." Buckingham's version above identifies the importance of deconstruction exercises during media production as a way to analyze and experiment with the conventions (framing, camera positioning, editing, etcetera) in every step of the process, allowing the distinctive variations of these conventions to be explored. For example, students might undertake exercises on the convention of documentaries to demonstrate their understanding of a particular genre. Thus, the expressive potential of the practical work is subordinated to the demonstration of conceptual understanding.

To simply cite the collective work in media education that has been carried out over the last 20 years is to be reminded of how radically different the media environment of the twenty-first century is from what preceded it. Two major changes can be mentioned for this paper following David Buckingham's discussion: The status of media production in media education, and the technological change in media (changes that occurred in the context of broader social, political and economic developments).

The change in status of practical work in media education has been influenced by the argument about the need for the appropriate "new literacies" to the changing social and cultural landscape. Thus the goal is not only to teach about media as a form of defensive "critical" reading, but also as an ability to produce in the new media environment (Press and Williams, 2010), becoming an ideal "full participant" in society at large (Jenkins, 2009), or at least, have possibilities for more democratic participation and expression.

The other major change refers to technology. Some early accounts of media production in school indicated the difficult nature of the process (production meant video-cameras based on tape recorders, tripods, editing consoles). Development in technology over the past decades have made more complex forms of media production much more accessible and easy to manage (flip or digital cameras, cell phones, accessible editing software programs, and so forth). Jenkins (2006, 2013) Ito et al (2010), and other scholars have written about the way communication, media and culture in general have been redefined by new technologies.

Participatory culture: media convergence, participation and power

In *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide*, Henry Jenkins (2006) focuses particularly on the ways fans are now becoming active and productive participants in the new media system. Jenkins' term of *convergence culture*, on the one hand refers to the technological convergence between multiple media platforms that have been enabled by what Nicholas Negroponte calls the transformation of "atoms into bytes" or digitization (Jenkins, 2006, 11); and the emergence of new trans-media industries

using technological process of bringing together multiple media functions within the same devices. For example, these processes enable the flow of same symbolic form of content in many different channels and assume many different forms at the point of reception.

On the other hand, this also refers to the convergence between producers and consumers. Jenkins argues that technological change has enabled migratory activities of media audiences who will go virtually anywhere in search of new information and experiences. The circulation of media content across "different media systems, competing media economies, and national borders, depends heavily on consumers' active participation… consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content" (Jenkins, 2006, 3). In sum, the idea of convergence not only is understood in terms of the digitalization and flow of media of content across multiple platforms, but also considers how consumers of media make connections among dispersed media contents.

It is this dynamic environment that generates the idea that we are seeing the emergence of new "participatory culture", in which consumers are becoming producers and creators of some type of published media, by appropriating and manipulating mainstream media content.[6] He views media fans as active producers and skilled manipulators of programs meanings, as audiences constructing their own culture from borrowed materials. Henry Jenkins defines "participatory culture" as a culture in which

[6] This term can be traced back to the subtitle of Henry Jenkins's influential 1992 study, *Textual Poachers. Television fans and participatory culture*.

fans and “other consumers are invited to actively participate in the creation and circulation of new content” (Jenkins, 2006, 290).

The concept of participatory culture has been made pertinent by the diverse new technologies appearing in the home and school classrooms. However, the idea of participation in media has existed long before the development of new technologies. According to Buckingham (2014), what has changed is the way "we think about learning and the interplay between technologies, literacies and educational experiences take on new forms of understanding in the digital media age" (p. xvi).

In 2006 Henry Jenkins (2009) proposed his participatory culture model for the development of skills in the white paper *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture*: *Media Education for the 21st Century* (Jenkins et al., 2009, xi) where he expands the concept to frame it in educational terms, building from print-literacies and media literacies perspectives to expand a notion of new media literacies. According to Jenkins, a participatory culture is one that has “relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations, and some type of information mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices” (p. 7).

As mentioned above, the shift from media consumer to media producer appears to hold considerable potential in this media convergence context, especially for media educators and their aim to reshape the conditions under which audiences engage with media culture. In what Jenkins and his colleagues have described as participatory culture teachers can set the conditions for the development and creation of media, an interrelated space that involves civic engagement and mentorship that affords a supportive structure

for contributions and connectedness.[7] The outcome of this engagement, they argue, is youth development of cultural competences and a proposed set of skills (play, performance, simulation, negotiation, appropriation, distributed cognition, transmedia navigation, judgment, networking, and collective intelligence) through interaction with popular culture, the creation of "full participants" in this new media culture.[8]

For Jenkins, these skills extend from traditional media literacy programs and therefore are issues concerning critical pedagogy. In order to ensure that every person can have an opportunity for participating in cultures supporting the development of new competences and social skills, Jenkins and colleagues look to afterschool programs and informal learning communities to take the lead transforming educational practices to support participatory cultural practices and create "affinity spaces": Peer-to-peer learning experiences, diverse cultural expression, development skills for the modern workplace, and a more empowered conception of citizenship.

The interest in after-school in developing different abilities than the ones emphasized in regular classrooms is because this venue permits educators to operate in a less hierarchical and structured environment. They are freer to foster learning about

[7] This characteristic of participatory culture has important implications for distinctive processes. Forms of participatory culture includes: a) *affiliations*: memberships, formal and informal, communities connected around various forms of media (blogs, Facebook, MySpace); b) *expressions*: production of new creative media forms (video-making, digital sampling, fiction writing, zines; c) *collaborative problem-solving*: collaborative working, formal and informal in order to achieve tasks and develop new knowledge (Wikipedia, alternative reality gaming); and d) *circulations*: new shape in the flow of media (podcasting, blogging).

[8] Jenkins et al (2009) argue that policymakers and educators confront three issues as they make an effort to bridge the gap between those that contribute and those that do not: the participation gap, the transparency problem, and the ethics challenge. Not everybody can access new media technologies and the opportunities of participation they represent (participation gap), not everybody can actively deliberate on their media experiences and articulate what they learn from their participation (transparency problem), and, not everybody can develop the ethical norms necessary to cope with a complex media environment (ethics challenge).

cooperation, computer literacy, and other skills that compliment the knowledge taught in the classroom, such as games to test math, and language abilities. Traditionally, such programs also provide children/teens-adult interaction and supervision for extra school hours, and at the same time involve them in-group activities where adults and other peers participate in a different way as in the regular classroom.

These circumstances allow the after-school participants to develop cultural competences, and practice social skills in culturally diverse settings. Jenkins, following Gee (2004) call such informal learning cultures "affinity spaces." Gee differentiates his concept of affinity spaces from previous theoretical frameworks of participation such as "communities of practices" by shifting the focus from membership to interactivity. In this sense, the space is framed active, in terms of action and interaction. In this sense, "affinity spaces" can be produced and sustained by common endeavors that bridge differences in age, class, race, gender, and educational level.

Jenkins and his colleagues see youth becoming active citizens through participation. They believe that youth empowerment –or active citizenship- comes from the manufacture of meaningful decisions through real civic engagement, learning the skills of citizenship by becoming political actors and gradually coming to perceive the choices young people make in political terms. According to Jenkins, today's children learn through amusement and play, the skills they will apply to more serious tasks later. However, real civic engagement is still a very vague notion or intention when the value of his model is on particular modes of expression, community building, and connection while holding up citizenship as an ideal display. Ultimately this inclination tends to obscure inequities in possibilities for participation.

Genres of participation

Compared to initiatives that focus on critical literacy, practical media production programs are still relatively scattered in media education. In at least some fields, however, there seems to be a growing recognition of their relevance and also, their misleading assumptions. Mizuko Ito and her colleagues' book entitled *Living and Learning with New Media*, have noted that increasing youth media programs have been motivated by the belief that engaging in practical media production should be the foundation of media education and lead youth to empowerment through the development of self-expression "our work is in line with that of other scholars who explore literacies in relation to ideology, power, and social practice in other settings where youth are pushing back against dominant definitions of literacy that structure their everyday life worlds" (Ito, 2008, 11).

In concordance with this last statement, they observed that media educators who have fostered this view believed that shifting youth identity from that of a media consumer to a media producer is a significant medium for developing youth voice, creativity, agency, and ways of literacy in a new media ecology era. However, according to them, other media education scholars overlook the various positions and participations that youth take up in relation to this new media converged technology.

Ito and her co-investigators describe participation with new media as either "friendship-driven practices," in which youth use new media to interact with friends and peers as they go about their day-to-day negotiations, or "interest-driven practices," which is depicted by activities that bring young people together around specialized interests, hobbies, and career aspirations. These practices often go through niche or marginalized

identities like “the domain of the geeks, freaks, musicians, artists, and dorks who are identified as smart, different, or creative, and who generally exist at the margins of teen social worlds” (Ito, 2008, 10).

In addition, within this broad framework, they identified three distinct genres of youth participation with new media that describe the different degrees of commitment, intensity and sophistication to media engagement. They correspond to different social and learning dynamics: “Hanging Out,” “Messing Around,” and “Geeking Out.” “Hanging Out” is participation that occurs during social time in friendship-driven networks. It can involve using new media technologies such as instant messaging, Facebook or MySpace as means to communicate, interact, play games with others or arrange social activities. “Messing Around” is a genre of participation that happens at a deeper level of engagement and interest in the workings of the technologies. It can involve using new media technologies to look for information, or to experiment with different forms of media in relatively casual way. “Geeking Out” is participation at the deepest level of investment and commitment in a specialized area of knowledge or interest. These media participations are intense, autonomous, and interest-driven. It requires specialized skills and knowledge in order to make participation possible. In order to articulate this broad framework of the genres of participation we must understand them as a continuum, with the category of “Messing Around” as the “transitional genre” on the path to peer-based-learning and that the kind of social activity that is crucial for regulating social norms needed to participate in contemporary new media ecology.

These categories describe a more nuanced idea of participation, even if they depict a universal sphere of participation in which access to new media technologies is

considered a priori. In addition, the path or transition between friendship-driven to interest-driven participation provides a better assessment to learning, but it can be erroneous if one assumes that this is simply the outcome of time and exposure or is the best way to conceive diversity in media learning.

The emergence of a critical participatory culture

While the concept of participation in Jenkins (2006, 2009) has been commented upon by many media scholars for helping to bring attention, inspiration, and resources to new media literacy programs, the concept has been also been critiqued, particular in the area of democratic theory and political economy, for forwarding an homogenized notion of participation (Sims, 2014), and propagating what Nico Carpentier cautions a "broad definition that incorporates all types of social practices… This implies that participation cannot be equated with 'mere' access to or interaction with media organization, as Jenkins and others do, for instance." (Carpentier, 2011, 69)

To such critics, one example of this conflation can be found in *Convergence Culture* where Jenkins defines participation as referring "to the social and cultural interactions that occur around media" (Jenkins, 2006, 305). A common observation of Carpentier's critique is that access and interaction do matter for participatory processes in the media, but "they are also very distinct from participation because of their less explicit emphasis on power dynamics and decision-making" (Carpentier, 2011, 69).

Instead he proposes the combination of two dimensions of audience activity (participation in the media and interaction with media content) distinguished from "participation through the media," which deals with the prospects for mediated

participation to voice opinions and experiences in public spaces," and "participation in the media," which refers to participation in the production of media output and in mediated production decision-making.

While I share some concerns of these critiques and propositions, I seek to pivot from them to address the power dynamics and the decision-making processes that are involved in media participation. Rather than casting aside the participatory culture model for its celebratory tone, we might ask about the processes involved in participation in the first place.

By placing emphasis on participation as "equal power relations in decision-making processes" (Carpentier, 2011, 69) and media participation as a shared decision-making in the context of media technology, content, people and institutions (Carpentier, 2011, 129-130), we may begin to see the developing relationship between learning and civic engagement of Latina/o youths. Although this level of equality (the idea of full participants utopia) is difficult to reach on a permanent basis, it is an important reference that allows a comparison of different participatory social practices. However, this emphasis in co-producing content together is more than just an approach to the media, is the possibility of a democratic, communicative and representative participation.

In this sense, we may also consider Latina/o youth participation as the production of a form of visibility that facilitates a discourse of rights, in the sense that human beings have the right to be part of decision-making and control structures that affect them.

I borrow Jenkins concept of participatory culture to explain the "space" for the development and creation of media content: a space involving interrelated civic participation and guidance, enabling a structure for contributions and connectivity.

Turning our attention to modalities of learning, it is worth considering how some principles of critical media literacy and critical media pedagogy could help us in casting some of the approaches to teaching that have been forwarded in cultural and critical perspectives of media education in the context of a community. The guidelines emphasize the need of a pedagogy that proceeds from respect for the complexity of the relationship between pedagogical theories and the sites in which they might developed" (Giroux in Brown and Cole, 2001, 47).

Media literacy programs in after school programs have become a social space to explore these voices optimally and affordability of digital technology and participation in a meaningful format that emphasizes citizenship and civic engagement. They have become more than participatory culture that creates a space for criticism or at least "has today more than ever great opportunities" (Orozco, 2010, p.15) to strengthen real participation, independent and critical of the media.

Chapter 2.

Latino media landscape in the U.S. and the border

In the next chapters I want to argue that television, print, and online news stories are pivotal to young people's negotiations of a Latina/o sense of self. These stories and online videos about immigration, gang-members, low-achievement, and the U.S.-Mexico border convey generic expectation of Latina/o identities and beckon young people to represent their own identity through the logic of media participation. I suggest that these news stories of Latina/os and immigrants are compelling not as a particular grouping of televisual, or digital videos but as a component of the media landscape that mark the boundaries of Latina/os identities in San Diego, California. These components of the media landscape also offer Latina/os routes to community recognition and inclusion, but are very scarce and almost all carried out by Spanish Language media. At the same time, young Latina/os are transforming "foreign" storylines about them through their online engagements as they respond or counter narrate their way they're being represented in mainstream media.

While "illegal invader" is one of the key representations to be associated with Latina/os (among others such as agricultural workers, gardeners, gang-members, low-achievers), it is perhaps the principal articulation experienced through mass media. In this chapter, and throughout this dissertation, I will examine how the mediated visibilities of Latina/o discourse intersect with the logics of the U.S.-Mexico border news coverage. I consider how the discourses of the "other" and the "border" are often used to address and

reinforce one another. Through a discussion of the ways in which news media has covered the border in response to the phenomenon of immigration, I suggest that mass media may ultimately function more to propel the discourse and visibility of "invader" than to effectively comprehend everyday life in the border.

In this chapter, I also want to draw attention away from the aesthetic codes associated with particular media texts associated with Latina/os in general –a well research topic in Latino Media Studies-, and, instead, attend to what media scholar Guillermo Orozco (2001) refers to as the "macro mediation" of the media to try to include and make sense of how the U.S.-Mexico border news media coverage also plays a big role in the configuration of media landscape in south San Diego. I do this because I believe it is in this coverage of the border that we can further understand the circulation of images as well as the constraints of a politics of visibility and media's role in it. This chapter demonstrates how news media in various platforms on the U.S. side of the border has played a key role in shaping and managing a "mediated visibility" of the region by expanding the coverage of mainly political aspects in terms of security and surveillance. For example, by the end of 2010, newspapers, and television screens across the Southern California were portraying the region with images of border fences, officials, long lines of cars waiting to cross to the United States, drug traffickers, and "shady" undocumented workers.

By studying examples in the press, online and television news, of Latina/os and border reporting in local context, this chapter argues that the media management of the visibility of the U.S.-Mexico border region most often amounts to a discourse of security and surveillance. In analyzing the border coverage over the last decade I first demonstrate

that the "border enforcement and security" discourse in the U.S. has "eclipsed" other narratives. So, for example, whether a young Latina/o audience member interprets a news image/story or a television news program as a reality-based media text may hinge as much on the register of a genre's aesthetic codes as whether the person watched the show on Univision or NBC, saw the image on Yahoo news or a video clip on Youtube. I want to analyze media texts or visibility (Thompson, 2005) in order to explore what media and new media mean and how they matter to people in the process of media participation. In order to go beyond close textual readings of media forms we must work across media platforms to make sense of the context in which audiences experience, engage and participate in media.

The concept "mediated visibility" (Thompson, 2005) describes the capacity of media to bring to the attention of others not only aspects of social and political life, but the means by which social and political struggles are articulated and carried out in a more intense and extensive way. In general terms the visible is that which can be seen, "that which is perceptible by the sense of sight; the invisible is that which cannot be seen, is imperceptible or hidden from view. What we see is that which lies within our field of vision, where the boundaries of this field are shaped by the spatial and temporal properties of the here and now" (Thompson, 2005, 35). According to John Thompson, with the development of communication media, the field of vision is no longer constrained by the "here and now," instead it is shaped by a range of social and technological considerations (such as a camera and photographic angles, editing process, and organizational interests), "it is also shaped by the fact that, in most communication

media, the visual is not an isolated sensory dimension but is usually accompanied by the spoken or written word –it is the audiovisual or the textual visual" (Thompson, 2005, 36).

Latina/os in English-Language U.S. news media

United States audiences do not have to go out of their way to experience news media content, though some forms of Latina/os news stories content might be more difficult to find than others. For example, a study by Federico Subervi-Vélez (2005) focusing on the 1995–2004 period found that less than one percent of all network news stories were about Latina/os. Of this one percent, 66 % focused on crime or illegal immigration. "Since 2004, the first trend has actually worsened: a forthcoming study by scholar Federico Subervi on news story topics from 2008 to 2012 found that the percentage of general market TV network news stories highlighting Latinos declined from 1% in 2008 to 0.6% in 2012. Over this period, Latinos were central in only 491 out of approximately 80,000 stories" (Negrón-Muntaner et. al., 2014).

For that matter, Latino media scholars have learned that was is missing from media representation is not necessarily an indicator of that which is not present in U.S. media landscape but rather an indication of what is ignored or marginalized (Valdivia, 2010). In her book *Latina/os and the Media*, Angharad Valdivia (2010) identifies the classic Media Studies concept of *symbolic annihilation* to address the under-representation of Latina/os news coverage in all forms of mainstream media given that Latina/os compose 17% or 53 million of the U.S. population. The finding of symbolic annihilation not only applies to under-representation of Latina/os in prime-time news media it also explains an over-representation of criminalization or sensationalization

when they are represented. Valdivia found precisely that, for example, Latina/os youth are represented in the news, they tend to appear as deviants. The result, according to Frances Negrón-Muntaner (2014) is that English-language mainstream media programing fails to reflect diversity, and denotes the marginalization of Latina/os.

This divergence led to Negrón-Muntaner to embark upon an extensive five-year research study to measure current status of Latino representation in mainstream media, titled "The Latino Media Gap: A Report on the State of Latinos in U.S. Media." The report explores a series of interrelated themes, including the limited inclusion of the Latina/os racial ethnic group in film and television; the stereotyping of Latina/os characters; and the Latina/os media producers online and other outlets; among others topics. Executed and published in partnership with by The Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race at Columbia University (CSER), the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) and The National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts (NHFA), the report was the association's response to the clear present-day lack of Latina/os and the apparent dangers of inflicting long-term damage to this segment as members of the U.S. society at large.

The report prompted an entire discourse around the phenomenon that Latina/so in the United States remain somewhat fractured by nationality in ways that other races have long moved past. Key findings of the report include the extremely limited inclusion of Latina/os in mainstream media, the prevalent Latina/o stereotypes in media (represented primarily as criminals, law enforcers, and cheap labor), the declining representation of Latina/os in news media environment (news stories about Latinos constitute less than 1% of news media coverage, and the majority of these stories feature Latinos as

lawbreakers), and the increasing visibility of Latina/os in social media: "of the top 50 single-focused Youtube channels with the most subscribers, 18% are produced by and/or feature U.S. Latina/os content creators" (Negrón-Muntaner, 2014, 35). Understanding this study as a report that has certain promotional objectives and relies on forms market predictions -in the top ten U.S. cities, Latina/os account for more than 30 percent of the market- can help us to understand the underlying priority of the many findings intended to push for more overall media participation by Latina/os

Continuities of paradigmatic Latina/os stereotypes and prevalent themes

Latina/o media scholar Angharad Valdivia maintains that the most enduring stereotype of Latino men in contemporary news media is the representation of the bandit/criminal or "bandido." The appearance of this Latino stereotype began in the press during the 1880s as an "outgrowth of the Manifest Destiny" policy (Subervi-Vélez, 1994, 306). The declaration that westward expansion was God-mandated resulted in "banditry" amid those being expanded into (Valdivia, 2010, 86). What has arguably remained constant since the development of modern media is the representation of the bandit stereotype; it moved from news to silent movies and then the whole range of Hollywood films (Halleck, 1995).

The bandit stereotype evolved according to the historical period. The representation of the bandit re-emerged in summer of 1943 in the Los Angeles area in what are know as "the Zoot Suit riots"[9] (Cosgrove, 1984). Observing the *Los Angeles*

[9] The "Zoot Suit Riots" were a series of racial conflicts that occurred in June 1943 in Los Angeles, between U.S. servicemen and Mexican American youths, during a period when many migrants arrived for the defense effort and recently appointed servicemen burst the city (Cosgrove, 1984).

Times coverage during these events, Cosgrove (1984) was struck by the panic framework of reporting on the public presence of Latina/o youth, he noted, as if they threatened the safety of the citizens of Los Angeles.

The stereotype of the bandit forms the basis for more recent representations of Latinos as criminals.

> Unsurprisingly, the study of themes is spearheaded by the finding of immigration and border-crossing as overarching narratives for talking about Latina/os. Immigration has been an overarching theme since the early days of the bandit stereotype, and, due to the moving border that not only changed the national sovereignty of massive amounts of territory but also separated families and communities into separate nation-states, this continues to be the case (Valdivia, 2010, 101).

Latina/os in Spanish-Language U.S. news media

What are the dominant tendencies in Spanish-Language U.S. news media about Latina/o coverage? There seems to be consensus in Latina/o media literature. For instance, communication scholar America Rodriguez (1999) has argued that coverage of Latina/o issues by news organizations, such as television and newspapers, simultaneously denationalizes Latin Americans while it re-nationalizes them as U.S. Hispanics. Here, too, the Latina/o experience is constructed in a way that is not representative of the audience addressed, "Latino journalism is produced by Latino journalists and Latino marketers, Latinos whose cultural and material capital set them apart from much of their intended audience, replicating the social distance that exists between most general market journalists and their audiences" (Rodriguez, 1999, 1). Anthropologist Arlene Dávila (2002) critiques the Latina/o media, such as *Univision*, for the construction of a whitened

pan-ethnic Latina/o audience or a commercial Latina/o identity for the purposes of reaching a segment of the population with a particular set of products. Similarly, communication scholar Kristin Moran (2011) argues that Spanish-language media have greatly developed due to their market driven agenda, according to which major corporation in the United States view the Hispanic market as able or willing to "assimilate" and spend money on products. In this sense, the best way to reach them, she notes, is through Spanish-language outlets (Moran, 2011).

Indeed, many claims have been made about the distinctive role of *Univision* network in terms of Latino cultural assimilation. Media scholars believe that this paradigm is adequate to describe how *Univision* synthesizes the Latin American-origin community as part of a national ethnic minority. Yet, Gabriel Moreno's article entitled "Noticiero Univision: Coverage of the Arizona Law as a Case Study about the Construction of Diasporic Public Spheres," calls for a more nuance and productive account of the Latino experience as a transnational diverse and dynamic condition, an account of Hispanic as a "diaspora of diasporas."

Latina/o media scholar Mari Castañeda (2008, 64) locates the importance of new modalities of representation about "Latinidades," the plural and different experiences of Latina/os in the United States. These new modalities of representation, she notices, are not without controversy or contention, especially when Spanish-Language media reinforce sexist, racist, and homophobic ideas. Castañeda further explores the importance of Spanish-Language and Latino media in terms of their participation in covering and supporting the public protests of the spring 2006 immigrant rights rallies in helping shape the links between "Latinidad, civil society, and the transcultural political economy of the

Americas" (Castañeda, 2008, 51). For that matter, Spanish-language media not only informed the public, but also encouraged their audiences to participate in the movement, which were increasingly viewed as opportunities for Latino activism and empowerment. This is major characteristic, she argues, of the changes occurring within the Spanish-language newspaper, radio, and television commercial and noncommercial industries due to the connection between Latina/o audience demographic shifts, profit maximization, and transnational media.

U.S.-Mexico border in the media

Research about media coverage on the U.S.-Mexico border draws on several academic traditions, which include race and ethnic studies. "These investigations tend to focus around two questions: whether Hispanics are covered in ways proportional to their percentage in the local population (Greenberg, Burgoon, Burgoon & Korzenny, 1983; Van Slyke Turk, Richstad, Bryson, Jr., & Johnson, 1989) and whether there is a bias in this coverage. Explorations of the latter question suggest that stereotypical symbols have been used in the representation of Mexican Americans" (Wallen, 2003). For example, these investigations claim that the U.S. press language, where Mexicans were labeled as "wetbacks" first, and "illegal aliens" later,[10] stigmatized the Latino community (Miller, 1994; Nevins, 2002; Salwen and Soruco, 1997).

[10] Joseph Nevins (2002) demonstrates the discourse of anti-immigration hysteria over the Mexicans "invasion": "At the time of the creation of the Border Patrol in 1924, major media outlets generally referred to unauthorized immigrant (to the extent that the media talked about them at all) as simply 'aliens'. By 1954 –the time of Operation Wetback- however, the term 'wetback' was most popular, with the term 'illegal' (such as in 'illegal alien') being the second most common label" (Nevins, 2002, 112) The language employed changed over time, a language less racist, but media coverage of the boundary tended to associated unauthorized immigrants with criminal activity and declining standard of living U.S. citizens.

The most insightful work is probably Ruth Wallen's "Barrier or Bridge: Photojournalism of the San Diego/Tijuana Border Region." Published in 2003, Wallen was one of the first to explore systematically the content and photographs of the border in local newspapers over a ten-year period (1990-2000). Her opus highlights relations between communication media images and the representations of the U.S.-Mexico border to demonstrate that images in U.S. reporting tend toward a more polarized reading than the text: she found that while the news stories included the point of view of migrants, this was rarely true in images. There is a lack of images of cooperation, and the visual preference follows a strategy for negative and dramatic photographs. In contrast, Mexican coverage is much more static, always portraying the border as a bridge from the perspective of official culture in Mexico. Although the depiction continues to be, in some extent, static in Mexican reporting, the notion of the border as a bridge has been substantially reformulated according to the argument of this paper.

In her research on reporting on the immigration rallies of May 2006, Merskin (2008) found that in broadcast coverage of *A Day Without an Immigrant*, (May 1, 2006) there was a potentially "violent" over-representation of photographs and scenes that showed Latinos positioned as threatening. Studies that address the theme of Mexican immigration reveal xenophobic metaphors of war and invasion that criminalize that Latino body, portraying her as a threat to the "American way of life" (Chávez, 2001, 2008; Santa Anna, 2002). Anti-immigration sentiments have been sustained through a rhetoric of nativism, especially pervasive in California's Proposition 187 during 1994 (Ono and Sloop, 2002). In addition, Padín's (2005) research on news reports found that the mainstream press in Oregon simultaneously represented Latinos as a social burden

and moral threat. All these studies analyzed magazines, newspapers, radio and television with extensive historical background detailing U.S. immigration laws and reactions of panic.

In summary, the study of the U.S.-Mexico relationship from media studies literature maximizes the presence of a conflict narrative. Latino/a communication scholars argue, in general terms, that news on Latina/o issues are not represented in media in accordance to its political magnitude or relevance for U.S. publics. In addition, there are other responses motivated by image. Continued research by "visibility" scholars interrogates how media or news report of people are seen and understood by distant others, and about how "mediated visibility" influences ideas of members of a particular national group (Orgad, 2008). The call for more research (Silverstone, 2007) relies on the small awareness of visual aspects of media in an age where we are increasingly becoming the objects of others' gaze, and why it matters how we are seen and understood by others. Theoretically, the focus on visibility is motivated by an "Arendtian definition of the public sphere as a 'space of appearance' (1958) where image and aesthetic performance (rather than language and deliberation) are also seen as constitutive of cultural dispositions" (Chouliaraki, 2008, 347). In a later section I explore the implications of this "mediated visibility" of the border in local newspapers. Before that I examine audiovisual reporting (television news report), which has also contributed to the direction of fields of vision.

United States and Mexican local television news and Youtube videos

My argument is that news media border enforcement and security coverage have altered the conditions under which mediated visibility is exercised, particularly in relation to representations of the U.S.-Mexico border as a "spectacular" (related to "warfare") zone. These representations have variously influenced a "balance of symbolic power" between the United States and Mexico, as well as shaped news media and public sentiment across both countries.

I further explore these issues by focusing on two examples of television news media. Television news uses the distinctive feature of honing in visually on people and places, focusing particularly on the body –its physical features and gestures - as it engages in the process of storytelling. The decision to select only two news stories for this analysis section is motivated by the fact that these examples are based on the most visible subject on the border: the migrant. What is rather striking about U.S.-Mexico televised news reporting from either country is that visibility to a great extent is also based on similar visual strategies. Thus, this study can also be seen as an exploration U.S. and Mexico border politics.

In this section, I use textual analysis to demonstrate how local television network news in the United States (NBC) and Mexico (Televisa) construct the representation of the U.S./Mexico border through a particular visuals of people in which a small set of interpretations regarding actions are offered to the public of San Diego and Tijuana. The analysis centers on an actual "visual text" or a television news report. It reveals that the working assumptions that guide the activity of local network coverage sets limits on what

is reported in the news. This consequently contributes to the perpetuation of a representation of conflict related to the border region.

In the case of San Diego, it was a news series on NBC television from December of 2007 that sparked my interest on what I term the "out of control" representation of the border. The news report describes the escalating tension in the boundary zone of San Diego and Tijuana between migrants (whether residents or smugglers was not clear), and border patrol. However it was the images that accompanied the narrative that drew my attention to the visual strategies, or what Barthes (1977) calls the "connotative procedures," of NBC's representation of the border zone. I noticed how the border region was almost always represented in relation to a "war zone" in surveillance mode, with images revealing objects such as a double fence ("iron curtain"), infrared night vision scopes, helicopters, ground sensors, illumination with bright lights by night, and all terrain border patrol vehicles moving up and down the area.

The other case, a news report on migrants aired on Notivisa Canal 12 (the Televisa station in Tijuana), portrays the threat of fellow-national migrants to the local Mexican public. The story reports the struggles of local authorities to maintain control of the indigent migrant "living in our streets". The imagery presented on television is sometimes similar to the NBC television report (which was also the case in the *Frontera* newspaper when representing the border in photographs).

The United States example: NBC television news

The first case is a news report dated December 17th 2007 and transmitted by the local NBC station (KNSD).[11] This news report can be watched on You Tube, the video sharing website under the name: "Attacks on US Border Patrol Agents in San Diego, CA" (See the example in still pictures).

The news report lasted one minute and thirty two seconds in KNSD Channel 7/39 San Diego, a local channel affiliate to the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), a United State television network headquartered in New York City, property of NBCUniversal, a subsidiary of Comcast Corporation. The story is about the boundary zone, "traditionally" related to a history of crime and smuggling that of late was getting worse. It describes border patrol agents encountering several assaults over a span of two months with rock throwers and "smugglers," which required them to introduce a "special response team" equipped to shoot pepper spray across the US border. However, there are reports of residents of Tijuana complaining about canisters being fired at their homes. Border patrol agents claimed that the "smugglers" use the Tijuana neighborhoods as a shield and that it's difficult to be accurate in hitting them with spray. The story ends suggesting the possibility of some kind of solution about immigration policy between the two countries.

[11] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zD6cN14Xq1k

Image 1. Immigrants climbing the border fence

The news report is composed of 28 images. Divided by source there are 18 images provided by the border patrol agency (16 moving images that lasted in total 39 seconds, and 2 still photo images of inside a damaged border patrol unit), 2 images from interviews, and 3 images from the network camera recorded along the border (including fences, images with the city of Tijuana as background, lasting a combined 13 seconds).

In the audio-visual situation, the television viewers encounter images that present the boundary zone of Tijuana and San Diego. The graphic layout of the images (Image 1) contain captions that function as a time-place location "San Diego" and the source "West cam 22, 2006-10-17" and the news reporter identification "Greg Bledsoe/KNSD reporting". The caption of the image adds an attention-catching voice device "It's one of the most notorious neighborhoods of the border." However, the moving images show three human forms moving through the middle of the double fence and no iconic denotation of a "neighborhood" or a type of urban life community. These pictures assist the viewers' inferential process about who the people in the images are and what are they

are doing. A surveillance camera, records white light against the green glow of a monitor recording as a single shot silhouette shadows (immigrants) from a distance –so you cannot see their faces. The illegality or criminality of their actions is constructed by the position of climbing, and therefore, trespassing of the fence.

Image 2. Border Patrol agent

The image of a government official (Image 2), a black person dressed in a green uniform with a badge on his chest and the flag in the background –a headquarters location-, is revealed in an illuminated close up. The caption reads: "Damon Foreman. Border Patrol agent."

The image of the official reveals him standing up and looking directly at the interviewer, as an iconic-symbolic sign conventionally used to indicate a government declaratory-explanatory attitude. He states: "It's an area whom' has a tradition and history for being a smuggling type of neighborhood". His voice alternates with the voice of the reporter: "And border patrol agents says lately it's getting worse." The audience

then hears the official: “The increase in assault has been skyrocketing”, to which the reporter responds by saying, “The place is Tijuana’s “Colonia Libertad” neighborhood. Over the past eight weeks averaging about once per day someone on the Mexican side targets agents on the U.S with rocks”. Next, images show an altercation (rock throwing) of individuals with border patrol agents (Image 3).

Image 3. Altercation at the border

This sequence transmits images on behalf of the government suggesting the possibility of visual sensationalism and legitimacy of their decisions. There are images presented in a wide shot frame of male people moving in a “running away” fashion from authorities, or chaotic movements –both the agents as the “smugglers.” For the most part the people portrayed in the images are faceless and act in a threatening and combative manner toward the camera (Image 3), or can be seen engaging in altercation by throwing rocks or fighting with border patrol agents. The word to label the people in the altercation is the stereotypical “smuggler” which according to Fiske (1987) favors a one-sided way

of looking at people and events. It is not clear these are “smugglers” or criminals. The people are voiceless in this news report, yet their portrait is reified as the “alien other.”

Image 4. Human Rights activist

In the spirit of being objective, the news report attempts to tell the story from different points of view (however migrants, residents of Tijuana, or even the “smugglers” were not interviewed, so there is not a clear identification of the people in the images). The news report shows an interview of a Latin/Mexican-American human rights activist, seated in a desk with a bookshelf behind him (Image 4).

This connotes an air of knowledge and agency. In a declarative sentence he defines the situation that “Some folks have described as a war zone”. As mentioned, human rights activist Christian Ramirez notes the battlefield atmosphere being created near the border. Similarly, anthropologist Jennifer Correa (2013) describes how residents living along the U.S.-Mexico border contend with the violent effects of militarization

after the state declared a War on Terror. According to Correa, after 11 September 2001, the U.S. repositioned "Arab-Middle-Eastern-Muslim" as threats to national security, and later included immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. "This discursive shift propelled the passage of the Secure Fence Act of 2006 (approximately 700 mile barrier between the United States and Mexico) to curtail unauthorized immigration and international terrorism." (Correa, 2013, 99).

Image 5. The border fence and Tijuana

This feature expression, supplemented by a series of images (Image 3), invites the viewer to witness an account of "warfare". Through most of the text, there are slides of images suggesting a representation of the border as a "war zone", an instance of word-play to describe a "no man's land". The verbal and visual signs appear to create a universe of meaning in which the conflicts between border patrol agents and "smugglers" have been increasing toward a situation of a "war zone".

This universe is enforced by the framing of the fence as the subject in some images (Image 5), with a dramatic shot of the fence itself dividing two lands, enhancing the perspective of distance from the viewer. This example matches Wallen's (2003) findings. Wallen argued that during the 1990s, the *San Diego Union Tribune* coverage of the border evolved in relationship to changing political realities "though the images may tend toward a more polarized reading than the text" (2003, 137). That is, the tendency of photographs to represent a more dichotomous point of view than the text, thus, images are still "one step behind" the content. These findings stated that the U.S. reporting lacked images of "cooperation" between San Diego and Tijuana in their print pages, and the visual preference followed a strategy for the often negative and the dramatic photographs. "If newspapers are to represent increased ties between the two cities, photojournalists need to explore methods to visually depict collaboration and editors must be willing to print these pictures" (Wallen, 2003, 158)

The Mexican example: Televisa *television news*

The second case is a news report dated August 10th 2012 transmitted from a local network, Televisa (XEWT).[12] This news report can also be watched on You Tube, under the video sharing website name: "Realiza DIF Tijuana jornada asistencial de atención al migrante" (DIF –the Department of the National System of Family Integral Development- Tijuana carries out a welfare attention day to migrants).[13] The length of the news report is less than a minute: 50 seconds. Basically, this television report consists of one (verbal) unit: the studio anchor reads both the report presentation, and the narrative.

[12] XEWT Channel 12 Tijuana, the local channel affiliate to Televisa, Mexico's mayor television network.
[13] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_XkkwRODR4

Usually, television news reports consist of four units, a) the presentation -read by a studio presenter-; b) the basic news narrative presented by a news reporter; c) the sound-bites produced by news sources embedded in the news narrative; and c) the closure of the report –by the studio presenter (Nylund, 2003).

This television news adopts a style of presentation that transmits the idea of local authorities; in this case the mayor of Tijuana, and can almost be read as a municipal "bulletin." There is no contextualization or evaluation from the anchor about this material on-camera.

The news report tells the story of the overflowing deported migrants living as indigents under the streets of Tijuana, on the river canal. In order to "maintain control" and "counteract this situation" the Mayor of Tijuana carried out a welfare program, which consisted of a series of social services along the border canal: legal counsel, medical and health attention. The news report ends assessing the difficulties to maintain control in a city that receives at least 400 deportees daily.

Five images comprise the news report. All of the images are from the network camera showing what seem to be migrants walking along the border canal. In the audio-visual situation, the audience first encounters the customary practice of having a newswoman simply reading a script on camera with a still-image as background -in this case five individuals standing along the border canal (Image 6).

Image 6. Mexican newswoman anchor

The graphic layout of the first images (Image 7) presents three captions that function as a) newscast identification "N", meaning, Notivisa, b) the subject "Attention to migrants", and c) the location "Migrants at the canal. Public health problem."

Image 7. Migrants at the Tijuana Canal

The narration continues during the voice-over, “It is estimated that more than two thousand indigents take refuge and they live inside the Tijuana River Canal. This represents one of the greater problems of public health in our city”. However, the eight-second establishing shot shows five individuals on the border canal: four walking around on a dirt road, one sitting down. These five individuals are shot from a distance; the video assists the viewers’ inferential process about who these people are, and what they are doing: silhouette figures –with no faces- assumed as migrants, living on the international fence and River Canal, and blamed for being a potential menace.

Image 8. Migrants at the Tijuana River Canal

In the next image (a pan image of twenty seconds duration) one can locate the action within the larger space of the border (Image 8), but there is no iconic denotation of the welfare program in “which thirty modules of different services were installed: legal counsel, medical and health attention” or the “more than fifteen hundred people responded.” Instead the camera work illustrates a certain stretch of the border river trough in a high-angle pan taken from a distance (a concrete canal filled with dirt and bushes

where waste water runs parallel to the migrants living site) targeting eight or nine individuals walking across the river canal. Playing with a language familiar to U.S. audiences (the previous example), where the border is often portrayed as seamy and lawless, the footage suggests that the "greatest problem" of the border is to be found within the canal boundary. These images reinforce the idea of the proximity of the migrant and the environmental degradation.

The news report is framed on behalf of the local government, a quote from Tijuana's Mayor Carlos Bustamante, assessing the legitimacy of its decisions to "maintain control". However the visual representation tends toward sensationalism. As stated, the images are from a wide-shot perspective (the same as the previous example): faceless people moving and hiding in the bushes from the lens of the camera. There are no interviews –not even with the Mayor-, people are voiceless and "shady". Deported migrants are presented as a serious threat to public health, and as being one reason for the "out of control" border. What is more important, refugee migrants seem also to be indigents.

We have yet to understand the full significance and long-term consequences of television aspects of mediated visibility in the U.S-Mexico border. They are certainly important and in need of further study. These examples show how the exercise of political power is open to view, not only in the sphere of local politics but on an international/regional scale. These actions, such as border patrol and military or police interventions along the border take place in a international and regional arena (San Diego-Tijuana region): they are visible, observable, and capable of being witnessed simultaneously in television by thousands of individuals living around the U.S.-Mexico

border. The proliferation of cross-border news channels means viewers no longer rely solely on national broadcasters for information. Of course, the increasing availability of channels such as Tv Azteca America, Telemundo, Univision, NBC, ABC, CBS, Televisa, Tv Azteca, in open air households across the border does not mean that they are viewed regularly. Among other reasons, this is because many people do not speak the language of these channels –English and/or Spanish. Nevertheless, the accessibility and increasing presence of multiple news channels, and thus images, has made multi-channel homes important sites for comparison and reflection.

Media reporting about migrants, in summary, maximizes the presence of "conflict" on television screens in a very similar visual manner, although with differences in content. Whereas the U.S. example represents the border in a "warzone" frame that internationalizing a security consciousness of surveillance of the border, the Mexican television report on the "out of control" border in need of surveillance in accordance to a public health or humanitarian service, base its relevance on local publics.

Mediated Publicness And Visibility

In order to explore the mediated visibility of the press (including photographs), I want to examine the arguments of John B. Thompson (1995, 2005) in *The media and modernity,* specifically "The transformation of visibility."

This work is a detailed study of the development of communication media –from print to recent types of electronic communication- as an integral part of the rise of modern societies. The work is well know in the field of media studies and, in particular, among those concerned with political communication; together with the work of Jürgen

Habermas (especially the notion of the public sphere), it has established one of the main frameworks within which problems of communication and political scandals are debated today. Many scholars regard John B. Thompson as the proponent of a theory based on types of social interaction related to media. *The media and modernity* is one of the few works that pursues the articulation between agency and structure in a theoretically oriented way. The symbolic dimension of the visible is important in his notion of media. Here, of course, the names of Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan come to mind. Their contribution helped Thompson to demonstrate how communicative technologies work as extensions of space and time, corporeal senses and –hierarchical- perceptions.

Thompson assumes a broad distinction between a social interaction of co-presence and a mediated interaction, where the latter is modeled on modern media, and he seeks to determine its conditions. What are the characteristics of mediated interaction in terms of visibility, in Thompson's view? Prior to the development of media (especially electronic media: radio, television, internet) few people were able to see or hear the individuals who held positions of political power. People's fields of vision were limited by locale, and their interactions with others were largely restricted to those who shared their immediate milieu (co-presence). For example, the assembly "constituted a distinctive kind of public sphere in which the publicness (or visibility) of power was based on the capacity of individuals to engage in debate with another in a common locale and to come to collective decisions through a show of hands or by similar procedure" (Thompson, 1995, 119).

By contrast, media in modern societies –beginning with print- transformed the nature of publicness, and retraced the changing historical relations between power and

visibility, and the boundaries between public and private. The development of media created new forms of publicness, different from traditional publicness of co-presence. The growth of the press and printed materials extended well beyond the specific locales: in this sense the printed word became dissociated (mediated interaction in terms of Thompson) from the conversational interaction, which characterized many contexts of reception. But this dissociation also transformed the linkage between publicness and the sense of perception: visibility was significantly attenuated; an action or event did not have to be literally seen by the individuals for whom it was a public action or event "it was projected through the prism of print. For the practice of reading involved the use of sight; and printed materials commonly incorporated visual illustrations, produced by means of woodcuts, lithographs and similar techniques, to supplement the printed word" (129).

In this respect, print created a form of mediated publicness very different from the traditional publicness of co-presence. Moreover, the nature of publicness also was transformed by the development of electronically based media. "Televison by virtue of the visual richness of its symbolic cues, establishes a new and distinctive relation between publicness and visibility. Like cinema, television places a particular emphasis on the sense of vision; audio cues are combined with visual cues to produce a complex audio-visual image" (Thompson, 1995, 129).

As I noted before, Thompson uses the term "mediated visibility" to describe the capacity of media to bring to the attention of others aspects of social and political life while managing the way of "seeing" these aspects (Thompson, 2005). Mediated visibility through electronic based media (television, and internet) enables and conditions:

1.Extensive audience. The actions and event are visible to a much greater range of individuals who are located in diverse and dispersed contexts.

2.Extensive field of vision. Electronic based media vision is altogether different from the field of vision that individuals have in their everyday life. Exposure to the electronic based media also affects the control of the field of vision. The viewer is not free to decide the angle of vision, and has –in television- little control over the selection of visible material.

3. "Directionality of vision". Interactions of co-presence are in principle visible to one another. In the case of television, however, the direction is essentially one-way. "The kind of publicness created by television is thus characterized by a fundamental contrast between the producers and recipients in terms of their visibility and invisibility, their capacity to see and to be seen" (Thompson, 1995, 130).

This set of conditions is also described by Andrea Brighenti (2007), but in terms of "field of visibility," which articulate different aspects: relational, strategic and processual aspects rooted in a deep "epistemology of seeing". Visibility is *relational* because (following Georg Simmel, 1969) the activity of seeing and being seen are intimately connected; it's a reciprocal event that can be both symmetrical (direct eye-to-eye) and asymmetrical or limited (from other angles or with limited vision). Asymmetries transform visibility into a site of *strategy* (an idea rooted in Goffman, 1971): individuals can exercise visibility in the form of "from/to few/ many" using technological devices (as argued by Thompson). They can enhance visibility asymmetries according to planned

arrangements, liberating it from the spatial-temporal properties of co-presence. Visibility, according to Brighenti, also entails a "tireless" *process of shaping and managing*: "as communication technologies enlarge the field of the socially visibility… questions arise of what is worth being seen at which price – along with the normative question of what should and what should not be seen. These questions are never simply a technical matter: they are inherently practical and political" (Brighenti, 2007, 327).

While Thompson's theory is in many ways oriented to television, nevertheless the theory highlights a number of differences from the form of mediated visibility/publicness created by the written word. Perhaps most important in this respect is the model of communication associated with the spoken word, and thus, with Habermas' bourgeois public sphere.

According to Thompson, it may well be that Habermas was not interested in print as such, in the distinctive characteristics of this communication medium and in the kinds of social relations established by it; "his way of thinking about print was shaped by a model of communication based on the spoken word: the periodical press was part of a conversation begun and continued in the share locales of bourgeois sociability… so while the press played a crucial role in the formation of the bourgeois public sphere, the latter was conceptualized by Habermas not in relation to print, but in relation to the face-to-face conversations stimulated by it" (Thompson, 1995, 131). Thompson's emphasis on the centrality of mediated visibility is a consideration of the detachment of publicness from the idea of a dialogic conversation in a shared locale: a despatialized and non-dialogical distinctive kind of visibility produced by and achievable through media.

In short, media's "new" visibility relates to the production and distribution of accounts, images and symbolic content relating to issues (both private and public) through space and time. There is another reason why mass media's high-visibility practices persist in the modern world. Like other forms of strategies,

> The issue of access to the places of visibility is a central political question. To access these places is the precondition for having a voice in the production of representations. More precisely, it is not simply 'access' that matters, but rather the styles and modes of access. It is not simply true that if I am disempowered or a society's outsider, then I am invisible. Rather, what happens is that I access visibility places in ways that are largely or completely out of my control (Brighenti, 2007, 333)

Public sphere and symbolic power as analytic tools

We can gain some insight into this process by considering what is sometimes referred to as "symbolic power". The notion of symbolic power as a media form was first explored in Harold Innis' *The Bias of Communication* (1950) and *Empire and Communication (1952)*. In those works Innis established a systematic study of the media and reflected on the organization of extensions in time and space of power, besides the new ways of negotiation of power via mass media. To Innis, a geographer and economist, power is matter of control of space and time (as a Canadian, he was thinking about the power of U.S. mass media). The systems of communication give form to the social organization because they structure spatial and temporal relations.[14] As Bourdieu, Mann[15]

[14] In history two forms of mass media are distinguished (that give rise to two forms of "empire"). The first one, connected with the space (space-binding) symbolized by the press and the electronic communication, connects to the expansion and to the control of a territory. The second, connected with the time (time - binding), carried by the oral culture and the manuscript, favors the memory, the sense of history, of small communities and traditional forms. The first one intends "centralization" in space; the other intends "extension" in time (Innis, 1950/1986). In this sense, it is Innis credit to have placed the media "effects" through the forms and the ways of interaction to create environments of action and relationship.

and others have shown, media are institutions with history and several commercial and political interests. Communication media "controls" and "edits" forms of visibility about social and physical reality. And by doing this it enforces *symbolic power* "the capacity to use symbolic forms to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others, and indeed to create events, by means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms" (Thompson, 1995, 17).

While symbolic activity is a pervasive feature of social life, Thompson argues, communication media is nevertheless the paradigmatic institution with the material and financial resources oriented toward large-scale production and generalized diffusion of symbolic forms. As I stated, Thompson (1995) explored the transformation in relation between visibility and power by considering the ways in which those who exercise political power seek to manage their visibility before others, and thus, change the "nature" of the public sphere.[16]

The concept of public sphere "has become increasingly central to the field of media studies" (Hallin, 1994, 2). According to Daniel Hallin, some of the reasons for such importance relates to the increasing power of media and its relation with democratic societies. The public sphere is "first of all a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed. Access to the public sphere is open in principle to all citizens" (Habermas, 1991, 398). Citizens act as public when dealing with matters of

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[15] According to Mann powers takes many forms. There is economic power, institutionalized in industry and commerce; political power, institutionalized in state apparatus; coercive power, institutionalized in military, police, and incarcerating organizations.

[16] The importance of media, especially the press, was apparent to many early liberal-democratic thinkers, a theme that faded from view in the work of more recent social and political theorists (Thompson, 1995, 69). One exception is Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.

general interest without being subject to coercion from the state or the market economy (capitalistic forces).[17]

Habermas argues that the public sphere emerged in the eighteenth century as part of historic changes in relation to the public and the private.[18] The rise of civil society is linked with a liberal political order that emerged as a domain of private autonomy in which individuals come together to discuss public affairs.[15] In this sense, the public sphere mediates between state and society (the state is not part of it, its the counterpart). In such conditions, today press, radio and television are the key institutions of the emerging public sphere; in a political sense, media disseminates discourses and positions both the state and civil society to broad publics, reaching the dominion of the private life. According to Habermas, media corrupts the public sphere by obscuring a once transparent communication (referring to the emergence of the public sphere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) into a process of commodification (the fallen public sphere of the twentieth century).[19]

Hallin challenges the thesis of the decline or the emergence of a mass public of culture consumers, arguing that "what mass culture replaced was not an elite public

[17] Thus, the most notable account about public sphere is the rise and the "supposedly" decline of the public sphere. The thesis of a decline of the public sphere presents a weak argument, Habermas's assumption exaggerates the passive consumption by individual, and the supposedly "refeudalization" of public sphere by commercial media: assuming no stimulation for critical debate in media behalf.

[18] Habermas account on the relation of public and private has been criticized as obscuring the political significance of gender. This critique also relates to the "singular" public sphere of Habermas. Many critics addressed this notion with gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, class and nationality to describe contemporary public sphere as multiple groups with differentiated characteristic, in addition to the "rise and fall" of public sphere (Fraser, 1992).

[19] The "bourgeois" public sphere played a basis role in bringing democracy and modern nation-states – replacing the feudal political order-, and thus, changing the fundamental structure of politics. Other critics are related to a) the especial over-consideration of cultivated political press that encapsulated the ideal public sphere (and neglecting other forms of press), and b) the restricted nature of the bourgeois in practice (theoretically has a principle of universal access).

sphere of the eighteenth century, but a complex popular culture that combined traditional preliterate forms of folk culture with early efforts to enter the printed public sphere" (Hallin, 1992, 3). However, Hallin argues that despite the problems with Habermas' ideas the conception of the public sphere is extremely useful as an empirical concept for its implication of responsibility towards a public good. "The difference between dialogue and negotiation for Habermas is that in dialogue interests themselves are open to criticism; and it is essential to his concept of the public sphere that it remain a place where dialogue and not merely negotiation can take place" (Hallin, 1994, 8). Thus, interests must be included in public dialogue because dialogue represents a problem of conflict of interest.[20]

Habermas' concept of the public sphere and power coupled with Bourdieu's and Thompson's insights into symbolic power informs the analysis of mediated visibility on the U.S.-Mexico border. The brief revision of Habermas' notion of public sphere and power is linked solely to politics and state, and fails to recognize other, more subtle forms of power such as symbolic power. "What Habermas loosely calls 'force' can hide behind the mask of rationality and agreement…[forms of symbolic power] are harder to recognize since they do not necessarily require external legitimization like the power of the state. Symbolic power only becomes effective if it is successfully masked as natural and inevitable" (Salin, 2011).

[20] Instead of single and abstract public sphere, Fraser proposes two basic: a) dominant public sphere (white, middle and upper class, male adult); and inspired by Felski (1989), b) "subaltern counterpublics", the historically oppressed –what Squires refers as the "marginals" groups "that have been excluded from dominant public sphere by legal or extralegal means" (Squires, 2002, 450). In sum, public sphere is an overlapping subcommunitites differentiated by gender, class and institutional locations; these co-exiting counterpublics are composed mainly of marginalized groups excluded from dominant public sphere and the state: women, racial communities (African-American, Native-American), homosexuals, religious minorities, and immigrant groups.

Therefore mediated circulation of images and narratives about images are ways of reinforcing boundaries and exclusion in extended time and space (Thompson, 1995). Media has the power to create "public sphere" through representations. Including representation of images and sounds, after all the public sphere phenomena entails an exposed area where one is seen and heard by unspecified others and submitted to their judgment (Arendt, 1958). "The public sphere is thus a generic term denoting all virtual or real spaces, the contents of which obtain general visibility" (Adut, 2012). However, it can be said that the privileged notion of the public sphere is the idea of conversation, a dialogue of interest, and sometimes conflict.[21] Even in transnational or cross-border public spheres, "It involves a conception of community centered around participation in a common conversation rather than sharing of common values" (Hallin, 1994, 161).

Obviously if one thinks about U.S. and Mexico there are different sets of values, and also one can assume asymmetrical flows of discourses in the "public arena". But what does it mean to be visible in a mediated conversation among entities of different countries, even one's own? A cross-border public sphere notion assumes a social space where the exchange of information and views of common concern take place so that public opinion can be formed as political power. Nevertheless, as I will argue, the transnational public sphere has been subsumed under media communication through which national and local officials participate in high degree, gaining voice and high visibility. Media scholars with studies on visibility and public sphere (Göle, 2011; Klimkiewicz, 2000) argue about the difficult task of a public opinion generated and

[21] In the political domain, Michael Schudson (1997) has critiqued a "romance of conversation" that tends to confuse ordinary sociable conversation with problem solving conversation. It is contra-productive to think of public debate among citizens as just another conversation among either intimates or strangers.

enriched by minorities, migrants or the ¨invisible¨ views and voices of people underrepresented in media. In this sense, citizens with no voice or portrayed only from a negative visual perspective represent a weak participation and dialogue in the public arena.

At the same time, factors specific to the "border" or transnational media have shaped the representation of *bodies*. Thus, for those undocumented workers who are consigned to border visibility –what is seen and how is it seen, often takes a "broken" (the arrested, the deported, the migrant farmworker) or "shady" body form (Example 1 and 2 of this chapter). This embodied representation can deepen our understanding of the way in which social inequalities and suffering come to be perceived as "natural" in the U.S.-Mexico border.

Describing the U.S.-Mexico border news

This study uses both quantitative (content analysis) and interpretive approaches to provide an extensive reading of media visibility in the San Diego-Tijuana region.[22] The data used in this paper are culled from content analysis of the two newspapers mentioned, using online and actual "material" archives. Content analysis contributes to confirming or disconfirming an organized account of a considerable set of media content through numbers that define the occurrence and prominence of particular messages and properties. In early definitions as a research technique, content analysis focused upon the

[22] I chose to focus on news coverage in Tijuana and San Diego for two reasons. First, Tijuana and San Diego are border cities, sometimes labeled as "twin cities" (Wallen, 2003). Second, Tijuana and San Diego have a press whose news outlets are archived online making it easily available for content analysis. In fact, both *Frontera* and *San Diego Union Tribune* have "eEdition", an exact replica of the print version of the daily newspaper.

"objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1952, 18). However, later technique developments have involved more of the interpretational roles than the restrictive approach of Bernard Berelson's definition of "making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (Krippendorf, 21), thus supporting a great deal of inferential processes in all phases of the research procedure. These include establishing analytical categories, units, correlations, and so on. In this sense, the second definition of content analysis is more adequate to my study.[23]

The major daily newspaper in San Diego is the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, and in Tijuana, *Frontera.* Each paper was sampled over a 10-year period. Ten randomly selected weeks of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* and *Frontera* were analyzed for the years 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010, in order to provide quantitative comparisons.

Two units of analysis guided the content analysis. I constructed a data set indicating the number of news stories and images (photographs, graphics, cartoons) published for each newspaper between 2000-2010. The first unit of analysis was the news story that related to the U.S. and Mexico, and their shared border. The other unit of analysis considered is the image of the news story. The completed data set in this study includes comprehensive information on 2,330 news stories and 1,507 images between *Frontera* (1776 articles, 1104 images) and *San Diego Union Tribune* (554 articles, 403 images).

[23] Also, content can be used with variety of research contexts, often in combination with other methodologies. The main varieties have included studies of patterns and trends in media representation as such, studies of the relationship between textual representations and the "real world", and studies concerning media effects (Larsen, 2002).

For the *San Diego Union Tribune*, articles from the local, business "border affairs" and "international" section were sampled. For *Frontera*, the local, regional, business, national, "La Linea" ("The Border"), and "International" news were tabulated. For both papers images (photographs, graphics, cartoons) were coded according to the image topic and their specific content. After reading several academic articles I arrived at a list of ten categories, including images. All such images were counted based on the topics or categories determined, and differentiated between variables of graphic imagery highlighted by the frame: a subject (officials, migrants, drug traffickers), a landscape (Tijuana or San Diego, the border fence, border crossing checking point, buildings, neighborhoods) or an artifact (drugs, visas, drones).

Here, I build on the work of comparative media and international communication scholars (Larson et al., 1986; Lozano, 1989; Wallen, 2003) who conceived of the U.S.-Mexico border news media flows largely as divergences. For purposes of analysis, the categories are compressed; for example, "state or political" includes news stories from both positive (the border as cooperation) and negative frames (the border as a site of conflict and problems). To asses the "specificity" in news media coverage of the border, categories were also divided into subtopics. For example, "legal/illegal immigration" was coded for a) anti-immigrant and racists expressions; b) human trafficking, detentions, accidents and deaths of migrants; c) Immigration law and initiatives; d) Legal migration and work on the border; e) Rescue and aid to migrants (tone of victims); and d) Undocumented migrants workers and border-crossing. In total, forty-two specific subcategories were used.

1. State or political.
Unit of analysis. News stories: This includes political news related to state organized events (reports of government, speeches, meetings and international agreements, political parties, visits of heads of state, interviews with officials, cooperation on issues on the border, etc), and news of political violence, border enforcement, protests, demonstrations, repression, labor conflicts, and customs review abuses of the border patrol or Mexican police.
Unit of analysis. Images: Images display subjects related to state actions (officials, soldiers, border patrol agents, protesters), landscape (built-environment) with state implications of security (border fence, the border-crossing checkpoint, lines of cars at the border waiting to be inspected), and artifacts (drones, boats, border patrol cars).

2. **Economy.**
News: This category contains news related to economic factors of the border. Examples are news that report on consumption, legal crossing, tourism, economic measures of the government trade, improvement of the economic situation, battle to the inflation, economic aid, banks, labor relations, etc; but also news that stand out crisis, poverty, leak of capitalist, corruption, failure of strategies and economic politics, inflation, devaluations of the currency.
Images: This includes subjects related to economy activities (tourists/consumers, workers, businessman/woman), landscape associated with commercial practices (corporate edifices, supermarkets, money exchange buildings), and artifacts or objects (statistics, money)

3. Legal/Illegal immigration.
News: The third group of stories report on undocumented and migrant workers, illegal labor, news on law or projects of immigration, news about the lacking of identity papers.
Images: Images related to migrants (arrested, deported, rescued, crossing the desert, standing at the border fence), and objects related to immigration and border crossing domain (passports, visas, identification cards)

4. Crime, murders.
News: It includes news stories that report abductions, sexual crimes, robberies, drug addiction, frauds, robberies, and alcoholism.
Images: This includes images about subjects related to crime (police, victims crime, delinquents), landscape associated with crime scenes, and artifacts used in crimes (weapons, knifes).

5. Environment.
News: Stories related to ecological contamination, pollution, accidents (plane crashes, explosions, fires, derailment of trains), and supply of water.
Images: Images displays the city landscape (Tijuana or San Diego). It also includes images of accidents and natural disasters such as earthquakes or fires.

6. Drug traffic.
News: Stories about production, distribution or illicit drug use that mention the border in a direct way. It also includes news about the efforts of breaking down drug trafficking.
Images: This include images of subjects related to drug trafficking (drug traffickers arrested, reward photos of drug lords) and trafficking products (drugs, drug paraphernalia)

7. Human interest.
News: The seventh category is arguably the most empathetic. News about ordinary people living along the border and current crosses that cause sympathy, pity or admiration.
Images: It covers images of subjects related to ordinary citizens with some sort of interesting story in daily life (citizens, aids from residents of the border, samaritans).

8. Cultural events.
News: This includes news about cultural and historical events, traditions, customs, artistic expressions, cultural achievements, movies, works, literature, music, religion, native cultures, etc.
Images: It displays images of subjects related to art and cultural events (artists, performers, musicians), landscape associated with cultural buildings (cultural centers, museums, galleries), and artifacts (artwork, instruments, pottery).

9. Education.
News: It covers news stories about education, news on universities and academics meetings, students' rallies or activities.
Images: Images displays subjects related to education (students, professors, academics, researchers), the landscape is associated with institutions dedicated to educate and research (schools, universities).

10. Health.
News: Stories about public and private health, diseases, epidemics, health services, health statistics.
Images: This includes subjects associated with health practices (doctors, patients, nurses), images also portrays a landscape related to health services (hospitals, clinics, pharmacies), and artifacts (instruments).

As noted previously, this study examines aspects of *Frontera* and *San Diego Union Tribune* news coverage of the border. Other research questions in this quantitative content analysis concerns news sources (source of news production and source of news

information) because studying news sources involves mapping the origin of the news production (agencies, newspapers) and who is permitted to speak in the news (the source of information). First, international news studies (Larson et al., 1986; Lozano, 1989) have documented the predominance of transnational news agencies (AP, UPI, Reuters) in the control of informational flow. "This predominance in third world countries may be considered as an example of concentration of power" (Lozano, 1989, 49) that needs further evaluation of international news influence on public opinion and decision making. Second, as this study documents in terms of source of information (people, speeches, documents, institutions, websites), officials from both sides of the border predominate in "visibility" and "voice" or the framing of the border.

Theoretical sources from Roland Barthes and Charles Sanders Peirce, helped me apply a textual analysis to news stories. The study of news imagery is often conducted against the background of semiology, which sees texts (including images) as operating on two levels, the denotative and the connotative. Barthes (1964), a French linguist, studied the literal meanings of texts (denotative), and the broader meanings that members of a certain culture associate with the sign (connotative). Barthes developed a method to analyze the way in which signs become new signifiers that are not arbitrarily related to a signifier, but rather set against deep cultural contexts. This interpretative approach can speak of issues of power, the "connotative practices" (Barthes, 1964; Wallen, 2003), and contains theoretical development and methodological grounding in the interpretation of image and text combination in a determinate cultural context: the semiology of images.

In "Rhetoric of the image" Barthes defines three type of messages, linked by redundancy to produce a whole: a) the linguistic message or the message made up of

words (caption, labels inserted); b) the code-iconic message, the "literal message" or any meaning "held" in the denoted message; and c) the symbolic image, the non-coded iconic message related to a larger social code: "All the knowledge we need to read this message is bound up with our perception: We need to know what an image is and what the objects are. The first message is literal; the second message is symbolic" (Barthes, 1977, 36).[24]

In this study media "news items" are viewed as texts, both in terms of word and image in press and on television. However, this discussion draws from larger samples than the quantitative analysis. Regarding the textual analysis of the newspapers, my emphasis in the study of these cases focuses on the visual and verbal properties of their spectacle of the border, and on the agency of the news, that is the options for action on the border each piece proposes to us as relevant.

United States, Mexico And The Border In News Coverage During 2000-2010

The overall number of news stories covered differed greatly between the two newspapers. Of the total 2330 news items, 1776 were published in *Frontera* and 554 were printed in the *San Diego Union-Tribune (SD UT)* (Table 1). *SD U-T* was more likely to report more information on any issue (the average number of paragraphs was 15.8; in contrast to *Frontera's* 7.8). Table 1 shows the section of each newspaper. *Frontera* and *San Diego Union Tribune* have a section related to the U.S.-Mexico border region. However, both of them also told stories about the other country in the

[24] According to Barthes the linguistic can be detached from images messages but the last two types of messages share the same iconic substance. They are perceived and "read" in cultural context at the same time but only can be distinguish by operational validity, similar to the distinction in the linguistic sign (signifier/signified). In a broad sense this type of analysis refers to a structural description of the messages, the whole constitution by redundancy or the tying together the linguistic, the literal (denoted) and symbolic (connoted).

"International" section. *SD U-T* has fewer news stories overall, which may account for the longer number of paragraphs of individual stories. More information provides the readers with more in-depth coverage of particular issues.

Table 1. News Section in *Frontera* and *San Diego Union-Tribune*

	Frontera (Mexico)	*San Diego Union Tribune* (United States)
Local/Border/Regional/National	1050 (59.2 %)	448 (80.9 %)
International	726 (40.8 %)	106 (19.1 %)

Table 2 illustrates the source of news production of each newspaper. Staff writers were the most frequent sources of production in both newspapers: *Frontera* accounted for 675 (38.2%) of the stories, and *SD U-T* 394 (71.1 %). The second most frequent source of production was *Associated Press* (AP), and was in fact, the main source other than the staff writers. For both newspapers AP led as news agency on topics related to the coverage in the other respective country. Despite the fact that *Frontera* shows more diversification in the use of news sources, there is still a dependency on Associated Press for news about the United States.

Table 3 presents the source of information for news production regarding the frequency of primary sources of information quoted in the news articles. Each subcategory is meant to capture the particular primary source of information, whether they are federal or national government agencies (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Education; or Federal Police in Mexico), political parties, California or Baja California government (California

Health and Human Services, Baja California Department of Education), or differentially located individuals (analysts, artists). These eighteen subcategories provide one measure of the diversity of sources. The significant parameter indicates that "Federal Government" is the most utilized primary source of information.

Table 2. Source of news production for news stories

	Frontera **(Mexico)**		***San Diego Union Tribune*** **(United States)**	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
AFN (Agencia Fronteriza de Noticias)	8	(0.5 %)	0	(0.0 %)
AFP (Agence France-Press)	3	(0.2 %)	0	(0.0 %)
Agencias	146	(8.3 %)	0	(0.0 %)
Agencia Reforma	79	(4.5 %)	0	(0.0 %)
AP (Associated Press)	**328**	**(18.7 %)**	**60**	**(10.8 %)**
APRO (Agencia de Noticias Proceso)	5	(0.3 %)	0	(0.0 %)
Collaboration/Columnist	8	(0.5 %)	38	(6.9 %)
Copley News Service	0	(0.0 %)	32	(5.8 %)
EFE (Spain Agency)	68	(3.9 %)	0	(0.0 %)
El Universal	21	(1.3 %)	0	(0.0 %)
NTX (Notimex)	210	(11.9 %)	0	(0.0 %)
NYT (New York Times)	1	(0.1 %)	0	(0.0 %)
PH (Periódicos Healy)	150	(8.5 %)	0	(0.0 %)
Staff writers/correspondents	**676**	**(38.3 %)**	**424**	**(76.5 %)**
SUN	34	(1.9 %)	0	(0.0 %)
Other agencies	19	(1.2 %)	0	(0.0 %)
	1776	**(100%)**	**554**	**(100 %)**

In fact, in the volume of coverage of *Frontera* Federal Government represents 50.8 percent (27.1 in the case of the border and 23.7, international); 900 news stories out of 1776 were based on "U.S. Federal Government" sources. The rest is distributed among "Municipal Government", "California or Baja California Government", "Private sector", "NGO", and so on. In the case of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* 45.2% of the sources

referred to "Federal Government", 13.7% to "Municipal Government", and 9.0% to "California or Baja California Government".

Table 3. The source of information of news stories

	Frontera (Mexico)		San Diego Union Tribune (United States)	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Analysts/Experts	6	(0.3 %)	10	(1.8 %)
Artists	1	(0.1 %)	13	(2.3 %)
Civil Groups	13	(0.7 %)	11	(2.0 %)
Federal Government	**900**	**(50.8 %)**	**250**	**(45.2 %)**
Human Rights	8	(0.4 %)	3	(0.5 %)
International Institution	31	(1.7 %)	7	(1.3 %)
Media	82	(4.6 %)	7	(1.3 %)
Municipal Government	**176**	**(9.9 %)**	**76**	**(13.7 %)**
NGO	78	(4.4 %)	12	(2.2 %)
Other	21	(1.2 %)	2	(0.4 %)
Political Party	73	(4.1 %)	11	(2.0 %)
Private Sector	**153**	**(8.7 %)**	**50**	**(9.0 %)**
Ordinary people/citizens	21	(1.2 %)	26	(4.7 %)
Religious organizations	6	(0.3 %)	4	(0.7 %)
California/Baja California government	**131**	**(7.3 %)**	**50**	**(9.0 %)**
Unions	10	(0.6 %)	3	(0.5 %)
Universities/Research Inst.	66	(3.7 %)	19	(3.4 %)
TOTAL	**1776**	**(100 %)**	**554**	**(100 %)**

This suggests that border located newspapers follows national politics and their influence on the region to some extent, without investigating and explaining the border region and its politics itself. For instance, on the one hand, institutions such as the Border Patrol, DEA, U.S. State Department, Mexican Secretary of Interior, Mexican Federal Police, and so on, seems more reliable sources of information; on the other hand, substantively, the frequency of "Federal Government" sources indicates that the presence of international news agencies –such as *Associated Press*- produces considerable amount

of articles regarding the capital cities (Mexico City and Washington, D.C.) and their officials.

What we also know is that the market characteristics play and important role in news media coverage in the U.S., especially on television. For example, Franklin et al (2009) reported that even under the most optimal circumstances (democratic ideals and agreements of local media presenting local news in a way that adequately represents local communities, congressional mandates, and federal regulatory policy) Spanish- and English-language local television newscast provided minimal coverage of local Latino interests. The authors find that "general market media attention to Latino audiences is a function of the characteristics of the target audience, the size of the media market, the interaction of market size and market characteristics, and the degree of competition between local stations" (Franklin, et al., 2009, 232).

Both newspapers included photos with their news (Table 4).

Table 4. Photos and images published by year on newspapers

	Frontera (Mexico)		*San Diego Union Tribune* (United States)	
	News Stories	Images	News Stories	Images
2000	309	125	91	54
2002	289	142	86	77
2004	284	176	89	82
2006	278	180	89	78
2008	339	274	94	54
2010	277	205	105	58
Total	1776	1102	554	403

United States Coverage: the case of *San Diego Union Tribune*

Topics

Table 5 illustrates the type of issues and newsworthiness in story publication. The *San Diego Union Tribune'* most frequent story was "State/political" with 25.6 percent (almost 80 percent reported of that sum was from "Border Affairs" or Local section). The second most frequent issue reported was related to "Drug traffic" (16.1%), and third, legal/illegal immigration (13.5%). With the exception of the year 2000 –previous to the tragedy of September 11, 2001-, "Border enforcement" was the main subject with the "State/political" category.

Table 5. *San Diego Union-Tribune* coverage (issues): 2000-2010

	State	Economy	Legal/ Illegal im-migration	Crime, violence	Drug traffic	Environ-ment	Health	Education	Human interest	Cultural Events
2000	30 (32.9)	13 (14.3)	14 (15.5)	3 (3.2)	17 (18.7)	5 (5.6)	0 (0.0)	2 (2.2)	3 (3.2)	4 (4.4)
2002	26 (30.4)	10 (11.6)	7 (8.2)	4 (4.8)	7 (8.3)	9 (10.6)	1 (1.3)	1 (1.3)	5 (5.9)	15 (17.6)
2004	17 (19.1)	13 (14.7)	15 (16.8)	10 (11.3)	11 (12.3)	4 (4.3)	3 (3.3)	1 (1.2)	5 (5.6)	10 (11.3)
2006	28 (31.3)	10 (11.3)	18 (20.2)	10 (11.3)	9 (10.1)	5 (5.6)	1 (1.2)	1 (1.2)	1 (1.2)	6 (6.7)
2008	15 (15.9)	10 (10.6)	14 (14.8)	20 (21.3)	18 (19.2)	4 (4.3)	4 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	5 (5.3)	4 (4.3)
2010	26 (24.8)	8 (7.6)	7 (6.7)	21 (20.0)	27 (25.7)	4 (3.8)	5 (4.8)	1 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	6 (5.7)

Totals: Year 2000 (91 stories = 100 %); year 2002 (86 stories = 100%); year 2004 (89 stories = 100%); 2006 (89 stories = 100%); year 2008 (94 stories = 100%), year 2010 (105 stories = 100%).

This is most obvious in border enforcement-related stories that involve the state, regulation and policy, ranging from border fence construction stories, to new ways of inspection in border-crossings (Table 6). Despite the persistence reporting stories of "drug trafficking", "border trade, tourism-consumption" and "legal/illegal immigration",

border enforcement reporting remains centrally involved in the vision field of the political, and the number of such stories is significant, especially after 2001.

Table 6. *San Diego Union-Tribune* news stories coverage (state and political): 2000-2010

	Abuse, authority corruption	Border enforcement, security strategies and inspection	Political events	Law initiatives	Terrorism and war	Foreign affairs	Protests
2000	26.6	10	26.6	16.6	0	13.3	6.6
2002	20	48	20	8	0	4	0
2004	23.5	47	0	5.8	5.8	11.8	5.8
2006	3.6	64.3	14.3	0	3.6	7.1	7.1
2008	7.7	53.8	30.8	0	0	7.7	0
2010	7.7	38.4	11.5	26.7	0	7.7	7.7

Totals: Year 2000 (30 news = 100 %); year 2002 (25 news = 100%); year 2004 (17 news = 100%); 2006 (28 news = 100%); year 2008 (13 news = 100%), year 2010 (26 news = 100%).

During the 2000's a series of protests took place, where people marched near the border in symbolic protest against *Operation Gatekeeper.*[25] But in 2002, after the 9/11 tragedy, news stories about a new border fence project started increasing in the context of the newly created strategies of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on immigration. In 2005, anti-migrant sentiment was unleashed by the presence of the *Minute Men* project around debates of immigration and border security. In 2006 political leaders and activist protested across the U.S. to regulate illegal immigration of Mexican and Latin American migrants. Border fence construction started in 2008 around a climate of violence and crime in Mexico. Table 7 gives a breakdown of the subjects covered in the *San Diego Union-Tribune* stories within the sample.

[25] The Clinton Administration's initiatives to heighten security at the U.S.-Mexico border in a political and cultural context, linking it to contemporaneous events, including the controversy surrounding California's *Proposition 187,* a ballot that denied education and healthcare programs to immigrants.

Table 7. *San Diego Union Tribune* news stories issues and subjects coverage (total)

		Frequency	Percent
State/Political	**Border enforcement, security strategies and inspection**	59	10.6
Economical	Border trade, tourism and consumption	44	7.9
Drug trafficking	**Arrests related to the drug trafficking**	42	7.6
Immigration	**Human trafficking, detentions, deportations, accidents and deaths**	38	6.9
Drug trafficking	**War against the drug trafficking, mobilization of soldiers to the border**	35	6.3
Crime	Murder	30	5.4
Culture	News on culture or Mexican or American traditions	27	4.9
Environment	Contamination	24	4.3
State/Political	Abuse, repression, and authority corruption	23	4.1
Immigration	**Immigration law and initiatives**	23	4.1
State/Political	Political events, discourse, partisan politics and presidential image	21	3.8
State/Political	Law initiatives and reforms, government projects	18	3.3
Crime	Other crimes: contraband, vandalism, prostitution	18	3.3
State/Political	Foreign Affairs and Head of State Visits	12	2.2
Culture	Artistic events	11	2.0
Human interest	Stories of people that cause admiration	11	2.0
Crime	Arrests	10	1.8
Crime	Kidnaps	10	1.8
Economical	Economic crisis, devaluations, recession, unemployment and poverty	8	1.5
Human interest	Stories of people that cause sympathy	8	1.5
Drug trafficking	Production, distribution and use of drugs	8	1.5
Health	Health programs (vaccination), prevention measures	7	1.3
State/Political	Protests, marches, and demonstrations	7	1.3
Immigration	Rescue and aid to migrants (tone of victims)	7	1.3
Culture	Celebrations or festivities of historic personages	7	1.3
Economical	Economic factors of the border, general reports on its dynamics	6	1.1
Economical	Economic strategies, employment, measures against the inflation	6	1.1
Environment	Reports on the climate and environment	4	0.7
Drug trafficking	Extraditions of dealers to Mexico or United States	4	0.7
Immigration	Anti-migrant expressions	3	0.6
Immigration	Undocumented migrants workers and border-crossing	3	0.6
Health	Human deaths by accidents, car crashes	3	0.6
Education	Events, institutional congresses, science reports	3	0.6
Environment	Natural disasters	2	0.4
Health	Epidemics and illnesses	2	0.4
Education	School desertion/reports on education	2	0.4
State/Political	Terrorism, and war	2	0.4
Immigration	Legal migration and work on the border	1	0.2
Crime	Rape, sexual abuse	1	0.2
Crime	Robberies	1	0.2
Crime	Shootings	1	0.2
Environment	Catastrophes and accidents that affect the environment	1	0.2
Health	Health reform or social security	1	0.2
Education	Racism and discrimination	1	0.2
Health	Walks or educational events of health	0	0.0
Human interest	Stories of people that cause pity	0	0.0
		554	100

Images.

The content of the images in the *San Diego Union-Tribune* changed relatively between 2000 and 2010. The border enforcement (border fence, border crossing check-point) is the focus of the largest percentage of images and photographs (Table 8). In the

beginning of the decade images of border enforcement were placed along with images and news stories about border protesters: protestors opposed to United States policies were photographed by the fence. It is notable that images of protesters were the subject of a smaller percentage of images as the years went by, and that photographs of Mexican soldiers, U.S. drones, and border agents started to appear since 2006.

Table 8. *San Diego Union Tribune* images percentage by content from 2000-2010

		2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
State	Officials	25.9	5.2	2.4	14.1	11.1	8.5
	Border enforcement	29.6	16.9	12.2	14.1	13.0	15.5
	Protesters	11.1	0.0	3.6	5.1	0.0	2.0
	Border agents	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	3.5
	Soldiers	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	9.3	7.5
	Transportation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7	3.5
Immigration	Migrants	3.7	1.3	13.2	19.2	11.11	3.5
	Visas	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drug traffic	Drug traffickers	3.7	7.8	1.2	16.7	20.4	9.5
	Drugs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5
Crime	Police	1.8	9.1	3.7	5.1	9.3	2.0
	Victims	0.0	7.9	4.9	3.8	1.9	2.5
Economical	Tourists	7.4	2.6	0.0	1.3	0.0	2.0
	Businessman	0.0	2.6	2.4	0.0	1.9	4.0
	Workers	0.0	3.9	18.9	3.8	0.0	3.5
Environment	City Landscape	5.5	2.6	7.2	6.4	0.0	5.0
	Disasters, accidents	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5
Culture	Artists	1.8	7.8	0.0	3.8	5.6	2.0
	Artistic artifacts	0.0	6.5	0.6	0.0	0.8	0.0
Education	Students	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.0
	Schools	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
Health	Doctors	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Patients	0.0	5.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.0
	Hospitals, clinics	1.8	1.3	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Human interest	Samaritans	1.8	2.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	1.0
	Ordinary citizens	3.7	5.2	8.4	2.6	0.8	1.0

This suggests that the border enforcement discourse began to be associated with news stories about security and surveillance (Image 3). By 2008, the border fence was

reinforced with cameras and military resources. Although images of Mexican officials were predominant in 2000 (the newly elected Vicente Fox dominated the coverage) the attention turned from government representatives to drug traffickers by 2010.

The presence of images of migrants has been constant since the 1990s (7.64% average during 2000-2010), however the coverage featured news images about deportations and detentions or the prevention of illegal crossing (Figure 4 and 5). The fact that migrants were the subject of a larger percentage of images during 2006 suggested the focus on the immigration reform protests.

Table 9. *San Diego Union Tribune* summary images according to topics from 2000 to 2010

	2000	**2002**	**2004**	**2006**	**2008**	**2010**
State	66.6	22.1	18.3	35.9	37.0	40.0
Immigration	3.7	1.3	14.4	19.2	11.1	3.5
Drug Traffic	3.7	7.8	1.2	16.7	20.3	13
Crime	1.9	16.9	8.6	9.0	11.1	4.5
Economical	7.4	9.1	21.3	5.1	1.9	9.5
Environment	5.5	2.6	7.2	6.4	0.0	8.0
Culture	1.9	14.3	0.6	3.8	6.3	2.0
Education	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.5
Health	1.9	10.4	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.0
Human interest	5.5	6.5	9.4	2.6	0.8	2.0
Other	1.9	9.1	16.6	1.3	11.1	16.0
	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Images about tourists, businessman, workers or legal commerce decreased during the last decade in comparison with the 1990s coverage (with the exception of 2004). Ruth Wallen (2003) found that the increased coverage of regional trade and cooperation correlated with heightened interest in Tijuana, the trading partner. However, there is “low visibility” or images devoted to economy and border trade. In fact, the coverage of legal

border crossing to the United States began to show disgruntled consumers, tourists or workers at the border-crossing checkpoint (Image 9).

News stories

Going beyond content analysis, I now turn to the interpretative approach for this study: how has the border coverage been visually represented? And how can we explain Mexico and the United States news coverage of the border in relation to the public sphere? To answer such questions, I use a range of the most reported news stories on the press. The consideration of these news stories allow me to see more clearly the speech and visual properties of news reporting on the experience of border-crossing traffic, the border fence, the detentions of undocumented workers, and the militarization of the border. I also draw on two interviews that I conducted with American and Mexican journalists from *San Diego Union* and *Frontera*, respectively. Where appropriate, I quote from these interviews. Throughout my discussion of this chapter, these interviews inform my understanding of the coverage of the border.

1. The experience of crossing the border

On August 30, 2006 "Bottleneck at the border. No relief in sight for longer lines" cross-border workers and tourists were interviewed about the long lines: "This is ridiculous. It takes three seconds to get into Mexico and three hours to get out", said one individual (Image 9).

U.S. Customs and Border Protection stated their efforts to move people across the border; however Department of Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff identified the

San Ysidro port of entry as a "high-threat area for the smuggling of contraband and the possible entry of terrorists". The chief of DHS suggested that the decisions on border crossings should be located in the sphere of security (not economy or cooperation), which would insert it into a very different frame of information.

Image 9. "No relief in sight for longer lines." Software developer Romero drives from Tijuana to San Diego once a week at San Ysidro. Because of the long lines he crosses the border entry when necessary for business. *San Diego Union-Tribune photo*. August 30, 2006.

The picture (Image 10) of the southbound lanes in Tijuana heading to the United States suggests the principal challenge to DHS: more control and surveillance on border crossing checkpoint. The long lines of cars waiting to enter the United States are the results of scrutiny and inspection on the border as the optimal ways of curbing the entrance of dangerous materials and people into the country: the controlled border.

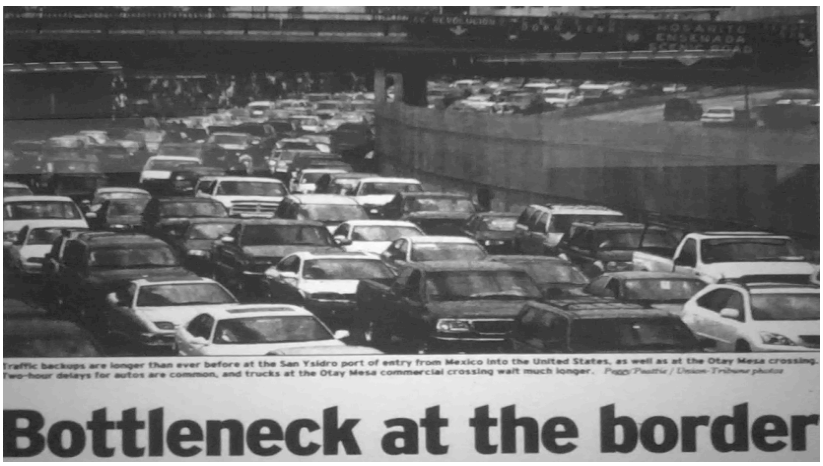

Image 10. "Bottleneck at the border." Traffic backups are longer than ever at the SY port of entry from Mexico into the U.S, as well as the Otay Mesa crossing. Two hours delay for autos are common, and trucks at the Otay Mesa commercial crossing wait much longer". *San Diego Union-Tribune* photo. August 30, 2006.

The visual register here is a representation of geographical space that abstracts the event of "exhaustion" (Figure 1) from its experiential circumstances. This management of visibility involves people with action (sitting in a car for hours) and emotion. Such representation correspond to choices over where, when, and with whom the "necessary suffering" to cross the border line into the United States is shown to occur, which, in turn, give rise to a particular type of moral agency: do something to relieve the long lines (however, do not compromise security).

Consumers, workers and tourists are sometimes treated as an interest group. As I noted before, Ruth Wallen (2003) argued that during the 1990s, the *San Diego Union Tribune* coverage lacked images of cooperation in their print pages, and the visual preference followed a strategy for the negative and the dramatic photographs. In this

sense, the impact of NAFTA in 1992 was not evident until 1998, when images of cross-border commerce reached the front page of the newspaper "Throughout the decade, images in the business section included public and business officials, maquiladora workers, new factories, and goods crossing the border. In recent years, articles and photographs about trade and tourism have been featured in the local section and even on the front page. As border commerce becomes more newsworthy, stories about illegal border crossing decline, decreasing dramatically by 1998" (Wallen, 2003, 151). Despite news stories about building bridges between countries, news media coverage still included the occasional dramatic image. Wallen's comparative study shows that the U.S.-Mexico border functions both as barrier and as a bridge.

With my own research one can see the similarities and continuities in the visual strategies and topics of news. Moreover, the "political reality" of border enforcement in the post-9/11 United States coverage increased (Table 6 and 7), and the "border trade, tourism and consumption" subject became more dramatic in its portrayal. The ordeal of waiting has become normalized, with people getting used to sitting in their cars for two and even three hours before making it across. A commuter interviewed on the "Bottleneck at the border" said that he gets up at 3 a.m. each day to arrive by 7 a.m. at his job as a parking attendant in a downtown San Diego "If I don't get in line by 4:30, I don't get here on time." These stories on economy and security, and the accompanying demand of more infrastructure and cooperation between U.S. and Mexican government became prevalent in border coverage. Years after 2001, newspapers were full of stories about the impact of border crossing on commerce: difficulties in crossing the border costs the regional economy $4 billion annually, according to a study by the San Diego Association

of Governments (SANDAG) in 2010 in information published in the *San Diego Union Tribune*. On October 7, 2010 a story on binational collaboration entitled "Tijuana's gains and goals in four critical areas", for example, stated that cooperation has faltered in recent years, and border crossings have dropped as a result of "heightened U.S. security measures, a prolonged economic downturn and Mexico's drug violence".

In the October 7, 2010 news-story, an interviewed individual shared his perception to the newspaper: "People talk about Tijuana and forget that 10 or 15 years ago, it was San Diego-Tijuana." This perceptual removal from an accustomed place enables a sense of e*strangement*, a consequence of the mediated visibility and social interactions in the context of the U.S.-Mexico border, a point I expand in the conclusion.

2. The fortification of the border

In 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010 border enforcement was highly politicized and the visible objects and subjects turned from the prevention of illegal crossing, passing through the *Minute Men Project* and immigration protests to the "targeting of illegal immigrants". The building of the second fence along the San Diego-Tijuana region became a common subject (Figure 3). It was frequently used to portray the border as a high-technology surveillance zone: "Like having a second pair of eyes out there: with the cameras "apprehensions went up and getaways went down," said one border patrol agent.

Image 11. "Cameras helping Border Patrol keep on the lookout for trouble." *San Diego Union-Tribune*. June 28, 2006.

3.Detentions and militarization: targeting the migrants

By 2010, images and content representing border enforcement included dramatic shots of the migrant arrested (Image 12), and border patrol/military corps "targeting" the migrants (Image 13). Two stories (one October 5, the other October 6, 2010) are representative of border enforcement and human trafficking along the border. The first "21 landing at beach seized by border agents" presents the arrest of 19 men and two women at about 2:30 am. The story notices the increase of using boats to smuggle people into the United States from Mexico in recent years "as federal authorities made it more difficult to cross illegally by land". The framing of the narrative is about how immigrants search for alternatives to cross into the United States and their propensity to try anything to do it. The mass media clearly helped to construct the image of an immigration and boundary enforcement crisis (Nevins, 2002). Such reporting continued to inform the

public and official perceptions and representations of unauthorized immigration through the 2000s (Image 12).

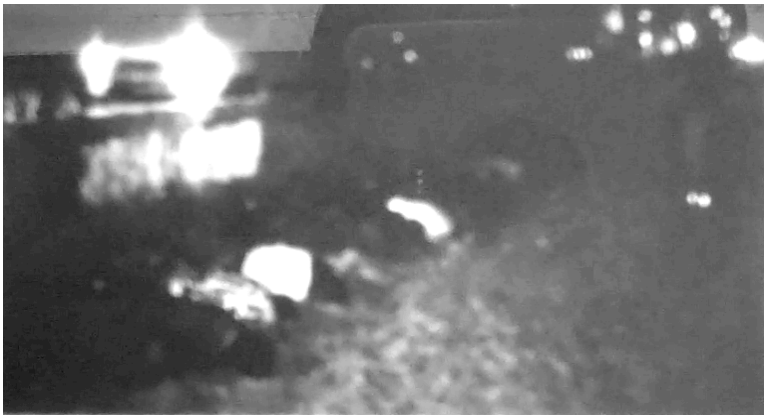

Image 12. "Suspected illegal immigrants are detained on Mission beach." *San Diego Union-Tribune* photo. October 5, 2010.

The picture is iconic of imagery that comes up repeatedly when detentions are reported in U.S. media. It shows the visualization of the scene of submission. The image of bodies arranged by the side of the road or sea, in this case, with their heads facing the ground. Their poses could be read as conveying a feeling of war prisoners being subjugated. Of the two pick-up trucks in the background, one has the lights on toward the viewer, illuminating the detainees "Only an anonymous or foreign victim, lacking in social standing, would be shot in this way" (Wallen, 2003). The panoramic point of view provide us with an overview of the detention from afar; at the same time, it generalizes the scene of a migrant capture: this could be have been elsewhere in the U.S.-Mexico border. In so doing, the panoramic landscape creates an aesthetic distance from lived reality; the scene is all about pick-up trucks, lights, and human figures in a static composition: inviting contemplation from distance rather than engagement with the

detainees. In terms of agency, there is no purposeful action, no voice: these people lack power to communicate the condition of their tribulation.

The notion of the "illegal" as a perceived threat to the U.S. is pervasive in California. "Targeting illegal immigration", was the title of a news report that ran the next day in response to the "21 landing at beach seized by border agents". On October 6, 2010 the story presented the US's entire infrastructure to "target" the unauthorized migrant, which included "fencing, cameras, floodlights, seismic sensors." It stated "all-weather access roads are used across much of California's border with Mexico to respond quickly to illegal intrusions… By air, land and sea, immigration enforcement efforts in San Diego County span at least a dozen federal, state and local agencies that detain well over 100,000 foreign nationals each year". The story reported that the number of Border Patrol agents has doubled since 2004, exceeding 20,000 in 2010. More than 2,500 of them were assigned to San Diego County. The story included three photographs depicting the infrastructure and spectacle/visibility of the surveillance using war references. One picture shows a predator drone aerial vehicle with the captioned words "By air". Another picture "By land" shows two border patrol officials. One official is fore grounded in the photo -from a low angle shot, portraying him as bigger and authoritarian- with military-style camouflaged clothing, binoculars, and a bullet-proof vest. 'By sea" is the caption depicted by the front of a boat.

Image 13. "Targeting illegal immigration. By air, by land and by sea." *San Diego Union-Tribune* photo. October 6, 2010.

As I stated earlier, with the rise of new media the phenomenon of "publicness" has become detached from the idea of dialogical conversation in a shared locale. The new forms of public created by the media are the visual representation and virtual reality: a distinctive kind of visuality produced by technologies and techniques of visualization in the context of modernity (Chow, 2010). Chow notes that the concept of "target" resonates with the primordial hunt. As the target in the hunt for the "other", a hunt with pernicious stereotyping, it reduced-constructed the other into an object. The relation with the other is mostly mediated by visuality, referring specifically to epistemological implications and cultural consequences. Chow develops Frederic Jameson's claim that stereotypes are inevitable in cross-cultural representations and encounters; but to Chow, Jameson "stopped short of elaborating the issue of power differentials in the very deployment of stereotypes" (Chow, 2010, 53). According to Chow visibility is constructed by political

practices: political regimes are capable of engendering realities that do not exist using stereotypes. The "fantastic figures of Jew, the Jap, and the wetback have all produced substantive political consequences, from deportation to incarceration to genocide or ethnic cleansing" (Chow, 2010, 53)

Mexico's border coverage: the case of *Frontera*

Topics

This section is based on a content and textual analysis of 1776 United States' and Border-related stories from *Frontera* (2000-2010). The urban newspaper is one of two main newspapers in Tijuana in which local, regional, national and international news are covered, though it is important because it represents a less "authoritarian news model" (Hughes, 2006). The other newspaper, *El mexicano*, has a traditional tendency to represent the official culture, the bureaucracies of both the public and powerful business sectors (Ortiz, 2007; Wallen, 2003;). *El mexicano* was founded in 1959 with the explicit aim to incorporate Tijuana to a national culture, a sort of cultural front to U.S. culture (Muriá, 2006).[26]

> *El Mexicano* is aligned with the PRI, the ruling party in Mexico from the revolution to the recent election of Vicente Fox, despite the fact that Baja California was the first state in Mexico where an alternative party, the PAN, came to power. Since that election in 1989 Baja California has had a PAN governor. It is not as significant that the paper represents the interests of a political party as that it describes official culture in general; half of the photographs depict meetings of public figures. These photographs certainly can be read as serving to enact national culture, a significant contrast to practices in San Diego where, at least until recently, nationalist positions

[26] This media representation can be explain by the "unifying" process of modern journalism about the "desire to integrate the community of its readers (potentially the entire political community): reporters unify their public behind them. This journalistic process of unifying can be traced in history… This unifying is probably the big idea of modern journalism" (Muhlmann, 2008, 3-4).

> were reinforced by images of the fence and illegal immigration (Wallen, 2003).

Modern Mexican press media continues its close connection to the state. This connection goes back before the dramatic transformation of the Mexican media in an emerging democratic context (Hughes, 2006). Despite its connection with the state, media in Mexico has changed during the past two decades, especially the Mexican press. Lawson (2002) argues that until the late 1990s, Mexican media was tied to politics through a system of bribes and concessions that furthered the ruling political party (PRI, Institutional Revolutionary Party). During the 1990s, changes in ownership and liberalization shifted the strong influence over journalistic content from government officials to the private sector and other commercial interests. Sallie Hughes (2006) identifies much of the change in Mexican journalism in newsrooms. She argues that authoritarian form of media institutions has transformed into a hybrid system of journalism with important implications for democracy.

One result of the liberal, market-oriented, and hybrid system context in the late 1990s in Tijuana was *Frontera* (founded July 25, 1999 by Editorial Healy Group, owner also of *La Crónica Baja California*, Mexicali and *El Imparcial*, Sonora). Its founders intend to produce a newspaper controlled by entrepreneurs, not by a political group, that emphasizes information and neutrality over doctrine, a newspaper that relegates opinion to the editorial pages. *Frontera* has a paper circulation of 32,798 from Monday to Saturday, 30,454 Sunday, and 388,777 electronic users/subscribers with 2,035,603 visits a month according to their website. Its area of coverage includes Baja California

(Tijuana, Mexicali, Ensenada, Rosarito) and California, United States (San Diego County).

Table 10. *Frontera* coverage (issues) 2000-2010

	State	Economy	Legal Illegal im-migration	Crime, violence	Drug traffic	Environ-ment	Health	Education	Human interest	Cultural Events
2000	153 (49.5)	31 (10.0)	46 (14.9)	21 (6.9)	28 (9.0)	13 (4.3)	10 (3.2)	6 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.3)
2002	127 (43.9)	24 (8.3)	53 (18.4)	38 (13.2)	12 (4.1)	11 (3.8)	9 (3.1)	5 (1.7)	6 (2.1)	4 (1.4)
2004	136 (47.9)	30 (10.6)	73 (25.7)	17 (6.0)	7 (2.5)	6 (2.1)	9 (3.2)	3 (1.1)	1 (0.3)	2 (0.6)
2006	124 (44.6)	24 (8.6)	69 (24.8)	17 (6.1)	13 (4.7)	15 (5.4)	6 (2.2)	2 (0.7)	6 (2.2)	2 (0.7)
2008	125 (36.9)	63 (18.6)	34 (10.0)	30 (8.9)	23 (6.8)	21 (6.2)	15 (4.4)	6 (1.8)	7 (2.0)	15 (4.4)
2010	109 (39.4)	37 (13.4)	27 (9.7)	12 (4.3)	25 (9.0)	31 (11.2)	16 (5.8)	6 (2.2)	7 (2.5)	7 (2.5)

Totals: Year 2000 (309 stories = 100 %); year 2002 (289 stories = 100%); year 2004 (284 stories = 100%); 2006 (278 stories = 100%); year 2008 (339 stories = 100%), year 2010 (277 stories = 100%)

Content analysis of news stories uncovered two trends in the way *Frontera* coverage of the border was portrayed between 2000 and 2010, as seen in Table 10 and Table 11. The first trend was the domination of "State or political" information (43.9 % total), with a considerable amount of "International" news, more than half of the political information (55.2%) concerning the United States. The second trend was "Legal-Illegal immigration" related issues (17.1% total), the main focus on the "Border" or "La Línea" (*The Line*) section.

The increasing figure of the presidents (Bush, Obama) is clearly visible in the trends depicted in Table 11, which traces the influence of international agencies (specifically *Associated Press*) in ten-year period. As a whole (Table 12), press coverage devoted almost 12 percent to "political events, political discourses, partisan politics and presidential images."

Table 11. *Frontera* coverage (state or political) 2000-2010

	Abuse, authority corruption	Border enforcement, security strategies and inspection	Political events	Law initiatives	Terrorism and war	Foreign affairs	Protests
2000	10.5	4.6	34.6	1.9	0	40.5	7.8
2002	22.6	17.2	18.7	6.2	23.4	10.2	1.6
2004	7.3	20.3	47.2	4.9	15.4	3.3	1.6
2006	5.3	26.5	21.2	9.8	13.6	9.1	14.4
2008	3.3	36.1	31.1	3.3	10.6	11.4	4.1
2010	9.8	51.8	17.3	7.4	20.1	6.2	4.9

Totals: Year 2000 (153 news = 100 %); year 2002 (128 news = 100%); year 2004 (123 news = 100%); 2006 (132 news = 100%); year 2008 (122 news = 100%), year 2010 (81 news = 100%).

By covering more information about political events, campaigns, and discourses, the U.S. presidential figure incremented its visibility: and the press coverage increased its dependency on foreign sources.

If we take a closer look at Table 11 figures, we find an important difference in the political coverage during the decade. In the first years of the 2000s “foreign affairs” and “political events” subjects were the most covered. After 2006, the “border enforcement” subject became prevalent. For example, in 2000, “foreign affairs” was the most common subject in *Frontera*. There was significant progress early in President Vicente Fox’s term (2000-2006) toward bilateral cooperation with the United States on legal/illegal immigration and drug trafficking (Fox’s visit to Washington on August, 2000), but President George Bush's government remained skeptical of Fox’s call for “open borders” with the U.S. and for the protection of rights of migrant workers.

Table 12. *Frontera* issues and subjects coverage (total)

		Frequency	Percent
State/Political	Political events, discourse, partisan politics and presidential image	211	11.9
State/Political	**Border enforcement, security strategies and inspection**	183	10.3
Immigration	**Human trafficking, detentions, deportations, accidents and deaths**	149	8.4
State/Political	Terrorism, and war	123	6.9
State/Political	Foreign Affairs and Head of State Visits	116	6.6
Economical	Border trade, tourism and consumption	81	4.6
Economical	Economic crisis, devaluations, recession, unemployment and poverty	67	3.9
State/Political	Abuse, repression, and authority corruption	60	3.5
Immigration	Immigration law and initiatives	58	3.4
Drug trafficking	**War against the drug trafficking, mobilization of soldiers to the border**	50	2.8
State/Political	Law initiatives and reforms, government projects	42	2.5
State/Political	Protests, marches, and demonstrations	39	2.3
Economical	Economic strategies, employment, measures against the inflation	39	2.3
Immigration	Rescue and aid to migrants (tone of victims)	37	2.1
Drug trafficking	Arrests related to the drug trafficking	33	2.0
Crime	Murder	33	2.0
Immigration	Undocumented migrants workers and border-crossing	29	1.7
Crime	Other crimes: contraband, vandalism, prostitution	27	1.6
Environment	Reports on the climate and environment	27	1.6
Environment	Natural disasters	23	1.3
Health	Health programs (vaccination), prevention measures	23	1.3
Economical	Economic factors of the border, general reports on its dynamics	22	1.2
Crime	Robberies	21	1.1
Health	Epidemics and illnesses	21	1.1
Crime	Arrests	18	1.0
Culture	News on culture or Mexican or American traditions	17	0.9
Human interest	Stories of people that cause sympathy	15	0.8
Immigration	Anti-migrant expressions	15	0.8
Crime	Kidnaps	15	0.8
Crime	Rape, sexual abuse	14	0.8
Environment	Catastrophes and accidents that affect the environment	14	0.8
Environment	Contamination	14	0.8
Drug trafficking	Production, distribution and use of drugs	14	0.8
Education	Events, institutional congresses, science reports	14	0.8
Health	Human deaths by accidents, car crashes	13	0.7
Immigration	Legal migration and work on the border	13	0.7
Drug trafficking	Extraditions of dealers to Mexico or United States	11	0.6
Education	School desertion/reports on education	10	0.5
Human interest	Stories of people that cause admiration	7	0.4
Culture	Artistic events	7	0.4
Culture	Celebrations or festivities of historic personages	7	0.4
Crime	Shootings	7	0.4
Health	Health reform or social security	6	0.3
Human interest	Stories of people that cause pity	5	0.2
Education	Racism and discrimination	4	0.1
Health	Walks or educational events of health	2	0.1
		1776	100

Images

In terms of images, the findings presented similar challenges to Wallen's study of *El Mexicano*, the prevalent newspaper during the 1990s in Tijuana, "analysis of *El Mexicano* is complicated by the fact that the actual content of the photographs does not

necessarily correlate with the subject matter. Roughly half of the photographs *in El Mexicano* are of public figures—political officials or business or academic leaders—but these officials may be addressing border enforcement, promotion of tourism, or binational cooperation" (Wallen, 2003, 144).

Table 13. *Frontera* images percentage from 2000 to 2010

		2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
State	Officials	34.4	28.2	43.8	33.9	23.8	22.9
	Border enforcement	10.4	9.8	13.6	11.1	17.1	11.7
	Protesters	11.2	1.4	2.3	4.4	2.6	2.4
	Border agents	0.8	1.4	3.4	1.6	0.4	1.5
	Soldiers	0.8	0.7	3.4	4.4	3.6	2.0
	Transportation	1.6	1.4	1.7	0.0	3.6	5.4
Immigration	Migrants	15.2	7.0	9.1	22.2	4.4	7.3
	Visas, passports	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
Drug traffic	Drug traffickers	4.8	10.6	2.3	2.2	2.9	5.4
	Drugs	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	3.4
Crime	Police	0.8	6.3	5.1	2.2	3.3	4.4
	Victims	3.2	6.3	1.1	2.3	0.0	2.4
Economical	Tourists	1.6	3.5	0.0	1.1	3.3	2.9
	Businessman	0.8	0.0	0.6	2.2	0.0	2.0
	Workers	1.6	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.7	1.5
Environment	City Landscape	0.8	4.9	2.3	2.3	5.2	4.9
	Disasters, accidents	0.8	3.5	0.0	2.2	4.8	1.0
Culture	Artists	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0
	Artistic artifacts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0
Education	Students	0.8	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	2.0
	Schools	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.7	2.0
Health	Doctors	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.5
	Patients	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
	Hospitals, clinics	0.0	0.7	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.0
Human interest	Samaritans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0
	Ordinary citizens	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.0	1.1	0.5

In this sense, images of government officials dominated the coverage (Table 13) over the 10-year period of the sample, which correlates with news stories topics about "political events, discourse, partisan politics and presidential image" (Table 12). Most of shots are taken "straight-on with very predictable composition" (Wallen, 2003, 151), or show officials at meetings. In addition, the national and international section of *Frontera* heavily relies on news agencies to illustrate the news story.

The visual representation of Mexican border enforcement maintained its coverage (Table 11) but increased to 17.5 % of the total images by 2008 due to the construction of the second border fence. Through the decade, images about the border fence and border patrol vans along the wall were accompanied by news stories about deportations, migrant deaths, and detentions. For *Frontera* there is change in the immigration coverage over the 10-year period of the sample (10.48 % average). Migration of Mexican citizens to the United Sates during the 1990s was covered at length in both papers but from very different perspectives "whereas the *Union-Tribune* addresses the threat migrant workers posed to American citizens, *El Mexicano* focuses on human rights abuses of migrant workers in the United States". (Wallen, 2003, 152). However, the last decade *Frontera* covered the migrants with similar visual representation strategies as the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. There are images of migrants, in *Frontera*, either arrested (Figure 6) or climbing over the fence (Figure 7) with almost no "voice" from the undocumented workers.

Table 14. *Frontera* images summary according to topics from 2000 to 2010

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
State	59.2	41.5	68.1	55.5	51.4	45.9
Immigration	16.0	7.8	9.7	22.8	4.4	7.3
Drug Traffic	4.8	10.6	2.3	2.2	5.1	8.8
Crime	4.0	12.7	6.2	5.0	3.3	6.8
Economical	4.0	4.9	0.6	3.3	4	6.4
Environment	1.6	8.4	8.4	2.3	10	5.9
Culture	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0
Education	0.8	1.4	0.0	0.6	2.2	4.0
Health	0.0	1.4	0.6	0.0	0.7	2.5
Human interest	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.1	0.5
Other	8.8	10.6	3.5	7.7	16.7	11.9
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

As noted before by Wallen (2003), the lack of images of border trade and tourism -in local Mexican newspaper- demonstrates the difficulty of conceiving images that would represent a mutual relationship as opposed to a hierarchical one in the context of border security. Only rare images (no more than one was recorded in a given year), shows other subjects rather than the occasional U.S. tourist: doctors, students, and artist. A close look at the health, education, human interest or culture images reveals the increased invisibility in the representation of San Diego in *Frontera*.

News stories

The factor that draws a considerable portion of United States and Border coverage into the public sphere is the role of the state. Thus, the news-stories of "Border enforcement, security strategies and inspection" became prevalent after 2006 (Table 11 and Table 12). How often do interventions by the state affect border coverage in its everyday forms? The number of stories in the 1776 sample that involved "La Línea" section was very large, and the coverage in the flow of information is often structured

around the U.S. and Mexico's political positions: oriented toward official sources (even positions on the border: during 2002 Fox's opponents criticized him for aligning Mexico too closely with the United States, a sentiment reflected in the vote of the Mexican Senate in 2002 to block a planned visit by Fox to the United States).

1. Immigration and detentions

Articles associated with the "state or political" border enforcement coverage stake out an important and similar focus on of "legal/illegal immigration" in the public sphere after the terrorist attacks. Just months after the tragedy of 9/11 in the United States, on February 21, 2002, *Frontera* published a story called the "Out of control migration", the article quoted a researcher who participated in a Forum celebrated in Tijuana to encourage more dialogue between Mexico and the United States "The terrorist attack, as said to exhaustion, cut down the talks between the presidents of both countries, the landscape changed." The article goes on to recount how the United States government can't contain migrants workers (Image 14), and that the border has become an "out of control" place of drug trafficking, people sleeping along the fence, and prostitution.

However, two symbolic features constitute the aesthetics of this image: the eye-witness representation and the action of detention. The eye-witness is a right-here-right-now exposition of the event. It seems we are walking behind the individuals at the location. The image (similar to a U.S. reporting point of view) show one officer and people walking with their hand on their heads, faceless, away from the scene of capture.

Image 14. "Out of control migration. U. S. can't contain the migrants" (Migracion sin control. E. U. no puede contener a los migrantes). *Frontera* photo. February 21, 2002.

Although *Frontera* focuses on deportations and human rights abuses of migrant workers, photographs represent migrants sitting along the fence, climbing over the fence or arrested.[27] A *Frontera* article printed on September 6, 2010, for example, reports how immigration has changed in the past 20 years, from individuals living in Tijuana waiting to cross to the United States to deported persons hanging around in Tijuana who lived in the Unites States more than 20 years. In this news story, immigration is presented not simply as a political (deportations) problem but as a social one: a form to deal with the deportees, "the migrant that we try to aid are deportees and no longer are the ones that are in transit toward the U.S." The deportees represent another problem to the local community, sometimes a "security" one (I will discuss this later on). The article favors dramatic content and a visually compelling image of people climbing the border fence.

[27] In *El Mexicano*, the usual representation was the "public officials or representatives of nongovernmental organizations protesting human rights abuses of Mexican nationals by the INS… but no representation of undocumented workers" (Wallen, 2003, 152)

The photograph used in this story (from a "bank of images") shows the back of two individuals, one climbing the fence, the other "apparently" looking for a way to get in. Since the 1990s, the fence began to appear on the U.S.-Mexico border between San Diego and Tijuana; this fence shows taggers' graffiti and the quieter would-be migrants (or deportees) trying to cross the rusty metal.

Frontera reported the construction of the border fence, the detentions and deportations. The "economy" stories focused on "Border trade, tourism and consumption" with a range of articles about the long lines to border-cross into the United States, and Tijuana's residents expending their money on President's Day "sales". At times the newspaper presented border enforcement stories according to economic conventions of reporting. The stories by reporters were framed in some cases as a response to "Mexican government initiatives on the border are interrupting the flow of commerce", and the failure of customs to "secure" the border.

Image 15. "Migration profile has changed" (Cambia perfil de migración). *Frontera* photo. September 6, 2010.

2. Border security and inspection

Many of the stories emphasized divisions between the local business sector and the federal government. This focus on divisions between the market sector and the federal government is a common frame in border coverage (in both countries). In this case the division also seems to reflect many residents own experiences about the border-crossings in the Tijuana-San Diego port of entry. On April 15, 2010, "They question the benefit of the SIAVE" the report contrasted the cost-benefit of the SIAVE program (SIAVE is a Spanish acronym for System of Vehicle Control and Inspection) by the local business sector. The SIAVE program, launched in 2009, makes use of new technology to stop the southbound flow of weapons and drugs from the U.S. to Mexico. However the business sector questioned the cost-benefit of SIAVE due to the lack of reports on weapons seizures, the purpose of its orchestration. The article quoted the president of the local chamber of commerce "The U.S. investors are thinking twice to come to Tijuana, since they have to take into account the average 4-5 hours investment to cross" referring to the traffic delays and the bottlenecks on the border. According to the article 35% of economic activity decayed during 2009-2010 since SIAVE was put into operation.

Image 16. "Business sector does not have reports of weapons seizures" (El sector empresarial no tiene informes de decomisos de armas). *Frontera* photo. April 15, 2010.

The photograph (Image 16) foregrounds a camera on a pole representing the surveillance system at the border entrance in Tijuana. A vehicle is directed to pass through a designated lane at a low speed during which time it is being weighed and measured. The background of the image shows several cars, supposedly approved to enter Mexico by a gate located behind the camera.

By 2010, *Frontera* pictures illustrating border enforcement included technology system shots (a result of Mexican initiatives on security), but they more often depicted the border fence and the arrested or deported migrants workers. *San Diego Union-Tribune* displayed this type of photographs ten years before (Image 17): an assumed driver scanning his card at the Otay Mesa crossing (only his hand is showed), however the screen shows the viewer –and the assumed border official- a photo and the cardholder's name. According to the article "Border gate express on the way" (April 22,

2000) to get the card, “commuters must pay a fee, pass an FBI criminal background check and show proof of citizenship, employment, vehicle registration and U.S. insurance”

Image 17. “Border gate express on the way”. *San Diego Union-Tribune* photo. April 22, 2000.

To Renato Rosaldo the U.S.-Mexico border has become a high-tech surveillance theater, and the “border theater has become social violence” (Rosaldo, 1997, 33). Border enforcement technology, intertwined with border surveillance represents a practice of power that seeks to define the juridical border between the citizens and the “others”. The installation of vehicle scales, cameras and vehicle access gates that are used to inspect and regulate the flow of traffic going south (and X-rays machines in the case of those going north) harkens back to Michel Foucault’s concepts of “spectacle” and “surveillance”.

Foucault did not discuss directly the nature of media, but did develop a distinctive argument about the organization of power in modern societies and the changing relation

between power and visibility. In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault talks about ancient regimes of power in which the visibility of the few were made visible to many, thus, public executions in market squares became a "spectacle": a public performance that enacted upon the body of prisoners the power of the sovereign. However, according to Foucault, new forms of discipline and surveillance emerged with modernity, characterized by the image of the Panopticon[28]: visibility as means of control. In this sense, "surveillance" describes a move away from the visibility of fully public executions. United States and Mexican governments use surveillance to produce a spectacle on the San Diego-Tijuana border. Putting the new technology in place at ports along its border in efforts to stop the flow of guns and drugs is part of making the clandestine become part of the visible, or what one might describe as a show. In the article "They question the benefit of the SIAVE", the visibility success of the SIAVE program was not in number of seizures and detained but in the attention the program received.

Discussion

One reporter of the San Diego Union-Tribune notes[29] how the San Diego-Tijuana region is viewed today in United States media coverage, "the clogged border crossings, drug violence, drop in tourism, economic crisis all contributed to driving a wedge

[28] The panoptic model it's suit up with the understanding of the space and the viewing of space, or in this case, the surveillance and control of place "Bentham's *Panopticon* is the architectural figure of this composition. We know the principle on which it was based: at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the periphery building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other.

[29] Email exchange with *San Diego Union Tribune* reporter, Sandra Dibble, about the newspaper border coverage; conducted on September 2010.

between the two sides of the border—and with all these events, they became the focus of coverage rather than the commonalities. But many people continue to look for the connections, and if you look at what I've written at least, I've worked hard to talk about inter-dependence". Similarly, a *Frontera* reporter[30] and news editor observes that, "due to the limited space –or no space at all in our newspaper-, along with the space dedicated to official sectors or opinion leaders; we lacked [San Diego] community coverage, their lifestyles and activities… I believe that the Tijuana-San Diego region notion stopped years ago. Perhaps that perception existed before because of the cultural exchange and the more freely crossings routine. But the hardening of U.S. migration policies toward the border, and of the Mexican Customs authorities regarding the introduction of cheap merchandise from the United States, as well as the decline of the Mexican economy, where factors that made the border an unfamiliar zone."

One consequence of the accentuated division between the two sides (focusing on the conflict than the commonalities) that local media enable –the "others"- is that it generates e*strangement*. As Orgad (2008) noted (in relation to satellite news channels) the unfamiliar often becomes visible, seen and articulated in a stereotypical way –because the commonplace becomes invisible; familiarity breeds a particular form of blindness-, mainly because journalists are embedded within the environment on which they are reporting.

The U.S.-Mexico border, in turn, is covered in the very process of making things that happen in their region unusual, and thus visible and dramatic. Local border news

[30] Email exchange with *Frontera* reporter and editor, Angel Ruiz, about the newspaper border coverage; conducted on September 2010.

media have the capacity to make the familiar unfamiliar. In Goffman's (1971) words, visibility overlaps with the perception of danger and alarm: normal is unnoticed. The data confirms that the newspapers in Tijuana and San Diego cover the border region in different ways in terms of practices and news production but in similar ways in terms of the visual strategies: the fence, the dramatic, the migrants as invaders and victims. While *Frontera's* newspaper tended to have more variety overall, the most frequent stories included politics and economy: more than 50 percent of all stories combined. On the political side, news stories were related to issues of "Border enforcement, security and inspection", accounting President's Bush and Obama decisions on the Border and U.S. foreign affair with Mexico, including U.S. federal officials declaration on the "War on terror" and drug traffic. This was consistent with *San Diego Union Tribune* in which a considerable percent of all stories were found on political categories, immigration, and drug traffic: a trend that repeated itself on the "Borders Affairs" section in the same order.

One strategy of estrangement is the use of analogies. Analogies transfer the usual perception of an object into a new sphere: a migrant as yet another criminal or victim, unrest in the border as yet more violence in suburban housing along the boundary (Example 1 NBC news). As Orgad noted "The juxtaposition of two concepts perceived to be physically, socially, politically, culturally, normatively or morally remote from each other creates surprise and distance, de-familiarizes the events, and demands reflection from the viewer" (Orgad, 2008, 316)

Both the Spanish-language and English-language media have similar orientation and agendas toward "Crime, murder and violence" on a local basis. This is the second

element that contributes to considerable de-familiarization of the border: the sheer volume of coverage produced and disseminated on border newspapers and television newscasts. The significance of border enforcement and security issues, in terms of both its meaning and importance, is determined, among other things, by the amount and scale of visibility afforded. The underlying consistency in covering each other as a shared border and as a "conflicted" neighbor nation may account for more news stories in *San Diego Union Tribune*. Even reporters acknowledge this situation. On February 7, 2010, *San Diego Union Tribune* "International" section posted an article entitled "Amid drug war, Mexico less deadly than decade ago." Quoting a Mexican research institution, the journalist stated that "Mexico City's homicide rate today is about on par with Los Angeles and is less than a third of that for Washington, D.C. Yet many Americans are leery of visiting Mexico at all. Drug violence and the swine flu outbreak contributed to a 12.5 percent decline in air travel to Mexico by U.S. citizens in 2009, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, a blow to Mexico's third-largest source of foreign income."[31] The similarities in international news can be explained by the fact that the source of information is the same regardless of nationality: *Associated Press*. Both *Frontera* and *San Diego Union Tribune* based their international news on the dominant agency, which still confirms the asymmetric balance of news flow: approximately 80 percent of the international news is managed by U.S. agencies in Latin America (Vincent, 1997, 178).

[31] *San Diego Union-Tribune*. February 7, 2010.

The third aspect that provoked estrangement at the "once" San Diego-Tijuana region was sensationalism. The news media, especially corporate television, are frequently criticized for dramatizing events. One can see the criticisms are often well grounded from the way the television news reports (Example 1 *NBC* news and 2 *Televisa* news) covered the events from a distanced perspective. In both newspapers cases, news coverage enabled estrangement and evoked distance by excluding the voice of the migrants as a marginalized social group (in most of the cases). According to Reguillo (2002) the conditions of migrants are close to marginalization and exclusion, they lack affirmation of citizenship from their nations of origin and destiny.

Conclusion

This text has sought to enhance our understanding of what happens when the mediated visibility of a region is limited, through time, by the expansion in news coverage of national implemented policies. One of the consequences of mediated visibility of migrants in the public space is that it is centered in a perspective that criminalizes them. Mexico represents, perhaps, the most explicit manifestation of the migrant construction as "other" in the Latin America scope. On April 28, 2010, *Síntesis Television* (a local cable company newscast) uploaded a news report on youtube entitled "Arizona law is applied in Tijuana,"[32] showing how local police are incarcerating migrants for 36 hours just by their "suspicious" looks and lack of identification documents. In this sense, mediated visibility has worked against migrants[33]. The mistrust

[32] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z55J5AMtIwo

[33] Another example, one that illustrates the Mexican pacification of the border, is the establishment of Grupo Beta (a police force to catch criminals in the border region) in December of 1990 "the most direct

that was engendered among the border publics towards their fellow migrants has promoted a high degree of threat. The *Televisa* news report analyzed earlier (Example 2), compared migrants as a "epidemic carriers", neatly illustrates how uncertain the situation feels to citizens alike. The "other", always remains intercepted by the force of a mediated global imaginary that re-elaborates the production of difference (Reguillo, 2002).

Another consequence of mediated visibility on the border was critical reflection on the U.S. side: the coverage on the border provided by newspapers, alongside other media and political players prompted critical debate among U.S. citizens, and between them and the San Diego news media, about Latino coverage. This included reflection on biased coverage and biased perception of the "other." An article published in the San Diego Union-Tribune (October 24, 2010) called ""U-T editor to consult with an advisory council. Panel will help newsroom address bias and perception of bias in coverage," describes how the Latino Advisory Council and the editor of the newspaper team up to reduce bias on its coverage of the region's ethnically diverse population, "about 3.2 million people live in the county. Just under half are white, while 31 percent are Hispanic, 10 percent Asian and 5 percent African-American. The Union-Tribune also is read in Tijuana and other parts of Baja California". The panel enabled a process of doubting, and acknowledgement of issues and voices that for decades had been underrepresented, among other things, and gave a substantial push toward diversity and representation of minorities.

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attempt by the Mexican government to regulate its northern boundary with the United States. While U.S. pressure might very well have informed Mexico City's decision to establish the group, Mexican authorities had their own reasons for wanting an institutionalized police presence in the border region. It appears that the Mexican officials were concerned about border violence because it hurt the image of Baja California" (Nevins, 2002, 133).

In the case of Mexico's, traditional news media (especially the press and television) still resonates as "official culture". Modern Mexican press media does in fact have close connection with the state. This connection extends back before the dramatic transformation of the Mexican media in an emerging democratic context. Moreover, this connection affects how Mexican press covers border issues such as immigration, especially with respect to how the Mexican immigrant "other" is represented. In addition, foreign corporate news agencies seem to dominate the sources of information in an international sphere. In that sense, the "exploitation" of the U.S.-Mexico border is more likely to generate more negative and sensational stories.

A version of Chapter 2, in part, is intended for publication.

Chapter 3.

Media education via hybrid digital production activities: lessons learned from media participation

Dreamers and deceivers
We have something alike
I desire to inspire
And rise above our plight
Despite broken bones
And broken homes
We believe
Despite unfavorable conditions
And negative criticisms
We achieve
We exists between a unity
That will stand the test of time
We are a family
We are Lincoln High

Poem by Gloria De Cruz
Abraham Lincoln High School Student
"Voices of Social Justice" Video

Gloria shared this poem in a *YouTube* video entitled "Voices of Social Justice," a product of joint activity between UCSD undergrads and Abraham Lincoln High School (ALHS) students. During the first three minutes the two groups used recorded sound, interviews, and visual images to present their opinions, feelings, and critiques over the stereotypes often associated with Latina/os, and minorities. They recorded their feelings and ideas in video and flip cameras, Youtube video clips, and final cut pro computer programs to speak about how mainstream media and local media, negatively portrayed them: immigrants, low-achievers, gang-members/criminals, drug users.

The video has received over 2000 hits since posted in 2013. It has resulted in one comment: “my mom works there soooooooooo nice and it’s not all about of drugs.” Gloria’s participation in this video production was decisive. She kept several conversations with UCSD undergrads and fellow students, shared her ideas, and connected with others about media stereotypes and social justice.

The next chapters take us deeper into the realm of media participation. This chapter deals with how high school and undergrad students, two groups with different social class and ethnic backgrounds work together to produce a video using new media technology in the context of an after-school program organized by the UCSD Community Stations Initiative. To approach a critical perspective of participatory culture in media education I analyze how cultural negotiation played a central role in media production practices and social relationships between UCSD undergrads and ALHS students.

In this case, these high school students found themselves in contention with UCSD undergraduate students who tried to exert control over the scope of the video production. I trace the ways in which groups resolved or negotiated differences of opinion, and achieved a hybrid production that interweaves the ¨voices¨ of the university students and the high school students. I argue that it is in this thoughtful and often difficult negotiation process that we identify critical media participation, and implications for reflection that naturally arise as central to the goal of a successful product for which all of them are being held accountable as the price of participation.

My central emphasis is on the ¨behind the scenes¨ contention of the group, and the ways in which individuals’ stake out identity positions about ethnicity, social class, the reality of low-income communities, and social justice in the video production process

itself. We will see in this chapter how participants had to continually rethink their relation to Latina/o representation throughout the video production process, trying to strike the right balance between "telling their side of the story" and complying with an "objective" view of the Latina/o situation in south San Diego. Interestingly, as the video was produced, different expectations about participation emerge; the UCSD undergrads as co-producers of the video increasingly encouraged high students to generate much of the content even as they don't fully understand some of their views. I argue that the final product is, by design, a hybrid text that emerges using critical media participations. The ways that students negotiated the production of their audiovisual product becomes visible in the "coming together" of the production process. More specifically, those negotiations revealed points of contention related to identity, privacy, authorship and ethnic representation in U.S. culture.

My study focuses on activities carried out at the South Metro Career Center[34] as part of a UCSD Winter course in 2012 "Communication Media Methods" organized by Michael Cole, Saura Naderi, Harry Simón, Carlos Martel and myself. This course was presented to Lincoln High School students' as an afterschool program,[35] and was one of the few projects that took place both in south east San Diego and UCSD classroom as

[34] SMCC is primarily an institution that provides individuals with job search services as well as assistance to career planning. At first, it may appear a highly regulated environment overall, but people enter and leave as they please most of the time (if they behave in a proper manner). Previously, during summer of 2011 I was involve in an exhibition called "Knowledge-Exchange Corridors: *The UCSD Community Stations Initiative",* conformed by an exhibition and a "mini-summer program" focused on media production.

[35] Afterschool programs can combine collaboration and social expression to foster a "participatory culture". In *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture. Media education for the 21st century* Jenkins, et al. (2009), referred to the importance of after-school programs and informal learning communities in reducing the participation gap in a world of unequal access to media resources. In part because schools have been slow to react to the emergence of this new participatory culture. Furthermore, schools and after-school programs must devote more attention to fostering new media literacies "a set of cultural competences and social skills that young people need in the new media landscape" (Jenkins et al, 2009, xiii).

part of the UCSD Community Stations Initiative (Image 18).

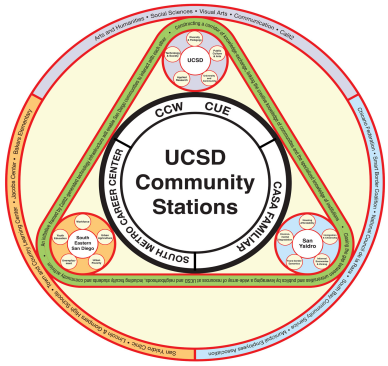

Image 18. UCSD Communities Stations Initiative Logo

The course consisted of 15 UCSD undergrads and 14 students from ALHS, and various UCSD players, centrally Harry Simon, official instructor of the course.[36] All the students from ALHS came from the Center for Social Justice, and were viewed as being highly motivated and critical about social issues. The majority of them were enrolled in ninth grade, taking courses with Mr. Orozco, and with Miss Jameson. Mr. Orozco taught the U.S. history class for juniors during 2012. In an interview for the video he defined his idea of Social Justice: "I've been teaching for the last fourteen years. The concept or ideas of social justice that we used here is a concept or an idea of everybody has what they need: housing, a decent paying job, health care, a right to free education, legal representation, and being part of the democratic process. Just a world where we all have

[36] For almost forty years, Abraham Lincoln High School remained the same, until the original buildings were demolished and rebuilt during 2003-2007. By then, the demographics around the urban public high school –located South East San Diego- had also shifted: from serving a historically working-class African-American neighborhood to a Latino, Vietnamese, Samoan, and Filipino community.

what is called basic necessities, and in the class we talk about what prevents these things to actually becoming a reality". Mr. Orozco stated that the students from Lincoln High are characterized by a wisdom "beyond their years, because they experienced so much in life, they had to grow up so much faster." Similarly, Miss Jameson considered that the Social Justice educational program was "about taking the students' experiences, both good and bad, and using those to help students grow and learn."

The UCSD students were drawn from a combination of Communication and Human Development majors enrolled in a 6-unit credit bearing class. The goal of the class was to have the UCSD students provide whatever assistance they could to help the Lincoln students create a video on a topic of the Lincoln student choosing.

In this case study I will include data from my field notes and the notes written by the UCSD undergraduate students as a core part of their coursework. I will also include a range of documentary sources such as video recordings, recordings of informal group discussions, and unstructured interviews conducted by myself with each participant of the group during each phase of video work. To a lesser extent I used data from the interviews with ALHS teachers. Participant observation took place at South Metro Career Center (SMCC), Abraham Lincoln High School, and video production exercises were carried out the SMCC building.[37]

[37] Downing-Wilson, Lecusay, and Cole (2012) analyzed common lines or assumptions in intervention research "which are themselves developmental in their fundamental methodology" (p.1): a) the intervention strategy is a joint undertaking between a university and a community institution where the university brings theoretically guided experience and expertise at constructing practices and artifacts that promote learning; b) the programs or projects are mixtures of "leading activities" (as proposed by Cultural Historical Activity Theory scholars), including peer interaction and collaborative work; c) the participant structure is designed to minimize power differentials between the participants, particularly the undergraduates and the youth with whom they work; an issue greatly affected by the "combination of sponsoring institutions and the concrete activities that are the focus of the collaboration"; d) communication in any form –computers, conversation, writings- is crucial to understand the goals that are provided within the activity setting; and

Demographically, SMCC is located in a predominantly African-American and Latino working-class community southeast San Diego. All of the Lincoln High students came from underprivileged households. This contrasts sharply with the UCSD undergraduates who came from privileged environments. These extreme differences in social class tended to closely correspond to conventional definitions of race and ethnicity. All of the high school participants in the course were from Latino or African-American descent; and almost all the UCSD undergrads were from White or Asian American ethnicity. According to Rosero, Lecusay and Cole (forthcoming, p. 5) "Given the geographical location [of this study], you would be justified in inferring that residents here are confronted daily with gang violence, poor diet (there is no accessible supermarket nearby), the challenges of single parenting, low achievement in school, high unemployment, and a host of problems well-known in this area of San Diego".

The course ran for ten weeks between January and March 2010. UCSD undergraduates met with the Lincoln students twice a week from 3 pm to 5 pm. The plan for the course was to introduce young people to hands-on techniques of media production, focusing specifically on digital video, composition, sound recording, lighting, and image and sound editing with digital nonlinear editing equipment. The UCSD students were to participate as "older buddies" who had acquired a number of the technical production skills that the ALHS students would need to learn as a part of their prior studies at UCSD.

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e) the voluntary aspect of participation, the principle that participant should not be forced to engage in the activities. Obviously, this project in media literacy and production project cannot be defined as a "Fifth Dimension project" but it does considers some methodological principles in intervention research develop by the LCHC consortium.

The video group I observed and participated in for the duration of the course consisted of three UCSD undergrads (Anne, Laurel and Mark), three Lincoln High students (Gina, Robert and Alfredo), and one Point Loma High School student (Emmanuel).

Most of the sessions were spent planning, shooting, and editing the video proposed by the Lincoln students. While there were occasional meetings to share ideas and to check progress on the other groups, for the most part this group worked independently.

Image 19. Instructional sessions

The instructional plan was to have mixed groups of local and UCSD students work to develop media and digital media skills in order to complete a documentary about their community. All of the groups were expected to learn basic skills of media literacy,

but the different groups took on different topics as the content of their videos. Our group chose the media project described. In addition, our educational objective was to promote the development of a participatory culture of collaboration that included both the undergraduates and high school students. We were particularly interested in the processes of negotiation that made collaboration participatory.

The process of instruction was an evolving conversation, negotiation, and field of contention that took many turns and changed many times during the course. At the beginning, the basics were taught in standard high lecture format by a highly trained high school teacher. During this period there was little feeling of joint participation and mutual engagement of the Lincoln students with the UCSD students. No critical participation was evident.

However, as the course developed into separate small group projects with a topic and a video product as the goal, the interactions between members became more intense. Once "the formalities" were over and we could reorganize around creating a video, we were able to modify the activities so that they would fit the needs of the video production project and allow the participants to use various cameras and edit digital media.

It was at this point that participants exerted more control and decision-making in the video production. But as the group formed, it made visible the differing entering assumptions and institutional stances of the undergraduates and the Lincoln students. As choices had to be made, the process of critical reflection emerged from the group differences. This reflection became a necessary tool for resolving the social contradictions that each group, from its own position, brought to the joint activity.

Media participation and contention in the production process

It may be useful to draw a distinction between the different activities and types of participation in terms of three phrases of the process of media production: pre-production (planning, storyboarding), production (shooting, interviews), and post-production (editing, dubbing). What follows is an analysis of some of the most salient displays of negotiation and critical thinking taking place in each phase of the media production process.

The pre-production process: "It's time to tell our side of the story"

In collaborative environments between teachers/researchers and students it is not a novel idea to engage participants in the study of youth-related and community-based issues of their own choosing and through video production (Taub-Pervizpour, 2011). Right from the start, the UCSD undergraduates working on the media representation project had decided to let the students choose the goal of the video. For example, Mark wrote on his field-note: "Our group decided we were going to let the youth decide what the story line was going to be and we were just going to help with production and direction. I really like the creative part of being in an open-ended group where we get to be creative and hopefully create a fun story line".

Mark's understanding is perfectly in line with our original plan for the video production process: to bring the youth together in a common "affinity space" (Jenkins, 2009) as a means to mobilizing their local concerns and offering them expertise in developing media skills. We envisioned giving the youth the skills they needed to

produce and direct their own video, making it with community related theme and open it up to the public to experience public feedback.

The group discussion to conceptualize the video lasted 30 minutes. Everyone was asked to come up with a video theme. Mark and Laurel were at UCSD, interacting via Skype, so Anne moderated the group discussion. Anne was trying to figure out the interests of the Lincoln High Students "I'm leaning toward a documentary where you get to interview people. Is that what you want to do?" Gina, a Latina Lincoln High Student, was the talkative one, "Kind of like that. But I was thinking more of spoken word stuff."

> Anne: I don't get the spoken word stuff?
> Gina: It would be like telling our story. Stuff about the school, stuff about the people, and I can do the narration
> Anne: We can do that
> Gina: I noticed that several students had always have like one way, and now I want to tell our story, it's our chance to tell our side

I noticed an "us versus them" position. So I asked, "what do you mean like "our side". Robert, an African-American Lincoln High student, responded, "At first when the school was built they keep saying that... they were mad about the gang stuff that they keep saying that its was going be a bad school; all the Blacks and Mexicans will tear the school up". Anne seemed a little confused with Robert's explanation. She asked Gina "Is that what you were talking about?" Gina responded, "It doesn't have to be about gangs, its just telling our story". The "our story" resonated with the rest of the group. To make sure they were all on the same page, Anne asked all the students "What do you guys think?" Robert agreed, "We like that." Alfredo, a Latino Lincoln High student, said, "I think that's a good idea."

Gina and Robert remained adamant about telling their side of the story. They didn't want to produce a video of themselves showing the "good and the bad". Gina argued that she didn't want to simplify their "flaws as far as the community goes." As Gina turned her attention to speak about the community's flaws and how society sees them, Robert realized that mass media was also part of the problem. Robert expressed that when stories about Lincoln High are shown on the media or talked about in the community, usually the stereotypes and clichés dominate the narration.

The discussion shifted to "stereotypes" in the community, more specifically stereotypes about the Mexicans and the African-Americans. Gina commented that the Lincoln High campus was really nice, and that "they say like we don't deserve that type of campus". I intervene and ask who "they" are. Robert and Gina responded that the media and some people outside the community were "they". I asked about the media and "they" included all of the media: the television news and some of the videos posted on YouTube about student fights school in bathrooms and dance offs. Alfredo described what he thought was part of either the U.S.-English language media and the Spanish-language media with their "focus only on the gang violence, the fights in school, and the athletics achievements." We watched several videos posted on Anne's laptop computer. At some point, Anne said, "I want to interview you guys because you go through this."

The high school students were thinking in a different way from the undergraduate participants. Many of the students' comments featured "positive stories" of their experiences. For example, Gina suggested including a poem she had written into the video "in a narrative way." Anne intervened "But it's still a documentary right? That is a voice over, like documentaries when the voice is really calm and describing what it's

going on, it that the kind of thing you're talking about?" Gina wanted to put some sort of narration into the video in order to do something "powerful." For Gina, satisfying a point of view rather than a neutral narration into the video proved challenging. She acknowledged that UCSD undergrads had media production skills and knew more about equipment than the high school students did. "They know it in a professional way." On the other hand, with something important as the Latina/o experience, in her point of view, there was an ample scope for opinions about social justice.

Although practical media production learning clearly does have certain advantages, here it seemed to be applied not simply to pre-production skills, but also to the process of critical media participation itself. During such discussion, I remembered that during the first media production class of the "Communication and Media Methods" course the instructor, Harry Simón, had commented about the importance of narrative and emotion. More specifically, he talked about evocation, "videos evoke different things," he said. So I asked the group, following Gina's remark "Do you remember we were talking about evocation [in the first class]? What do you want to evoke with the video?"

> Gina: Just like, sort to be empowered. Like empower the students
> Anne: That's a great idea!

This discussion also demonstrates a classic distinction between the students' notion of a story (the events as they actually happened), and a narrative, the re-ordering of events in sequence as they are to be told. Gina and Robert negotiated with Anne to tell only one side of the story, the positive one: they wanted a story that challenged the dominant stories circulating around media and the community. Gina's remarks indicated

that she was attempting to take a stance that challenged the preconceived ideas that the "others" (media, community, UCSD undergrads) have about her High School and minorities.

Gina resisted accepting the idea of the "two-side story" proposed by the undergraduates. This "two-side story" argument resonated with the journalistic professional model of objectivity. Understood in the context of journalism, objectivity is related to neutrality and plays a significant role in presenting a theme with different angles while trying to portray a fair story. But Gina was trying to avoid a reinforcement of stereotypes: Gang related fights, pep rally dancers, low achievers, and student-menace to the school infrastructure. It is worth noting how through the very act of defending her view, she was articulating a critical view of U.S. history. For example, two weeks later, when participants interviewed Gina about the Social Justice program she responded "the main focus is political and cultural awareness, its very driven by history, it's an 'our people' history, a history that often doesn't get told. And we learn about social movements, especially those kinds of movements that drove us to what we are now". She also said that, being from Lincoln High, she felt the urge to prove something to people, "the campus is renovated and people feel we don't deserve it."[38]

Anne moderated the group discussion, and we can see that she adopted a deliberative strategy. She encouraged collaboration and discussion across two positions, and thus created a context for differing parties to learn from one another and reformulate

[38] On that note, Robert commented "People said we don't deserve the infrastructure because we had violence but recently we cleaned that up, and we have kids that have been studying and we do have test scores that are going up but they keep focusing the bad test scores, they never focus on what we are doing today."

their positions. The UCSD undergrads got an overall idea about Lincoln High stereotypes but it didn't fully make sense to them until they visited the school, interviewed the teachers, started networking and discussing audiovisual material (YouTube clips), and worked side Lincoln High students in the editing process (see below).

Based on the evidence, the pre-production process evoked contention and provided fertile ground for negotiation about what sort of story to tell and how to tell it in the video all were committed to making. There was clear contention over community or high school identity, "our story" versus "documentary" portrayal. Yet the contention did not replace the capacity to imagine a final product even in this early stage of media production.

This is apparent when we compare the different notions of what genre the video should be. UCSD undergraduates imagined a documentary genre where all angles could be explored and about how Lincoln students' face harsh realities. By contrast the students wanted to empower themselves and their community through a narration and having voice, opposing mainstream media representation of minorities. They viewed the video from a Social Justice and historical perspective, they did not see themselves in a documentary genre -"That's not us." This divergence is important on a number of levels beyond the immediate contention. The story they decided upon is about empowerment, which feeds off the poetic motif where Gina creates a poem about overcoming social struggles in unity.

Their negotiation with undergraduates reflects their concept of what the video should be. It also implies that the narrative function of the empowerment has been agreed on the first place and serves to establish a frame against other images (negative stereotypes) and events. During this process, the undergraduate students consented to the

Lincoln students' terms. As Mark's comment in his field note of the event, "our group decided we were going to let the youth decide what the story line was going to be and we were just going to help with production and direction."

The production phase: taking charge of the shoot

After three weeks of pre-production, the pace started to accelerate dramatically in the production or shoot phase. By the end of the fifth week, everyone was present in the group: Mark, Laurel, Anne (UCSD), and Gina, Robert, Alfredo (Lincoln High) and Emmanuel (Point Loma High School). Lincoln High students got more involved with the project at this stage. They talked with school authorities and received permission to visit and video record classes at the school. They also interviewed teachers and peers. They took charge of the shoot. This form of participation, including dealing with constraints ultimately influenced many of the decisions in producing the film. Laurel wrote in her field-note that day:

> We set up our camera and filmed the class interaction. It was really interesting because they spent a majority of the class talking about oppression and race and how they are judged by the way they speak. The organization of their class was definitely not normal, and the last part was spent with Gina and Maria presenting a chapter of the textbook in a PowerPoint. Gina and Maria were really comfortable in front of their class, and I realized how close knit they all are. We interviewed their history teacher, Mr. Orozco, then one of Robert's teachers, and two students, Maria and Beatriz. Maria and Robert's teacher had some really powerful things to say and I'm excited to put them in our interview. We asked Robert and Gina to be the interviewers, and I think it went pretty well. Next time, we might write down the questions ahead of time, but they did fine.

Among other things, it is worth noting how, through the very act of attending their Social Justice class, through learning how the Lincoln students view race and oppression,

Laurel has a moment of realization (about how “close knit they all are”, and how invested they are in Social Justice themes) that is then registered into the field note itself. She acknowledges that the “organization of their class was definitely not normal” and recognizes the promotion of critical consciousness of the world and its social problems in Mr. Orozco’ class.

What became particularly notable, as the shooting progressed, was that Gina, Emmanuel and Robert began to intervene quite heavily, often taking hold of the camera, directing the interviews and asking their own questions. As the initial group discussion showed, they appeared to be motivated by a desire to get to tell “our side of the story”. As the shoot at Lincoln High progressed, the decisions within the group also appeared to become more fixed (Image 20).

Image 20. Taking charge in the production

While Gina and Robert alternatively took control, Gina did so more consistently, even though she frequently appeared reluctant. Gina seemed to carry more weight with the other students than Robert perhaps because she felt it was originally her idea of doing a video about stereotypes and the social justice program. Gina did the voice over and made a poem for the video, which may well have gave her some decision-making power in the process too. By contrast, Emmanuel (who didn't attend Lincoln High), and was a year younger, tended to do what he was told and fit in with the general drift, looking to Anne for guidance. Alfredo tended to look for spaces in which he could intervene, and contributed a number of useful suggestions without ever really appearing to take charge. Mark, the UCSD undergrad, was largely on the margins during this phase: he managed quite successfully to video record "B-rolls" he had originally planned, but it was hard to see what else he contributed during this phase when we had become visitors or guests at their high school.

What were the implications of these shifting relationships (taking more charge of the decision-making) in terms of the video production and the class as an after-school class as a whole? Most of the "tutorial" style learning that emerged during the first weeks was never practiced again. What emerged instead were moments of an ideal "media participation" (Carpenter, 2011): a more symmetrical collaboration and decision-making between undergraduates and students. It was particularly noticeable how the interviews and video recording became much more of a balanced collaboration in regards to the distribution of tasks and responsibilities. Gina's resistance to clichés and stereotypes, which was shared by all of us at least, helped frame a story about the Social Justice program. Robert's interviews, which I would describe as very informative, were certainly

perceived in this way by a number of the other students. To do anything different would have involved working against the common goal of all participants in the production process – to create an affinity space that brought often-conflicting groups together.

Post-production: "For educational purposes"

Although the production itself had ended on a positive note, very few students, including undergrads, seemed to be prepared to see the video through the post-production stage, which involved video editing using a computer program called Final Cut Pro.

During the later weeks of the class everybody met to devise an edit list with all the material gathered. Being more experienced in post-production, Anne and Laurel now took charge, although this time they were concerned to preserve a space for democratic decision-making, and to delegate tasks to others (Photo 3). UCSD undergrads Anne and Laurel worked on the script with Gina. They downloaded information from Wikipedia and started from there. Anne and Laurel were impressed by the changing demographics from African-American to Latino "The student population has since stabilized at approximately 2100 students. As of the 2009 school year, the student body was composed of approximately 35% African-American, 55% Hispanic or Latino and 10% other groups" (Wikipedia).

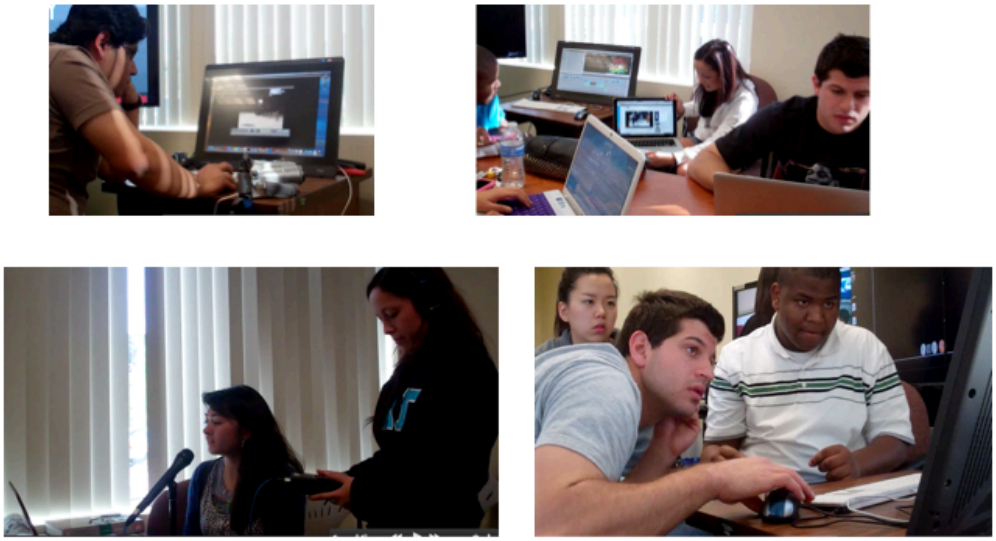

Image 21. The editing phase: "for educational purposes."

While the sessions started with a focus on editing, the issue of content, what the video was actually "saying," began to resurface in the plenary sessions when we showed a rough cut with no voice over. For example, one undergraduate didn't understand the point that the video was "trying to make." Laurel explained that the video was about the students' life in Lincoln High School and their perspective on addressing the negative stereotypes, specifically, going against the stereotypes in order to highlight "the good things" of Lincoln High.

These plenary sessions made everyone in the group concerned. The story of empowerment wasn't clear enough. Anne wrote about this situation:

> We really needed to buckle down on our editing. Gina was there and shared her poem, however we didn't have a mic to record her voice over. Without the voice over, we really didn't have the backbone to our story. I spent most of the time trying to write the script, and the rest of our group pulled out clips and started putting them on the timeline. Mark also was looking for

> songs to put with the piece as well. It was a very productive day because we were all doing something.

The editing process enhanced discussions within the group, and thus, the negotiation and contentions between them arose while trying to produce a common narrative. The main object of deliberation during the editing process was the stereotype of minorities in the video: a) the negative stereotype of Mexican-American as "gang fighters"; and b) the negative stereotype of minorities overall as low-achievers and "dropouts." Although the university students had agreed to follow the story of "success" and empowerment, they wanted to include youtube clips about fights and "dance offs" into the narrative of the video as a way to talk about the harsh realities of south east San Diego schools, "as any documentary portrays for educational purposes", they argued. But high school students' tried to avoid playing the stereotype role and discuss every detail in order to accomplish a positive story that media and other communities' often overlook.

The first disagreement involved the very initial sequences. The script narrated by Gina stated,

> Abraham Lincoln High School is a public school in San Diego that's home to over 2,000 students. Since its remodel in 2007, Lincoln has become the most expensive campus in the San Diego Unified School District. Ironically, it is also surrounded by some of the poorest neighborhoods in southeast San Diego. The community around Lincoln High is well known for its rival gangs and poverty. Less than half of the adults in the area graduated high school, and 1/8 never finished elementary school. Because of the situations in the nearby neighborhoods, many students that enter the school are immediately absorbed in the existing negative stereotypes.

At this phase we needed to visually devise the video. After several hours of Internet navigation Mark and Emmanuel had collected clips from YouTube. With some exceptions, the videos seemed to reinforce the stereotypes that the Lincoln High students

tried to counteract. Mark was very curious and impressed about fight videos, the pep rallies and the dance offs (a duel between two or more dancers), all of them shot with cell phones cameras. He was sitting in front of his laptop, surrounded by Robert, Emmanuel, Antonio, Laurel and Gina. Laurel and Mark wanted to include "nasty" video-clips of students fighting "I hope you're cool about it because it's for educational purposes. Because if were going talk about it, we should probably show some of it… When you type "Lincoln High School" is the first thing [on Youtube] that's comes up"

> Mark: There's a lot of fight in the bathroom? I think is like a "Fight Club" of something. You guys have that? Because sometimes you just get to fight or something… Have you seen the fights?
> Alfredo: Yeah, on Facebook
> Gina: But were you there?
> Mark: Have you seem them live
> Alfredo: No
> Mark: So that what your bathroom looks like?
> Gina: I don't want to talk about it [laughing]

The overall drift of the group discussion is about including several such video-clips into the video. Laurel in particular talks about how Internet users find out clips of the fights on the top of the list on YouTube. She tries to reason with students about the importance of addressing these issues in order to educate potential audiences about the struggles of minorities in the education system. Mark agrees with Laurel and is amused that student fights are carried out in bathrooms and recorded with cell phones. He thinks the fights are part of a "Fight Club" (a club where people fight voluntarily). He doesn't doubt his assumption; on the contrary, he seeks confirmation. He was very curious about a video called "Mexicans Fighting" with more than 55,000 views on YouTube.

At this point in the negotiations, Gina and Alfredo don't want to include the clips, Gina and Alfredo quickly aligned themselves to their positive story, the "our story" position. The discussion implicates them in identity awareness and their stance in a new context of representation. They're trying to position Lincoln High students' positive story.

In the next section of the video another contention arose. It happened in the middle of the editing process, when the group was trying to represent the achievements and success of students in recent years. The script narrated by Gina stated,

> Many people fail to recognize the potential and determination of the future graduates of Lincoln High School. Although the students' test scores are not quite yet where they hope to be in the future, test scores raised by 47 points in the past few years. It's time to unmask the success and hope in the students at Lincoln High that have been hidden behind negative assumptions for years

Again, Laurel and Mark wanted to include YouTube video-clips to illustrate the sequence of the video. They were watching video-clips along with Alfredo and Emmanuel.

> Laurel: Or you should put the videos of people dancing, a dance off
> Alfredo: There's, they just having fun [watching the video-clip]
> Mark: Does that happen at lunch often?
> Alfredo: No, that only happens on rallies
> Mark: I want to be in a dance off
> Laurel: Pep rallies, rules!
> Alfredo: Pep rallies are very creative

The group tried to discuss this through and finally an apprehensive compromise was reached, whereby the students were encouraged to make sense of the audiovisual material for the curious undergraduates. Mark and Laurel seemed to be celebrating these events. Laurel asked the group to consider including a "dance off" video-clip, but soon

was corrected by Alfredo: the video she was watching was not a "dance off" as she assumed, "they just people [dancing] having fun."

Again, high school students' didn't want to include clips of the dance offs or pep rallies. They argued on two grounds. First, the "pep rallies" clips lack meaning in the context of telling the story of academic success. Second, Alfredo reminded the undergraduates about the misrepresentation in mainstream news media, including the Spanish network *Univision*. Alfredo told his experience of seeing *Univision* reporters at Lincoln High searching for amusing stories about fights, pep-rallies, and so on; but especially, interviewing the "darker" Latinos to appear on camera. Alfredo noticed what America Rodriguez (1999) found about how Latina/o news target their public to be: "racially non-White, linguistically Spanish speaking, and socioeconomically poor." This idea of the Latina/o created in order to reach a segment of a population with particular identifications (Chapter 2).

Ultimately, we decided to include images from a PBS television documentary on Lincoln High School, a clip about a basketball game carried out at Lincoln High School gymnasium. This documentary proved to be less polarizing with their representation of their neighborhood than other video clips with images oriented toward a representation of a more dichotomous point of view than the text (Chapter 2), where the potential of the visual aspects undermine the text.

In this discussion, and perhaps predictably, it was Gina who pursued the anti-stereotype concept to the very end. Various technical mishaps and considerable amount of discovery learning and meaning negotiation meant that the editing took more time than planned and ran past the initial schedule. While everyone had an opportunity to sit down

and “mess around” with Final Cut Pro (a hands-on tutorial instructed by myself), for much of the time we learned about the high school’s everyday life. Ultimately, many of the decisions were determined by the “positive representation” footage. The finished product that emerged was articulated around “our story” narrative and it appeared that the majority of the participants with positive aura were represented.

The “dramatic scenes” of Mexicans fighting in bathroom were there, but only in short snatches that would probably make sense as an anti-stereotype video to an outsider (audience). Some of the shots that were eventually inserted had not actually been recorded by the group, and clearly seemed to have come from YouTube video-clips. Mark wrote about it:

> Today we accomplished a great deal and set ourselves up to finish next class. All of our clips are placed in the final cut timeline and we need more B-rolls to fill the voice overs. This documentary is going to look incredible and portray the high school these kids go to in a high light. It felt good contributing to the musical aspect at the end, considering it is one of my passions. The group is really meshing and collaborating together to create a nice documentary. It took a lot of time to get to this point where everyone was contributing at the same time. Perhaps starting production even earlier would result in more success.

This phase, the editing process, shows levels of progression and critical participation in itself. The continuum evaluation and re-editing suggest discussions mediated by insider/outsider point of views, and the deconstruction of video representation: clear signs of critical media participation. The editing process documents the critical participation as the group was able to put distance and reflect on the political –issues of voice-, educational –issues of academic achievement-, and mass media –issues

of stereotypes- assumptions behind historically situated, culturally shaped, and thus subjectively constructed definitions of minorities. In this sense, critical participation is a "complex and contested notion, covering a wide variety of meanings and practices that are converging into a hybrid of technologies, genres, and formats" (Carpentier and De Cleen, 2008, 7).

In addition, the editing process demonstrates that the use of these media technologies, and their critical participatory potential, cannot be detached from their organizational component. The media literacy context helped create, sometimes, a hybrid affinity space where critical thinking arose. According to Buckingham (2003), following Vygotsky's notion of "higher psychological functions", individuals develop higher order thinking when they're able recognize the social, cultural and ideological dimensions of their particular practices.

Discussion

In the beginning of this chapter I proposed the following goal: to document the problems and possibilities of learning about media and through media in the context of small group production that involves two groups with different social class and ethnic backgrounds working together. I hope these examples offered a variety of practical answers, perhaps of use to others, and demonstrated that this form of production produces critical, collaborative participation, which is in fact required as an essential part of the production process as we arranged it.

In the end, the claims to personal experience of the Lincoln students, combined with interpellations and questions about representation and stereotypes from the

undergraduates proved to be a challenge for the entire group: answering those questions obligated each one of the participants to be engage in critical media participation and collaboration. They had to deal, again and again, with many of the questions explored above about the "harsh realities." Was it necessary to include "gang-fights" or could they create a "success story" only by depicting the "good stuff?" As a group, the undergraduates and the high school students, were forced to ask, time and again, where the line should be drawn between a video of community self-expression and a video about "educating the public."[39]

The fact that two groups from different backgrounds making this video could participate highlights a level of affective investment characteristic of media work that turned into a "hybrid affinity space" over time: a process and outcome of group interaction doing media production, which is described by students' decision-making and critical thinking during the making of a common narrative. This hybrid affinity space developed new properties of intercultural understanding. These included processes of empathy and intercultural exchange registered within the video production and youth discussions, which, in a general sense, empowered the students through the critical thinking about social and media issues. More specifically, those negotiations revealed points of contention related to identity, privacy, authorship and representation.

Not accidentally, the video product includes the word "voices", in order to indicate that participation has now converged into a hybrid text. The re-articulation of the mainstream visual language (television and YouTube clips), along with the video

[39] The final screening, held three weeks after video recording had been completed, was a somewhat celebrated event. The course group's positive response to the video was noticeable. All the students were invited to make some evaluative comments about the videos.

material recorded by the participants, whose hybrid narratives and visualizations maintain many intertextual links with the different voices they include, is an indication of what it means to communicate within a critical frame. The video, as hybrid text, displays this combination of an affinity space and the process of participatory production.

For example, undergraduate students needed to reflect upon social injustices, and thus, developed a cultural understanding of southeast San Diego while trying to know more about the social issues and visual misrepresentation from the high school students' perspective. The Lincoln High School students also realized the need to reframe their narrative, thanks to the interventions of the UCSD undergraduates. The point of a "success story" in a documentary genre typically involves a struggle. Because of the constraints of a "one sided story", potential audiences can be mislead about the video's intentions. As a result of their critical participation, the collaboration and negotiation between the students in this informal learning environment achieved the goal of a five-minute video whose virtues the readers can see for themselves.

In the end, "Inside Lincoln High School: Voices of Social Justice" is framed as a documentary. The video starts with a view of Abraham Lincoln High School as a well funded public institution surrounded by some of the poorest neighborhoods in southeast San Diego. It then shows a YouTube clip called "Lincoln High School: Mexicans Fighting," with a view of two Latino students fighting in a bathroom in front of other young people. In this sequence, the Lincoln High School students took an anti-stereotype stance because they could not allow clichés about Mexican gang fights and school

dropouts define them.[40] However, undergraduates contested these notions during the editing process, in order to successfully include and use video-clips of fights as a way to "educate the audiences." The video accomplishes imagery of both sides through the narrative of the "negative" but mostly the "positive" side of Lincoln High School community: they reference social justice and archetypes and practices, such as "overcoming" unfavorable conditions and "achieve success."

This first sequence is followed by a series of interviews with students discussing negative stereotypes, but also, the positive stories and academic achievements. Although the YouTube video highlights the negative stereotypical dimensions it also includes some representational issues such as asking questions to students about the negative stereotypes portrayed by the media: a reason to elevate their voice. More obviously the video describes the benefits of the social justice program in Lincoln High. It is clear that the students' consciousness of the misrepresentation in media and the community relies to some extent on the social justice program taught at school aimed for critical thinking. In this statement, it appears that the producers see the video as a chance to hold up the stereotype for critique.

The video, as a hybrid text, illustrates the variations and complexities of media production practices, and the multiplicity of cultural contexts and constraints in which

[40] For example, the "fight video" gets more audiences views (57, 094 views) than the more positive video "Inside Lincoln High School: Voices of social justice" (868) as September 2013. Although the fight video was uploaded to YouTube on May 8, 2011, and Inside Lincoln High School on June 10, 2012; the proportions of views, it seems to me, are overwhelming. How can we account for the power of audiences when they seek out sensational content, content that reaffirms previously held stereotypes? Collaborative group work can offer many positive educational and cultural outcomes, but it does not itself guarantee them "To leave groups to their own devices in the hope that they will find their own ways of working, and to assume that these will necessarily be constructive and egalitarian, is not to delegate responsibility, but to abdicate it" (Buckingham, 1995, 103).

students were situated. The term, hybrid, highlights the combination and complexity obscured by more binary terms (full participation/low participation, media producer expert/novice), and serves to analyze these combinations as an outcome, but also as a process of the mixture of discourses, media technologies, and practices: hybridity is defined as "situated, dialogic, and ongoing social accomplishment emerging from negotiated tensions between contested (long-standing and newer) forms and functions in language, history, and culture" (Christianakis, 2011, 1133). This notion breaks up narratives about stereotypes held together by genres (news, videos), time periods, or topics and recombines them into new text.

Today, the social interactions that support the making of media constitute an important and largely disregarded site for analysis in the context of media studies. Indeed, "bourgeoning scholarship pays close attention to digitally mediated texts poduced by at-risk youth and, in particular, to issues of voice, identity, and agency forged through new media tools" (Taub-Pervizpour, 2011, 98). In this paper, I tried to highlight the central fact that carrying out after-school programs and providing high school students access to technologies and media practices will have restricted potential unless participants deliberately construct a connection with university students more meaningful than the inequalities that frame both privilege-underprivileged and adult-youth relations. It also supports the idea that "the greatest opportunity for change is currently found in after-school programs and informal learning communities" (Jenkins et al, 2009, xiii). In their video production, students documented those inequalities as they played out in their mistreatment by local neighborhood residents and commercial mass media. But at

another level, the students remind us of the importance of mutual recognition within the activity of media production itself and the after-school programs overall.

ALHS took reassurance that UCSD undergrads, at least sometimes, agreed at what high school students had made. In fact, part of the allure of participating in the video production project is the fact that ALHS students had almost complete control. There is no doubt that UCSD undergrads liked at least some form of ideas on social justice. On other levels, undergrads wanted to control what school students produced and circulated that was not in the spirit of what they think a "documentary" is about. For them, the documentary is about telling both sides of the story in a balanced way for the purposes of instruction or maintaining a historical record –this is actually one genre of documentary, more mainstream. But the ALHS wanted to have voice and be empowered not filmmakers per se.

Chapter 3 is being prepared for publication.

Chapter 4.

The forgotten border: discrimination and youth political engagement

This chapter, and the next one take us to other examples of media literacy and critical media participation, this time at the U.S. border town of San Ysidro. This chapter deals with young Latina/o participants who are producing their own points of view about the San Ysidro community, Casa Familiar – a social service institution-, and news media representations. In all these study cases (Chapter 3, 4 and 5) these young media producers are finding themselves in opposition to mainstream media corporations, both English and Spanish speaking media who cover south of San Diego in very narrow ways (Chapter 2), and local municipal administration.

For purposes of this chapter I will focus on the media participation process of one group, demonstrating how their contentions and decision-making led to a shifting perspective for all the members involved in the media production process. In this group, each of the three young media producers changed their dispositions toward media and the city administration in ways they had not expected. I consider two specific issues that emerged in production over the U.S.-Mexico border region: the differences between San Ysidro audiences and news media corporations, both from San Diego and Tijuana; and the question of inclusion and exclusion in the U.S. from young Latina/os due to their Mexican roots.

This chapter maps a range of responses to the "mis-representation" of traditional coverage and the expansion of exclusion narratives into many parts of their everyday lives. On the one hand, these participants are striking back against media representations, reasserting the idea of media "discrimination" in the face of more relevant and profound social information about their community. On the other hand, these young participants embrace the interests of a social service institution (Casa Familiar) fostering a distinctive approach to media literacy education and encouraging participation through the knowledge of the local community issues.

I argue in this chapter that these contentions and new dispositions toward news media challenge the common representation of young people as positively *disenfranchised* (Bhavnani, quoted by Buckingham, 2000) or uninterested in politics and in the responsibilities of being active citizens in a democracy. David Buckingham examined this issue in his study of news media and youth, "young people's alienation from the domain of politics should not be interpreted merely as a form of apathy or ignorance. On the contrary, I would see it as a result of their positive exclusion from that domain" (Buckingham, 2000, 218). In this case, an investigation of the city budget cuts toward their community shifted from what participants perceived as typical news information to a learning experience. What does youth participation in political issues looks like? This chapter answers this with accounts of resistance in media messages, and in deciding what to produce.

UCSD Community Stations in San Ysidro: Gaining entrance to Casa Familiar

In each of the following study cases (Chapter 4 and 5), the social services institution youth administrators (Casa Familiar) played a key role in trying to build stronger connections with their constituencies and community members. They contributed with knowledge learned as managers to the media literacy program, education, and politics.

Prior to beginning the media literacy and media workshop program with Casa Familiar I had been working in the UCSD Community Stations Project for one year. In August of 2011, I participated as an instructor in the summer workshops (south east San Diego and San Ysidro) for an exhibition by Teddy Cruz and Michael Cole at the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (Calit2), an institution run by UCSD.

The exhibition displayed

> two main aspects pertaining to the UCSD Community Stations Initiative. One part of the exhibition will be a descriptive mapping of this project in order to convey to the audience the meaning of this initiative and its operative dimension in building new pedagogical interfaces between UCSD and San Diego marginal communities… A second part of the exhibition will include the production of a "mini-Summer Program," involving youth from each of the Community-based agencies involved and UCSD, engaging in a series of dialogues and exchanges across 4 weeks of interactive programming mediated by an OptiPortable that will be deployed in the gallery and coordinated by instructors at each location. *The UCSD Community Stations Initiative Press Release from Calit2*

We linked communities together using "OptiPortables" (a large high resolution display screen for real-time video and audio Internet interaction) built by researchers at Calit2 from consumer LCD screens. Calit2 Divisional Director Ramesh Rao worked with

Michael Cole and Teddy Cruz to install "OptiPortables" in these underserved, economically disadvantaged areas of San Diego. Certainly we set up to track this project by designing a research methodology based on following the multiple social practices as outlined by Michael Cole and Teddy Cruz.

To Calit2 researchers and engineers, this project was centered on the possibilities of their technology, which had this utopian vision of bringing communities together via learning activities: "two communities in underserved areas of San Diego County have a new tool to improve education and long-distance collaboration."[41]

Although the leading activities we had prepared were undoubtedly valuable in helping participants to organize and share their ideas using the Optiporable, it turned out that technology got in the way. It was difficult to hook Optiportables together to share sessions across sites.

The main difficulty was the mismatch in technological infrastructure between UCSD and the community sites. First, network troubleshooting proved difficult to achieve since the Optiportable demanded high bandwidth for full network function. In Casa Familiar we continuously experienced a drop in the bandwidth so it was difficult to work under this circumstance. Another difficulty was sustainability at each facility; we needed continuous tech support from Calit2 staff to upkeep these devices functioning.

[41] Tiffany Fox, *UCSD News Center*, "OptIPortables Bring High-Tech Collaboration to San Diego Communities" In her news article, she reported "The fundamental idea with the OptIPortable is to promote sharing," explains Calit2 Director of Visualization Tom DeFanti. "With the OptIPortable, you can walk right up to it and wirelessly push content from your laptop to the screen and then manipulate that data right on the screen. Instead of a group taking turns plugging their laptops into a projector, they can all have their material on the screen at the same time."
http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/archive/newsrel/general/03-08TechCollaboration.asp

The implications and eventual outcomes of the changes or "workarounds" we made here proved very interesting to survey.

These problems inevitably had a substantial impact on the practice of education, and particularly on media production. Of course, media production didn't need to rely upon "high-tech" OptiPortable media. Nevertheless, these technological limitations foregrounded the intense social dialogue and participation of practical media production. Significantly, these limitations led me to think more about the situation in which the experience of media production process is more important than technology itself. A great deal of interesting and valuable work continues to be achieved despite technology limitations.

San Ysidro

Located immediately north of the U.S.-Mexico border and 20 miles south of downtown San Diego, San Ysidro suffered for several decades of social and economic hardships. San Ysidro developed as a farming and residential community during the first half of the past century (Lee, 1975). Because of the shortage of United States labor toward the end of the World War II Mexican nationals were allowed to work in southern California legally thanks to the Bracero Program –which continued through 1964- without obtaining permanent residency. Many of these workers eventually settled and San Ysidro experienced ongoing residential development due to the growth in border traffic and regional population.

The San Ysidro population is characterized by an extremely large Latino component. According to the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

Census in 2010 over 90 percent of residents are Hispanic, compared to 28 percent of San Diego City residents –only 2 percent are Non-Hispanic Whites compared to 45 percent of County residents. However, San Ysidro comprises a small portion of the City's total population, estimated at 28,707 representing just 2.1 percent of the City's total. Even with large average household size (4.21 compared to 2.80 for the city overall) and a larger share of households with children under age 18 (58.6 percent) than the City (30.7 percent), San Ysidro lacks ample publics facilities such as parks, libraries, and recreational spaces. In addition, even with this high proportion of families, this border town has a relatively low rate of home ownership: less than 40 percent of households are owners (compared to ownership rates of over 50 percent citywide).

The lack of development in the district left the area severely deficient in resources. As with many marginalized urban settings, crime rates and gang activity were high, and levels of education attainment are the lowest in San Diego: almost 47 percent of residents 25 or older do not have a high school diploma (15 percent citywide). Similarly, San Ysidro has the lower levels of household incomes compare to the City. The median household income is around $22,000 year. 64.2 percent of the population is with incomes below $50,000 (40.8 percent for the City). In addition, the area has a higher percentage of individuals in poverty (26 percent) than the City (13.1 percent).

San Ysidro has numerous subsidized housing complexes for low-income families. One can find money exchange business, liquor stores, retail stores, and fast food restaurants (these outnumber grocery stores and healthy eating establishments). In order to stand even a remote chance to face these border town problems, Casa Familiar addresses some of the social and economic issues.

As mentioned earlier, members of Casa Familiar worked to create better conditions through which local residents can access housing, education, artistic, and social services. Casa Familiar addresses a number of local needs and seeks to engage local residents to demand better services from local government. The UCSD Community Stations and the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition (LCHC) collaborated by trying to create new social practices that people could find beneficial using this "optiportable" technology.

This initiative was specially challenging because the UCSD Communities Stations was conceived not only as a practicum course where undergraduates could participate (Chapter 3), but as a three year-long program on designing learning and cultivating responsible citizenship as a part of the experience, to make the community and undergraduate participants familiar with technology, and the production of knowledge.

As I got involved in San Ysidro and Casa Familiar, I attended a community meeting at a local gym, where I met Estela Flores, youth program coordinator. I intended to share information about the UCSD Community program and inform parents about the workshop that Casa Familiar and I would provide, hoping they would bring their sons and daughters work with us. In addition to my presentation, the youth program coordinator from Casa Familiar program was on the agenda. She was trying to recruit volunteers to be part of a summer camp program that was being run by the institution.

The second media literacy and media production workshop was created in response to a group of adolescents sneaking into this community meeting. The event proved to be relevant. As I sat at the meeting I listened to CEO of Casa Familiar, Andrea

Skopera, and David Flores, Director of Urban Projects at Casa Familiar, discuss budget cuts from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).[42] Flores commented, "San Ysidro district and the rest of San Diego generate these federal funds that have been reduced in not the most efficient manner." Then Skopera indicated that the CDBG process for distributing funds has been bureaucratized. "For the second consecutive year –she said- the CDBG program has not recommended funds for social services to this community agency in San Ysidro, despite having received approval for a project to improve infrastructure." They called attention to the fact that other districts in San Diego with higher levels of income (La Jolla, Rancho Peñasquitos, Rancho Bernardo) continue to received CDBG funds, "We are asking that there should be greater weight given to those communities that are low income." Then Skopera invoked the political picture "SanYsidro is affected because of the lack of support from Councilmember David Alvarez that does not look out for the best interests… he didn't even lift his voice."

After that meeting, community members were very much on edge. Things were coming down on almost all social services. Casa Familiar asked young community members attending the meeting for volunteer work. According to Estela Flores, the program youth coordinator, this tactic had been employed by Casa Familiar to push many teens into active participants. As a result of this collaboration, during school vacation in June 2012, a group of volunteers at Casa Familiar asked for activities to do at the center other than volunteering for social services.

[42] The CDBG is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) runs the program and determines the amount of each grant.

A media production workshop for young people was designed, using cameras and computers borrowed from the UCSD Community Stations Project. The idea was that anyone could drop in to participate.

Media literacy workshop in San Ysidro

From June to August 2012, I attended the media literacy and workshop production two times a week. The group met regularly every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 4 to 6 pm at the Casa Familiar youth center. When I initially started to instruct the workshop, there were four participants in attendance. By the end of the first week of the project, I had three participants. The adolescents came from different places around San Ysidro. Most of their families arrived as undocumented immigrants. Some adolescents lived with a complete nuclear family in one house, with a mother, father, brothers and sisters. Most families had relatives in Tijuana, Mexico with whom they were in contact. Thus, the adolescents had generally experienced some degree of a border-crossing life between Tijuana and San Diego.

The context in which the media workshop took place was of crucial importance for the resulting media productions. The social context of the institution (Casa Familiar) was also the base for the ethnographic fieldwork. I acted as a extra resource during the production sessions, but my role was primarily to observe and take notes on relevant processes and actions going on in the workshop. The setting was an arena for rich and intense discussions between adolescents, program coordinators, interviewees, and me. It provided a good opportunity to study young people negotiations and development of stories; their editing as well as their knowledge of audiences.

Pre-production

The group of focus was composed of three adolescents, two males and one female: Pablo, a third year middle school student, and two juniors in high school, Juanita and Miguel. The preproduction process can be outlined as follows: the young media producers had the common idea that the production should deal with the topic of "San Ysidro." In order to make sense of this task the young people were asked to think about their community. They initiated the task with a brainstorming session where the adolescents could discuss what "San Ysidro" really meant to them. The topic also stimulated extensive group discussion and gave rise to a great deal of points of views and ideas about media.

The group quickly arrived at consensus as to the general focus of their video: how the city budget cuts are affecting their community, specifically Casa Familiar, the social services institution; and how news media is covering the San Ysidro community. While they all agreed that the budget cuts topic would be worthwhile to pursue, the specifics of their argument were still undecided. As a group, they discussed the possibility of having their video explore and reveal the impacts of impeding budget cuts that would limit the everyday life of their community and the services provided by Casa Familiar. This focus on budget cuts helped the group to get started with the process of researching the topic through gathering, selecting, and handling related media.

The selecting of a topic was the beginning for the pre-production process, taking the first steps into a continual process of negotiation and reconciliation of knowing. While this phase only lasted few days, this initial step helped frame the whole idea of the

video. As the group began their research, however, their focus shifted away from budget cuts toward exploring the struggles of San Ysidro and discrimination.

For their pre-production research, all the three group members ask their relatives and friends if they had suffered some sort of discrimination in their everyday life. Manuel and Pablo completed their task together since they're cousins. Juanita completed her task by herself and wrote a small script. Before the start of the media literacy program, Juanita went to the community meeting described earlier. Inspired by the reports that local members published about budgets cuts, she wanted to do her part to promote awareness or "enseñar" (Image 22).

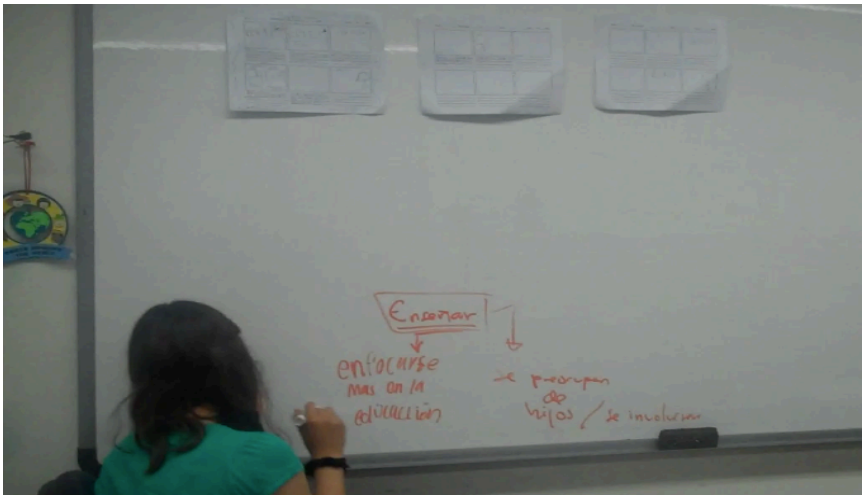

Image 22. The "budget cuts" topic and preliminary storyboard

She brought a bilingual local newspaper called "Borders-Fronteras" printed by Casa Familiar. With the budget cuts affecting the agency, the "BordersFronteras" reporter Eleazar López highlighted the news story "They leave Casa Familiar without Funds." López framed the situation as a consequence of San Ysidro's agencies disadvantage

competition, namely, loosing to other social services providers located in high-income districts.

Less than a week later, she wrote a draft, a script for the video production. Juanita managed the script; she personally edited the whole story, getting it ready for production. She encouraged Miguel to closely compare her original draft with the news reports from Casa Familiar and consulted with them on issues of style and grammar as needed. Miguel initially checked the script in minutes until Pablo suggested a careful read-through where they as participants could contribute. From that point on, she was in charge of the media production and drew on the contributions from other peer participants. With a draft of the storyboard completed on target, Juanita congratulates everyone, as though she's accepting the role of the director. This then leads into a discussion of the shooting schedule: the others increasingly see Juanita as the leader.

Miguel later agreed to include the Casa Familiar story, yet he suggested that the story would work best if they show some "testimonials" from its affected members, a focus on the human interest of the situation.

From the start, Juanita framed the project with explicit pedagogical goals (Image 22) that she used to help parents understand their community. In a group discussion with the other two participants, Juanita described her goals.

> Miguel: People who live close to the border get discriminated by the "gringos"
> Juanita: The district, they discriminate. We have to inform the community about the budget cuts
> Pablo: That is a good theme. We're not going to get bored

In the conversation above, the group engages with a discussion about

discrimination that reveals that each group member has a similar story living along the U.S.-Mexico border. Juanita knows what to write, she tells her group that they have to inform their community. Of interest in this exchange, and overall discussion, is the power among group members. In most cases, it has been Juanita and sometimes Miguel, who have exercised the power in the group. As a high school student, Juanita has voiced most authority in the group related to the topic focus and script ideas. Pablo, has deferred to the other participants in most cases. Yet, in this instance Pablo interjects as a collaborator who doesn't want to get bored.

Pablo's direct reference to having fun cannot be avoided but rather must be addressed. Juanita affirms the importance of racial discrimination, yet Juanita qualifies it stating that it is the government which discriminates and cuts the funding to institutions functioning close to the border. Pablo further dilutes the comment by projecting "we're not going to get bored." To Pablo, the fact that the topic was budget cuts did not interfere with finding a sense a purposeful pleasure. This was one of the most positive features of the project. Of course, teenagers want to have fun; but in this context, Pablo was saying that they were going to have fun with "this" theme, which often yielded sensible truths – such as the group discovery that San Ysidro was far poorer than other districts.

Juanita was so good at reproducing Casa Familiar interests that one could forget that she's just a site volunteer and not a social worker. For example, she provides information about how the budget cuts are affecting the whole community. Juanita was anxious to see her work recognized by the site coordinators, community, parents, and her fellow peers. She included detailed information of how Casa Familiar was affected.

Juanita tried to enable peer participants to immerse themselves into the local situation and to feel a real sense of connection to an actual community of people around San Ysidro who were working together “para salir adelante” (“to move forward in life”). The video they were creating together (building on the foundations of local newspapers) could not have been more different from the news reports they had viewed on television about San Ysidro or the U.S.-Mexico border. Here, people interviewed of different backgrounds and ages formed the San Ysidro community where individual contributions were accepted and where learning was appreciated.

The point of entry into this video production was the interpretation of a border town, San Ysidro, and subsequently these accounts got woven into a series of “news stories “reporting on the consequences of budget cuts and media coverage events at the U.S-Mexico border.

As the group members moved through the script process, there was an oscillation of topic focus back and forth between three themes. First, presenting the budget cuts that are affecting the San Ysidro. Second, talking about Casa Familiar as an important social service institution to the community. And third, exploring news media representations. This focus and intent is highly evident in the final video product, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. For now, however, the focus will remain on the participants’ decision-making and interactions during the production process, since it is via these interactions that critical media participation dispositions were initiated.

This critical notion of participation was more evident in the third phase (editing or post—production) when contentions emerged. They were further refined in the post-production phase through close discussion of the video interviews and track analysis of

YouTube videos. Next, I describe certain key events to illustrate moments of significant critical thinking in the process of production and editing, moments that shape both the individual perspectives and their group focus for the video project.

Production

One important aim of the video production project was to create a space in which young people felt free and comfortable to express their views using digital media technology. My role as a media educator and researcher was to listen and encourage young people's initiatives. In general, the different themes appeared to be difficult to separate, as the adolescents or media producers often focused on mixed themes such as discrimination in media and budget cuts.

One week later the group was conducting interviews with local residents. I checked with the group asking them how the interviews were coming. Juanita responded abruptly that because they could not find a parent willing to appear on camera, the project appeared to have stagnated. This quick response reveals to me that Juanita expresses some exasperation at the way people denied several interviews. She was still unsure of how to precede with their video when they are unable to get interviewees –other than Casa Familiar members- to appear in front of the camera.

The rest of this session and the next are Juanita and Miguel with questions about pragmatics for completion. Although Pablo waives participation in this discussion, he does express his willingness to continue with the digital video production about how people are affected by budget cuts.

All members start wading and searching on the Internet for audiovisual material (Image 23). In this event there is much exchange of ideas; however the sharing relies less on language and instead relies heavily on the shared knowledge of the YouTube video clips. The shared site of engagement is focused on various computer screens, which are located in front of them. Some clips related to San Ysidro were linked to the U.S.-Mexico border, especially the border-crossing situation. At one point this audiovisual material led to a discussion about "forgottenness," San Ysidro as being consigned to oblivion. One reason why this theme raised such a discussion was that the young media producers perceived a vulnerable situation.

Image 23. Searching for audiovisual material and conducting interviews

Unlike the other districts in San Diego with better infrastructure and social services, San Ysidro was located at the end of the road. They referred to the closeness of Tijuana, Mexico and also to the feeling of exclusion and the difficulties of "belonging." It seems that support and inclusion was highly valued in their mind. Also there were references to English Language news media that they had viewed on television and the

Internet in their life and whom they often called “gringo media.” For example, they agreed to include one Youtube video clip as an example: one clip from ABC news on how they cover traffic in San Ysidro.

In this case the planning of scenes followed a schedule set up by Juanita and Miguel. It extended over one week in different settings, outdoors and indoors, with a number of interviewees: Casa Familiar youth coordinators and local residents. The video uses these scenes to some extent, such as the trolley crossing the street when the light is on red, some shots of the local high school and neighborhood, and the U.S.-Mexico border, all recorded with flip cameras and cell phones in some cases. The participants making this production were also demonstrating their knowledge of the “poor” neighborhood, as they were anxious that outsiders should have an inside look. For example, they recorded a an altar of the Virgen of Guadalupe located in front of a house. The setting should look like a Latina/o community, Juanita and Miguel thought.

For Pablo, the Internet was key to him to get involved and participate in the video production. In collecting material for the video he found music that could express the sense of community. In this event, Youtube made new resources available, whereas the interaction with Juanita aided him in selecting the most useful resources for the purposes at hand (resources about songs referring to a “Come together” by the Beatles. Pablo’s intuition led him to eventually select another song called “Back in time” by Pitbull, which served as an empowering message for the beginning of the video dedicated to Latina/os and San Ysidro. In this song Pitbull raps, “To understand the future we have to go back in time… Stop the movement, they can try if they want to, ignoring the Latino, yes, they can try if they want to”. The song serves as a reference, according to Pablo, to

San Ysidro's resilience to be forgotten. Although Pablo did not immediately have a say on the final cut of the video, his anticipation for doing so framed the narrative at the beginning and the end fundamentally. Again, even before working on the editing process, his intentions for including these songs anticipated the decision-making, reflecting the collaborative and dialogic character of this production process in the use of various media.

Post-production

The post-production phase was organized by multiple objects and activities: the general storyboard, the interviews and audiovisual materials (video clips, and songs); the single laptop, and the Final Cut Pro interface. At this point there is some dialogue among the group members. Instead the Final Cut Program and audiovisual material are threaded together through repeated finger point gestures, communicating each other's wishes.

This plurality and diversity of objects and actions allows for a distancing from the sensitivity of the topic to a focus on task completion.

Juanita: We need to record a voice to my script
Miguel: I can do it
Pablo: How about both of you do it?
Juanita: Then we need to include my interview

Of interest in this excerpt above is how much Juanita participates in the production. Similar to other moments where she has participated verbally, the conversation is heavily mediated by the interview she did, she interjects frequently that she thinks they should include the idea of San Ysidro as "forgotten." (an idea expressed

by an interviewee). Unique to this situation, is that she is sitting on the computer and manipulating the Final Cut Program. In essence she is shaping the editing process and has much control, in this moment, over the video production in its "raw" state. This suggests that for Juanita there was an idea that resonated with her after the interview with a local resident: the emergence of a framework to learn about U.S. politics -in this case-, the perceived exclusion of the San Ysidro community.

Juanita was satisfied with the direction of the video content. She enjoyed learning the tools of video expression that being in an editor role allowed. In many ways this reveals an engaged participation for Juanita. Rather than experiencing the video production as a vehicle to explore her individual expression as a youth female, it becomes a medium to further her "communal" identity. From the start Juanita convinced the other participants about the path of the collective "discrimination" position rather than just "another video" position. She recalled the educational purposes of the video production for the potential audiences: the San Ysidro community.

While working on their "sound off" narration of the video, she felt that Pablo's Spanish reading and pronunciation was not very "clear" and offered to help on the "messy" sections.

In the final days of post-production there is much editing. The editing is done in two steps that I described as the "rough cut" and "final cut." These events are completed by participants but in purpose for the whole. Miguel completed the rough cut by himself using Juanita's script and basic storyboard. When I talked to him during the editing first phase process, Miguel explains to me that he has been selecting the material on the computer with some guidance of the group. He goes on to describe that, while Juanita

created most of the script, he is really excited about how he has edited some of the clips together. He shares an example of where one interview clips leads smoothly into another of the clip with a different person.

Image 24. Editing the "Forgotten Border"

On the last day of editing I talk with Pablo who is completing what he describes as the final touch. Pablo describes his contribution to the video as the "sound task." He included the *Pit Bull* song at he start of the video. Taken together these two editing phases are a collaborative effort to accomplish a single task for a similar outcome: their video has become a calling for inclusion, and an potential learning experience "whenever people are engaged in activities with each other… the practice of participating—that is, being a youth media producer or a student— gives youth a chance to learn in a way that would be difficult to achieve in a classroom" (Goldman, Booker, and McDermott, 2008, 186).

Conclusion

So far, we have seen that the young media participants' increasingly recognized the stereotypes posed by mainstream media (Chapter 3). Media participants spoke about telling their "side of the story" to refer to the importance of audience self-representation and participation in media content. Media literacy participants think about video production in terms of creating openings for community representation. At the same time, they're skilled in using new media technologies to engage with old media content, seeing the Internet, or in this case, Youtube as a vehicle for circulation of information about their community. Indeed, I have suggested that it is the interplay and tension between mainstream media and the force of media interaction/consumption that is driving many of the video production participations.

At every level, the notion of participation has emerged as key concept, albeit surrounded by expectations. As consumers of media they're asserting the right to participate in the culture, on their own terms, when and where they wish. However, this empowered Latina/o citizen faces a series of struggles to preserve and broaden this perceived right to participate. All of these issues surfaced very visibly through two sets of contentions surrounding San Ysidro, CA as a border town.

I previously noted that this case challenged Buckingham's notion of youth disenfranchised from institutional politics. However, it must be noted that Buckingham "argues, first of all, not that a politics is already there to be recognized but that it must be developed" (Richards, 2011, 151), finding ways of establishing its relevance and connection to personal experience.

This workshop is a case in point. First of all, if we think of institutional politics in terms of exclusion, then it is not surprising that this group complicated the notion of budget cuts as well at translating this topic into other more public forums (video exhibitions) and online platforms such as Youtube.com. This qualification of "politics must be developed" happened in the course of the workshop, encouraging young people critical media participation as cultural producers in their own right.

Another observation related to the finding that Latina/o participants are interested in institutional politics is that important parts of the video content that frame their message may not have resulted solely from the workshop itself. The most obvious motivation for their interest had to do with Casa Familiar being left out of the distribution of funds. Casa Familiar, as an institutional context is set in the heart of the San Ysidro community, located in across sites of the border town. These participants had every reason to be close to political concerns related to their volunteer work at Casa Familiar; at least Juanita had that reason. As as young Latina teen living in a low-income community, perhaps she could hardly see otherwise. And this is why Buckingham's argument is quite striking today, sixteen years later, precisely because its generalization of *certain* young people interests: the interests of young upper-middle class, white, young people.

All of the above suggest that inclusion is at heart a struggle over what rights we have to represent ourselves. As I already stated, media literacy is understood here not only as what we can learn about media and through media but also what we can do or produce with media. Who has the right to participate in "American" culture and on what terms. "Latinidad" and the U.S.-Mexico border are particularly rich focal points for studying current media literacy programs and media participation because they

themselves deal so explicitly with issues of learning and identity, and because media literacy programs have been praised for inciting young people to develop their skills.

After finishing the video, which they have entitled *San Ysidro: Frontera Olvidada/A Forgotten Border*, the group shared it with the Casa Familiar staff and volunteers. Months later, on March of 2013, they presented their video at a Border Film Festival Week at the University of San Diego. At the festival, during the 20 minutes Q&A with the young media producers, one audience viewer asked them to explain to the public why they chose the topic of budget cuts and discrimination. At first no one steps forward to speak, but then Pablo, the youngest participant replied, "We wanted to learn why San Ysidro was forgotten. San Ysidro is a very important city, you cross from Tijuana to the United States, people don't recognized that, just pass by our city, we have the ugliest and oldest trolleys."

The mention of their video focus being that of a "learning experience" was first mentioned here in this moment. That said, the pedagogical, oscillation of focus is evident in the final cut as well. In breaking down the video by the thematic scenes, it is clear to see the shifts that occur throughout the video. For example the video opens with two scenes presenting San Ysidro as an important border town. The video then shift to one scene of interview footage of Casa Familiar staff presenting the various budget cuts on the region. The presentation of the budget cuts continues to shift back and fourth throughout the video, from Casa Familiar to transportation quality. The video continues presenting the news media discrimination of San Ysidro. The video then ends with one scene focusing on the "coming together" of the community. While not directly related to the previous scenes focusing on budget cuts and news media, this scene is presented as

relating to San Ysidro in that they claim rights and thus provide a future improvement to the border town. With so many representations of San Ysidro in a single video, it is difficult to identify a central argument about the budget cuts beyond perhaps the region being an "needing" place and an important strategic region. Further conversations with the group members both informally in class and in post-production interviews, reveal that while their final media product may not show it, their views have changed significantly and continue to change as the participation extends beyond the composition of the video.

As the young media producers developed their video about life at San Ysidro, they drew from each other experiences into their video, trying to preserve what each of them sees at its special place within San Ysidro. The result is a jointly produced "pedagogical" video –somewhere between a news report and documentary. The intertwining of short stories and interviews becomes a key element of bonding for these young producers, who come to care about one another thorough interacting with these situations.

With this case study I want to suggest that media participation develops critical dispositions as producers: role-playing both as means of exploring a social realm and as mean of developing a richer understanding of themselves and the community around them. These teens came to understand discrimination by participating in media production practices, participating in such project helped them to map more fully the situation and the roles that various institutions played within the San Ysidro community. Much as a media professionals produce content by editing video clips registered through research with things learned through personal introspection and group collaboration, these young people were drawing on their own experiences to flesh out various aspects of

their community. Other media education scholars worry that these productions are "imitating" pre-existing media content rather than creating their own original works. Instead, one should think about their appropriation as learning. This is a kind of critical learning that comes through active participation. At the same time, the role as producers was providing an inspiration for them to expand other kinds of literacy skills – those already acknowledged within education.

What's interesting about this media production process, though, is that it takes place beyond any formal learning. More and more, educators are coming to value the learning that occurs in these informal spaces (Jenkins, 2009; Cole et al, 2015), especially as they confront the constraints imposed on learning via an educational system (Cole, 1996) that standardizes content. They learned about their community problems and issues through involvement in activities such as interviewing or editing the video, things that teachers and parents can regard as important pursuits.

The video was honest but with technical and aesthetical difficulties. During the Border Film Festival Week at USD the video raised questions about the Latina/o community and the deep challenges of engaging youth in video production process. One audience member noticed the representation of San Ysidro as a "Mexican community… is that bad?" she asked.

> Pablo: No
> Juanita: Well of course it's not bad because it shows how much culture you have and what could be done to improve this because it's not where you come from… its how you confront situations.

Some media educators had stated the possibilities of making media could enable

youth to discover the power of their voices when they name and imagine how they might change their worlds. This video production was a medium through which young people develop critical literacy and recognized their potentials for leadership and social change. This example illustrated how important it is to create an environment where youth can participate, dialogue and learn in critical ways.

Chapter 5.

Youth Media Participation in the U.S.-Mexico border. Community self-representation.

David Buckingham (2007) has written about the difficulty of identifying evidence of critical thinking in the work of students or participants of workshops on media literacy, and the need to be cautious in stating the scope of the emancipation and empowerment of audiences by media education. While the outcomes of empowerment in such studies are defined in different ways, this emphasis on the analysis of the "critical" reflects a common concern with what is often called critical media literacy. In this chapter, I want to explore the meaning of this term in relation to the ways in which youth participate in video production processes and learn both to "read" and to "write" audiovisual narratives about immigration and community within a border community context.

In this chapter I will attempt to illustrate the critical and creative work that emerges from media literacy and production workshop, and the conditions for dialogue and discussion by a group of young media participants. I want to demonstrate the potential of youth participation in media production by providing them opportunities to be critical and take a position against the representations of the media.

This case study aimed to develop participant's critical dispositions about the process of representation, interaction and participation with media. The assumption behind the workshop was that the participants could create a critical media participation, or at least develop a predisposition (Dezuanni and Woods, 2014), thinking about representation issues while distancing themselves from the representations that they

created during production, especially during the editing process.

The following account of my participatory research in which I served as the instructor for media production workshop at Casa Familiar, suggests the need to more closely consider the ways in which young media producers take up and transform learning spaces and use new media technologies. Through an ethnographic account that draws from my participant observation, interviews with youth participants, and analysis of the video produced, I describe the specific workshop design and the youth video production making in the process of challenging and reframing immigrant issues to counter media misconceptions about the Latino community.

Media literacy programs about production in schools have emerged as a pedagogical tool that optimally exploits the affordability of digital technology and amenability of participation discourse to a meaningful format that highlights citizenship. Youth-produced videos, situated at the forefront of media participation discourse, offer some access to the experiences and perspectives of youth as media consumers, which I argue is not only constituted through their own media interactions and personal stories, but by their roles in the production process.

Latino youth in particular have been addressed and positioned along with other ethnic groups at the center of a variety of social justice and educational programs that have utilized youth produced video (Castañeda, 2011). Consequently, video production has become the revealing site of investment of creative, technical and intellectual energy in telling a story about the young Latino experience. Researchers, educators and social justice advocates often take youth produced videos as representative of the sum of the discourse on the social issue at hand. Yet, focusing on the social value of the ultimate

video product comes at the expense of overshadowing the process of its productions and the way in which youth participate (Castañeda, 2011). The video production process, I argue in this ethnographic account, is worthy of examination as a way to understand more deeply how youth Latino producers must collaborate and negotiate their relationships to social issues mediated by media representations they are responding to their instructors, the audience, and each other. It allows us to see how the design to participate and the actual production are actually often at odds with each other.

For the Casa Familiar administrators, myself as an instructor, and the students involved in the production of the community and immigration video, there was an implicit expectation that the video would contain a message that would be legible to outside audiences and would possess the strongest possible production values given the technologies available to us. Yet, while the final video may have met these expectations, ultimately it is a weak representation of what occurred within the time and space of its making.

In addition, the study of the process of production enables a close look at social differences that emerged through media production. These social differences, I argue, made some youth more prepared to participate in the whole process (discussions, writing, searching, editing, recording, and so on) due to their background, age or genre. These social dynamics (Sims, 2013) of the production video are hidden in the circulating video, and thereby feed the dominant literature discourse that "participatory culture" is uniformly empowering for youth. It has become commonplace to think about youth user-generated content as a way to express feelings and thoughts on issues that concerns them.

Media workshop during summer camp

This workshop took place at Casa Familiar. Using a range of resources from the UCSD Community Stations Initiative my instruction became equipped with technology for sound recording and video production, if not state of the art at least significantly affordable: flip cameras, video cameras, laptops, microphones. The workshop took place during Casa Familiar's Summer Camp (June-July of 2014) on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 10am to 1pm. It was taught by me and with the supervision of one staff member. The five young people who officially attended the workshop were aged between 14 and 17, and were drawn from the Summer Camp. All of them were volunteers at one of the summer programs: arts, soccer, and dancing. Young women (Andrea, Amalia, Yesica, and Gina) outnumbered young men (Leonardo) by four to one. All of them were Latina/o.

The workshop had a focus on video production. Despite occasional disruptions (summer camp's volunteering activities), the participants had a clear end in view, which was as a group they should work collectively to produce a video of their choosing. In the event, some of the tasks were divided. While the young girls mostly worked on writing and editing, the boy opted to participate with the sound and music of the video.

Pre-production: "a real problem" not addressed by schools anymore

For young Latina/os or Mexican-Americans, the negative tone of news media coverage of the U.S.-Mexico border is not new. However, doing something about it is. Workshop participants decided to make a video about how San Ysidro, as a community, takes care of immigrants from Mexico and Latin America. One aspect that influenced this

decision was that Amalia, a high school student, had written an article on immigration for her Spanish class.

In a group discussion (Image 25) about the video production, Andrea said that the theme proposed by Amalia felt like a “real problem for the community”, compared to other topics that had been mentioned and which were drawn to “general” issues, such as the use of media technology by young people in San Ysidro. Amalia, Leonardo and Gina agreed on this issue. As participants became interested in generating ideas and sorting them by importance to the community, Andrea said, somewhat confidently, that the youth of the community, and in general of San Diego, needed to be informed about this problem, “because there 's no education in high schools” on immigration from Mexico and Latin America. She said it was important to think about solutions "we can say how together we can really help each other. This is very challenging." Alex said that “they come and they don’t have a job.

Image 25. Group discussion: workshop of the future

The group discussion was characterized by a number of stories of exodus of their parents. Gina and Amalia shared the story of his father, who came on foot from Jalisco and was about to die during the migration: “He didn’t know the language until he met my mommy, she accommodated him, but he couldn’t find a job. Today you have to have a high school diploma at least, not to mention managing to speak English. He’s unemployed right now.”

The media literacy project began with a screening of examples of work from previous projects (“Inside Lincoln High School: Voices of Social Justice”, and “San Ysidro: The Forgotten Border/La Frontera Olvidada”), which were close of the documentary genre videos. Given the nature of the of the previous experiences, the young participants decided to begin the project by interviewing -off camera- their relatives and community people about their personal experiences with migration and the struggles to live in the United States.

The interviews, they claimed, could help to reveal some common themes on the subject of immigration and the ways news media portrays them. This later topic came up with “things you are concern about San Ysidro” discussion. Watching the other videos gave them a course of the kind of product they were aiming at – namely a documentary video. They already had considered interviews on camera with Casa Familiar representatives. From there they would determine their message for the video, based on an essay written previously Amalia.

Production: The framing about immigration and community

The video recording of the initial interviews serve also as a way for the group to become more proficient with how to use the camera, and sound equipment. Once some volunteers working at the center who had agreed to go on-camera had been interviewed (two people), they actively sought out Casa Familiar representatives to interview. Only two persons agreed, so they began recruiting people hanging around the center. This resulted in the compilation of interviews from an array of volunteers, many of whom were involved in Casa Familiar' summer camp.

The participants in general seemed very eager to expand their audiovisual material and the majority of the group was very sensitive to new current events: migrants, mostly women and children, were being brought to the city of Murrieta, California from Texas, which has been overwhelmed with the amount of immigrants from the Central American countries of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador crossing the border from Mexico. Some of the news footage from Murrieta showed angry protesters gathered to hurl reproaches at children and women who were part of this immigration. The detainees were being brought to Murrieta and San Ysidro immigration offices for processing purposes.

All production (recording) stopped, as the new focus became knowing more about the children and immigration. The project changed its approach when a participant, Yessica, commented on the facts of Murrieta, especially when she found an image online about the singer Lupillo Rivera –a picture of the Mexican-American artist holding a sign while a woman is screaming in his face. Then the young participants took the decision to seek more about this event related to children confined, immigration stories and news

coverage in the United States. This new approach generated a discussion on how to integrate these events to the subject of the video.

With access to computer equipment at the community center, YouTube videos, pictures available on Google Images, and some news on the Internet (*Yahoo* and *Univision* news, especially), became something of a "detonator" for discussion. The workshop participants now found that they had a "humanitarian" framework to talk about people and children who were coming from different communities in Mexico and Central America (Image 26).

Image 26. Production phase: finding the "humanitarian" framework

Yet, with the discussion of news media, we can see the way mass media still shapes the agenda on topics to talk about even in this participatory new media project.

Mass media, or more specifically, news media influenced the way that the topics courted the participants, but more importantly, it shaped how the participants processed and acted upon immigration news. So often we assume that new media operate with different principles than the broadcast media that dominates U.S. audiovisual landscape: access, interaction and participation rather than one-to-many communication. We also assume that young people don't pay attention to news media but they do: all participants expressed interests in watching news stories, either on the Internet or at home watching "Noticieros" with their parents.

Andrea and Amalia had devised a list of questions from the new framework of the video. They also wanted to ask interviewees, mostly members of Casa Familiar, about their experiences of having to serve the San Ysidro community and their opinions on how media portrays the overall community.

While the interviewers would typically stick to the discussion guide during the interviews, the producers and workshop participants would often continue the discussion once the camera had been shut off. They would ask me more questions about the stories and would often pivot off details mentioned during the interview to get to know the subject better.

For example, in her on-camera interview, Youth Program Coordinator Estela Flores spoke about how news media never focus on a "real" representation of the migrants' situation. When the camera was turned off, the group of us asked more questions to Estela. Other adolescents who weren't involved in the shoot but had been listening from across the room came to join us. Some of them asked concerned follow-up questions and applauded Estela for her view. Maritza, another youth coordinator and

close friend of Estela's, told her that she valued her well-informed opinions. The interview clearly had affected those of us who were at the community center that day and provided an impetus for a type of "coming together" that had apparently not happened since the start of the camp. At the time of the interview the video production workshop was primarily part of several organized activities in the context of a recreational space. The post-interview discussion brought the need for more attention to the specific needs of the video production.

As the size of material expanded, the three hours of workshop time came to be dominated by discussion and "hanging around." (Ito, et al., 2010) Meaningful conversations were beginning to emerge out of YouTube clips, pictures, musical songs, news reports and interviews. As a facilitator, I fueled some of these conversations, but sometimes I had to cut short discussions in order to keep the youth producers on track with our production timelines.

One participant, Gina said it was important to find a way to engage other audiences who weren't initially inclined to view their video. As she saw it, anyone not directly involved with Casa Familiar or the San Ysidro community was a possible viewer of their product. In the name of efficiency, the youth asserted the need for the group to identify the commitment of Casa Familiar. This explicitly constituted an "us" within Casa Familiar. Maritza, who was the only other adult present beside myself, had begun to refer them as the "filmmakers" as if the workshop was a separate entity from the rest of the summer camp. Maritza was responsible for keeping us aware of the institutional policies to fulfill their responsibilities as volunteers of the summer camp. She also helped to ensure that young participants who attended the workshop were given priority access to

technology and a working place within the center. As a result of these configurations, being seen as a producer conferred special status among the youth volunteers. Hence, a certain productive interest to produce was tacitly rewarded by Maritza, and by other adolescents in the community center.

The prospects of making a video project during a summer camp program imposed time constraints that made it problematic to take on strategies to teaching that demand attention to unpredicted topics that might have been valuable to work through, such as child immigration. As one might imagine, this was all the more true in the case of working with teens in a summer camp context because many of them came to the youth center expressly to volunteer on camp activities (making piñatas, playing soccer), which was not best facilitated while participating in video production exercises.

Post-Production: Immigration and San Ysidro

As Media educators David Buckingham (2007) and Steven Goodman (2003) have noted, it is precisely during the process of reviewing and logging interview tapes that youth producers become more critical about the content they have produced. In his chapter "Digital Media Literacies" Buckingham states that through the experience of media production –discussions about shots, discussions about where to place the footage in their editing video- students are able to gain more analysis in an effective and enjoyable way. Additionally, Steve Goodman has found that students are able to achieve some distance from their subjects, changing their social position from being a participant in the community to a more acute observer of the content and the community. Youth gain

critical distance by audiovisual objectification, situating the video content in "light" of their experience

Despite the diversity of audiovisual material and range of video-clips about news media and immigration –along with some discussions- the group tended away from including more complex stories or a range of ways of representing the issue of media and migration in their edit. The differences between their material and their editing choices were mediated by the limitations of working within a five-minute video format. This documentary form or structure, which typically has room for pauses, counter-narratives, and persuasive narratives, places particular constraints on forms of expressions.

These limitations were better understood at the final level of the post-production by the youth (Image 27). Though they were never directly articulated by anyone, they were reinforced through general discussion of the video' need to present a cohesive, legible narrative of the Latina/o experience that would resonate across different populations. While video interviews made the relationships within the group more dynamic, audiovisual material generated by the participants themselves was put to evaluation, not only in terms of content, but also for its technical value. Decisions about what to include were evaluated based on the sound or image quality as well as compositional elements. In some videos, Andrea noted that some of the earliest recorded interviews had several technical problems and were, therefore, "unusable." However, these interviews were actually very helpful to provide an excuse for the meaningful participation of young people about their experiences with immigration and the media.

Image 27. The editing phase: it requires knowledge to cut material

The group of young people made the effort to find a narrative coherence of the interviews they had gathered. The group was having trouble deciding which clips to include in their video edition. Yesica, who lives near the U.S.-Mexico border in a housing project, had taken a flip camera home with her one full day and had returned with video clips of the San Ysidro area "I even recorded the actual border." Her brother drove her to the bridge to gather material about the lines of cars waiting to enter the U.S., very similar to footage or visual register about the "Bottleneck at the border" (Chapter 2), the function of the border both as barrier and bridge. When Andrea and Amalia were reviewing the over twenty video clips they had collected during the course of the project, Yesica's material was very important because she recorded the actual border and undocumented

workers, but mostly her other material was rejected or pushed aside. This had partially to do with the fact that the production values of her taped material (which she shot handheld while her brother was driving) were less strong than those that were filmed by other members of the group.

What is important about this situation is the material that was rejected by the group. A video recording with undocumented workers standing at one of neighborhood corners was rejected by the core young producers who felt uncomfortable showing them from a distance using an "extreme wide shot", a view so far from the subjects that they're barely visible and the focus is more on the surroundings. Yesica was embarrassed by this shot because she acknowledged that it was a very similar shot and angle shown by regular media "This is like the media does with them." She was referring to the common portrayal of undocumented workers "shot" to represent immigrants in news media. In chapter 2 I discussed how Mexican news report covers immigrants using similar angles and shot as the one Yesica describes. For instance, in *The Mexican example:* Televisa *television news* I described a news story about five individuals who are shot from a distance: "silhouette figures –with no faces- assumed as migrants, living on the international fence and River Canal, and blamed for being a potential menace."

To say, "Like the media does," is to describe the implicit role of media in crafting a negative perception. News media doesn't highlight the plight of these individuals and therefore doesn't induce empathy for them –as pointed out by Estela Flores in an on-camera interview.

Similarly another interview with a summer camp volunteer was not included because he gave an account of his activism toward the border patrols station in San

Ysidro. The interviewee asked not to be included since it would compromise the social service community center. The young interviewee had been participating in protests in front of a U.S. Border patrol station offices. The story of the young activist addressed conflict issues around the community and the young media producers found it difficult to include it. They also considered the particularities of the story to be too much of a deviation from the narrative they were constructing, and ultimately did not want a video of protest, but one of conciliation.

Ultimately, video-clips and interviews that addressed the news coverage of the U.S.-Mexico border as a "migration" and "border patrol" phenomenon, occurring within the confines of San Ysidro that could be easily linked to a negative representation, stayed in. The teens wanted their interviewees to articulate the phenomenon, impact and effects of news media coverage, but they could not or did not seem to want to place the images of detentions as b-rolls. There was a very short discussion in which two editors (Amalia and Andrea) presented their ideas to some of the participants, where this question of content became a significant point of consensus. Andrea said that this material makes the immigrant loose their dignity. Amalia and the others, including Yesica, clearly approve of this.

Some of the images portraying arrested immigrants covered by the media are not always that encouraging for them, such of the coverage of deportations, especially in this working class neighborhood where participants have close ties or come in contact with undocumented workers. In Chapter 2 I presented an image that shows this type of visualization, the image of bodies arranged by the side of the road or sea, in this case, with their heads facing the ground (Image 2.12). Their poses could be read as conveying

a feeling of war prisoners being subjugated. One can assume that these images convey the feeling of exclusion and discrimination: “Only an anonymous or foreign victim, lacking in social standing, would be shot in this way” (Wallen, 2003).

There seemed to be no place for this type of representation, the loss of dignity and humanity of the deported. Instead, the teens wished to present the conflict of the border in non-spectacular or dramatic tone and through art: paintings and music. They included previously recorded video-clips of the “WHYsidro Mix-Media Work exposition.”

The media producers were especially pleased when their interviewees referred to experiences of the San Ysidro community because their comments made the idea of the U.S.-Mexico border explicit. In contrast, they struggle with stories that were more difficult to place. For instance, Amalia and Andrea interviewed Estela Flores -the youth program coordinator- who talked about salient cultural features of Tijuana where she resides. The exclusion of this type of stories illustrates the San Ysidro-centered focus that the young producers wanted to represent.

These video-clips introduce a complexity to the issues at hand that diverged from the “human crisis” narrative and were difficult to incorporate into the overall story. They needed context and explanation. The main editors, Amalia and Andrea, were determined to use video-clips that told stories of this “humanitarian crisis” in the direction of shaping the overall story. Opinions about the humanitarian crisis, such as the High School teacher Ocampo, served as reference to the overall video idea. The problem of immigration that such video-clips and interviews outlined had already been articulated within local protests and news media. The teen producers therefore had some sort of scale for determining to what extent viewers might interpret the incidents of Murrieta as worthy of

attention. However, the opinion of a high school teacher, interviewed by young people on the issue of migration was crucial as a benchmark for the general idea of the video.

The group's interview of teacher Ocampo was included almost at full extent in the final cut of the video. For one, she addressed the positive and negatives of migration reform, but the main reason given by the youth was because she had a lot of credibility and directly addressed the topic of migration within their narrative of trying to solve the problem with "humanitarian laws" while considering the "dignity" of the workers. Professor Ocampo had talked directly about her feelings of desperation within U.S. system but it had nothing to do with her experience as a teacher in school. Her interview was carried out by Andrea and Amalia, and was ultimately deemed to have a lot of value to the project. All interviews, but specially this one to Professor Ocampo, gave a sense to teens, site coordinators and me of a coming together through their stories and opinions, and some of the teens were moved to share their own experiences with the "exodus" of their parents and family.

As for the sound and music, Leonardo, who asked to be responsible for this task, was determined to include music and spent the week combing through YouTube clips looking for corridos and songs of empowerment." With his selections, the group agreed to include songs such as "America" from "Los Tigres del Norte" and "El Aguante," from "Calle Trece." These songs spoke about belonging to America from a continental perspective and Latina/o resilience. Leonardo got the group excited about his choices by suggesting that the music would convey "Latino power." Leonardo choice for music echoed the narrative arc the group had chosen for the piece "we have endured, we belong, and demand a to be treated with dignity". While there are certainly many more ways to

interpret Leonardo and the rest of the group's tendency towards this kind of dramatic rendering of the immigration experience. Their choices were impacted by their presumption of the viewers' expectations.

Another example of their presumption of viewers' expectations is when some of the teen video makers advocated for the inclusion of a very intriguing picture in which Lupillo Rivera –famous Mexican American singer- confronts anti-immigrant protesters who blocked buses carrying the migrants. According to news reports the protesters spat at Rivera. The protesters didn't want the migrants at Murrieta, California. Rivera shouted at the protesters that the migrants who come to the U.S. are baby sitters, cooks and hotel workers. The teens decided that this picture should be included because it shows very clearly the obstacles, and describes an example of day-to-day discrimination. In the video-clip where the picture is included, in the final cut it says about news media coverage:

> Maritza (Interviewee): "Most of all when it comes to San Ysidro is going to be a migration problem, border patrol. Always related to the border. If we are going to be on the news is because something happened at the border… Only the facts and not the stories" Video "The community and its migrants" (2014)

The youth producers were compelled by the potential for the audience to make an empathetic connection to the topic of media representation through their account. The interviewee had discussed an incident of mis-representation and explicitly named it as discrimination, and they were so taken by these interviews that they wanted to let it run in its entirely for almost three minutes of their six minutes rough cut. "This is the idea,"

exclaimed Yesica. “It has to do with fighting for our rights” Amalia rejoiced. “We have to fight to stop deportations… the immigration reforms are urgent” Yesica decided to team up with Andrea to see if they could gather together clips about the San Ysidro community. One central point of this dissertation has to do with where Media Education can connect with civic engagement, where media literacy can connect with and inform more directly practice of video production in afterschool programs. In these terms, its political rationale is more likely “to revive and become more a part of the way that young people think about their lives” (Richards, 2011, 152). In this respect, media education should challenge the political marginalization of young people.

The group decision to include video clips about San Ysidro (trolley) was aimed to reproduce a sense of identification. The trolley provided a venue of community representation for the people residing in San Ysidro which do not see themselves reflected in mainstream English media, nor in most of the Spanish language media produced by Latina/os or even Mexicans, who are more interested in portraying the border malls, such as “Las Americas Premium Outlets.” The core residential area in San Ysidro is bounded by freeways and is largely built with a mix of historic, older and newer multifamily developments., and further bisected by the Trolley and freight rail lines.

They wanted to end the video with a message they felt best conveyed their expectations: a call for civil rights and better media representation. Their approach directly challenges media literacy and participatory models that tend to emphasized the skill based and expressive nature of producing as a form of agency. Here I wish to emphasize that the Say Ysidro and migration production process should not be conflated

solely with youth expression, but instead understood as guided by some of the same directives that motivate civic engagement projects.

Discussion

This chapter does not seek to explain the media literacy nor the participatory model from a perspective that emphasizes the skills acquired or forms of expression as a way to discuss agency. Instead, I emphasize the media participation process and the way of representing San Ysidro mediated by the immigration situation in the U.S-Mexico border. Again, this should not be understood only as a youthful expression, but also as a guided process by some of the premises of critical media pedagogy that encourage projects to foster a considerable degree of civic engagement, and the development of critical dispositions.

The production of the video or short documentary "San Ysidro: The community and it's migrants" provided an opportunity for the young participants to experience this distance (Freire and Macedo, 1987) while editing the video: when they rejected video clips or shots representing the undocumented workers, and when they decided to frame its narrative from an angle related to the "humanitarian crisis," and not as mere presentation of information or facts. The "humanitarian crisis" angle highlighted a consensus reached through contact of diverse perspectives that appear in interviews, discussions and audiovisual material: immigrants as heroes (stories about obtaining a piece of the "American Dream"), or as threat to the public order (stories about detentions and deportations). These elements, I claim, are part of critical media participation. The young people seemed to articulate a broader, more abstract idea like "humanitarian

crisis."

The young media producers decided to focus their video on important people to them and the community. This, in the end, helped create a sense of belonging to the border area community, and to Casa Familiar. They also decided not to include images of detentions or deportations, considering them as miss-representations of human dignity. These decision-making outcomes suggest that the group realized that the process of representation is an active and influential process. In a relatively general sense, they noticed the different focus and agenda of mainstream media in representing their community.

What I hoped to illustrate in this chapter is that the process of dialogue and discussion on how to represent the video or how to produce it, provides valuable opportunities to make visible the interaction processes and meaning making of the media literacy participants. This, in turn, represents a critical pedagogy with the greatest potential in contemporary times. I agree with colleagues that not all production work is critical, but it represents an opportunity to explore key concepts of media education in an era of media convergence.

Chapter 6.

Conclusion

> We just got motivated to start doing this project to our community, since we're always on budget cuts. People think San Ysidro is only Mexican people from Tijuana, they think very little of us. They think it's a bad place to be but, I'm my opinion, I think its ok and it's good for everyone. Only people who don't know and don't care think it's a really bad place and this is important because San Ysidro is open to Tijuana and to the U.S. and many people see it and pass by but they don't really see inside of it. They don't see the emotional part of San Ysidro.
>
> Miguel. Border Film Week.

Speaking to an audience from the stage of the University of San Diego's Peace and Justice Theater, the video producer and participant Miguel used these words to make sense of "San Ysidro: Frontera Olvidada or Forgotten border" video on March 7, 2013.

Surrounded by an audience, including filmmakers from both Mexico and the United States, he passionately described their situation and their intention to foster a change aimed at changing the perception of the San Ysidro community by encouraging youth to participate and to get involved. This was a good highlight of the event, this panel discussion where teens talked about media, community, representation, and participation.

Topics and themes which have been discussed throughout this dissertation. In short, it was a filmmaking event of artistic proportions, drawing on the finest binational filmmakers and scholars to highlight the issue of the border and to rally in support for more video and film production.

Miguel had a good reason for his comment at USD. Part of his purpose was to recognize both San Diego and Tijuana as an "open" region, using an "us" versus "them" binary: a way to talk about the value of San Ysidro against discrimination.

In this dissertation I have sought to complicate notions of media participation as a viable process and desirable social and pedagogical goal. Miguel's assumption that people are ignoring the Latina/o community echoes the dominant perception surrounding the Latina/o discourse that I have drawn attention to throughout.

I have argued that through media participation, youth can produce their own conditions and develop core educational competencies through guided participation and social engagements. I have claimed that the support for the media participation approach can overcome celebratory assumptions if we also focus on the "downsides" and "struggles" that constrain young people's ability to have meaningful interactions with and through digital media.

Using a critical pedagogy approach to highlight the ways that calls for guided participation and dialogic engagements youth media production have developed what Meghan McDermott (2015) has called "Transformative Media," I have argued that digital media participation can reframe ideas at the level of community dialogue and in the mass media.

While there is little doubt that its common for young people to use digital technologies for creative and personal expression, my three case studies show that when media production is prompted by guided participation with the express purpose of dialogue, what they produce becomes structured in ways that correspond with the most meaningful and beneficial enterprise for them. We must, therefore, continually ask, how media participation can build critical thinking. Today it is no surprise the growing number of scholars and media educators calling for more in-depth qualitative studies of how youth use media technology while critiquing the "techno-utopian celebration" of

participatory culture (van Dijck, 2013).

Some of the participatory literature is an example of this. I draw attention to the participatory model because it underscores the skills involved in media literacy initiatives. The model reaffirms the widely held belief that there is something inherently transformational in young people's digital media use.

As I have argued, despite the undeniable potential of digital media technology use among young people, it remains highly problematic for researchers to equate their digital media content with agency without looking at the process of media production. As we saw in these case studies, the participants' desire to produce a video that would be legible to the community and outsiders was highlighted by their actual lived experiences, perspectives on the "downsides" of media. Hence, when we try to the see agency on the content, we risk overlooking the nuanced interactions and contentions and institutional contexts that shape what youth produce and more importantly, what the media producers learn about themselves, each other, their community, and the work they are engaged in.

There is a similar empowering discourse, visibility and identity in the speech of Miguel. He encourages marginalized youth to be proud of their binational identities. In this way these media literacy projects suture digital media participation to a media context on the U.S.-Mexico border in which participation is hitched to and expected to emerge from young people's media interaction. Media participation becomes the means with which to claim or defend their community and identity. Exclusion and discrimination are represented as necessarily ethnic-based. These media literacy projects were not intended to reinforce the idea that Latina/o youth simply need to be brave about defending those identities; rather it was about working to understand their places within

larger histories and structures of oppression (Freire, 1970).

The focus on learning requires us to engage with youth needs in order to let them to feel supported in their particular communities. To wit, we must also take into account that when youth produce digital media as part of larger mainstream media landscape that have major stereotypical visibility, there are incentives in place for them place for them to not reproduce particular styles and messages. In this way, forms of alternative media visibility entwine with forms of mainstream media forms of news, ultimately highlighting the power of building support for marginalized subject positions and the structures and conditions that contribute to their discrimination. We might imagine that any youth production will inevitably always be in play with the mainstream media particular style and political and ideological framing.

As I show in this dissertation, it is possible to encourage forms of self-expression among youth. We can set possibilities to make videos about issues that concern them if we orient them more toward open-ended forms of creativity, and if we re-frame digital media participation as the connections, decision-making, and reflection made possible during the process of production, regardless of what kind of video is produced.

Toward critical media participation and assessment

Throughout this dissertation I have suggested the possibility to develop critical media participation of Latina/o youth video production in the context of media literacy. The work I have analyzed in this dissertation has been diverse, in terms of contexts and themes. More fundamentally, each of the case studies has sought to address a set of related issues -with a degree of overlap between them.

In this conclusion, I seek to draw together some of the most significant themes that have arisen in the case studies.

1. Debates in media participation

I begin by locating my approach in the context of broader debates about media participation. While scholarship in participatory culture studies is increasingly concerned with studying how youth utilize digital media technologies towards a democratic society, what scholars mean by participation is often unspecified. Clearly, more nuanced theorization is needed, particularly analysis that is based in participant action research methods. The advent of digital media learning studies in recent years had begun to remedy this absence. However, in some respects, the broader debate about the framework –that is, about the "critical utopianism/empowerment" politics or critical pessimism/victimization of audiences and media participants- has remained polarized. The recent exchanges that surfaced in symposiums like "On Empowered and Impassioned Audiences in the Age of Media Convergence" in 2012 might easily be mistaken for consensus about what participation means in the age of new media. Looking back at 2006, those earlier debates do appear remarkably polarized –an indeed parochial. Evidence of participation in the age of new media was echoed by habitual tools turned into verbs: buttons for liking, trending, following sharing (van Dijck, 2013). Yet, here again, I feel that there are fundamental questions to which media educators must return. For example, Buckingham had said that it is difficult to assess when critical thinking is happening when studies disregard these processes.

The problem has not simply to do with the degree of polarization. I would argue

that these frames are in some degree inadequate representations of media participation. Of course, this is not to suggest that such characterizations are simply false, on the contrary, they are extremely influential, not least in terms of how media educators themselves account for what they do. I hope my empirical study would suggest that the realities of both approaches are much more intertwined than the polarized debate itself might lead one to suppose.

2. The consideration of institutional context

There is a demand for more research on the part of contextual and institutional settings involved with audiences and communities. In this case it was necessary to explain they way that the UCSD Community Stations Initiative, the community center and social service institution, set the infrastructure and conditions in order to youth and members to get involved and talk about the issues of their community. It was also necessary to explicate the role of the media in South San Diego landscape regarding the Latina/o population.

On the one hand, providing digital media production equipment along with human resources to produce videos enabled good conditions toward engagement, dialogue and participation not to mention the institutional support to sustain media production practices and maintain the equipment. In the case of South Metro Career Center and Casa Familiar production of several community-based videos, there were more participants in the production than there were at other activities that these centers offered during same period of time. Once the videos were finalized these centers supported the circulation of the videos in what turned out to be used as institutional positions.

On the other hand, it is important to understand the structural discourses and circulation of images in the age of "convergence culture," that do not depend on any specific interaction with audiences. Here, represented in news media content that flows across multiple media channels (news in print and online media, television and Youtube). In this dissertation I sought to document a long period during which at least in some segments of the public (Latina/o population) have experienced what it means to live with "negative press." The news media coverage of Southern California as a place of fortified border fences, long lines of cars waiting to cross to the United states, drug traffickers, and "shady" undocumented workers. The notion discussed in Chapter 2, about how this coverage on the Latina/o population and the border generates a sense of *estrangement*, I claim, plays a big role in the discussion and motivations for young people participations. All the participants' work described in this dissertation used "dominant" media topics and themes. It showed how traditional media still shape the agenda in the public sphere. New media scholars have often neglected the complexity of audiences' media ecology. Evidence from digital media participation and production was at best anecdotal; and there was very little sense of the wider world of media. In order to go beyond close textual readings of media forms we must work across media platforms to make sense of the context in which audiences experience, engage and participate in media.

3. Critical media participation and assessment

If the goal is to promote critical media participation, we must put aside formulas that impart particular frameworks on what and how youth produce. Both implicitly and at times explicitly (Chapter 5) this dissertation has sought to assess a grounded description

of critical thinking in media education. The aim of any theory of critical thinking is to explain the relationship between what participants already know and what it is that they envision and implement solution to their social communicative challenges. In these case studies, it is fair to say that the former has largely been neglected in favor of latter. Critical media participation through digital media may come in unanticipated forms, at unexpected moments. It may be in the outtakes, or in the small successes and defeats during the editing process that will only ever be recognized by the youth themselves. As I have argued it is not enough that participants learn to "read" and "write" in media; "they also have to learn to reflect upon the nature of reading and writing themselves, and on the ways in which meanings are socially produced and circulated" (Buckingham, 1995, 203).

While the limitations contained in this critical emphasis on recent studies on media literacy is recognized, and certain unintended dangers of some initiatives of media education, studies show clearly that the most productive way to generate critical analysis among students is from their concerns, interests and identities, rather than to engage in ideological analysis somewhat abstract and that have prevailed in teaching media. Again, this critical media participation cannot be divorced from the social contexts and relationships in which it is incorporated. It is a crucial aspect of the production process, and not simply as a mean of assessment.

From these and similar consideration, I discuss the following basic assessment of my participatory action research in terms of the utopian methodology: this methodology carefully considers the question of why the utopia is not a reality that one can reach an understanding of how society works. My concern in this evaluation articulates two fundamental themes for "critical media participation," a) the social processes of media

participation and learning, and, b) the production practices and critical thinking. These two dimensions can assess the media literacy and media production design in terms of positive, negative, and shortcomings (Table 15 and Table 16).

Table 15. Media literacy assessment: social process and learning

Positive	Building of social relationships, mutual support, and cooperation among project participants.
	Interpellation is key for asking larger questions about unequal distribution of power in society and media representation.
Negative	It is easy to reproduce "politically correct" arguments, without necessarily questioning their own position.
	Participants on the periphery of production practices can be alienated from learning.
Shortcomings	Not all members participated equally in digital video production
	Not all the digital products optimally circulated around the community
	Need for a final assessment from media literacy participants

Table 16. Media literacy assessment: production and critical thinking

Positive	Enabled participants to explore broad concerns of their conceptual understanding emerged in practical work
	Improving the quality of video products, including the ability to critically reflect on the quality of productions in media
Negative	Practical production can become a mere illustration of the conceptual understanding of a story
	Digital media production with one-side story or with out dialogue creates a crucial difficulty for learning
Shortcomings	We can improve the process of evaluation and assessment..
	The need for a more clear idea of the integration of critical thinking and practical work
	Not all the member developed critical media participation.

4. The process in media participation

This leads to the final, and perhaps most important aspect of this dissertation: the

process of making videos is more valuable than the final content (Buckingham, 1995). We must emphasize this notion to teachers, administrators and institutions. A final video, such as a San Ysidro: *Forgotten border, San Ysidro: The community and its migrations,* and *Abraham Lincoln High School: Voices of Social Justices,* were used to prompt the production process, and I hope, truly provided youth with opportunities to experiment, express, and reflect on what they are making. In this study I let go of the idea of the finished video as the ultimate marker of agency or a given project's success.

I have raised the concern that the finished video product is not merely an empowerment process that happens in the producers' social context. These contexts are simultaneously interpersonal and institutional. They are characterized by power-relationships and decision/making between participants, between participants and instructors –if that is the case-, and between participants and the wider structures which constraints and facilitates (Giddens, 1995, Thompson, 1995) their practice. In the case studies I argue how examining the production process enable me to identify some of the contentions, which in a broad sense shows the possibilities and limitations of media participation in the sense that helped to open up a mode of social interaction and way of making sense of the world.

In the case of these videos, a process-oriented approach encouraged dialogue and reflection as central aspect of production. I believe that this approach can set the conditions into forming critical communities. In this case it meant the challenge to invest more time in discussing the goals of the project, and coming to understand where the project was situated within institutions and circulating discourses about news media.

Perhaps inevitably, in these final remarks I have outlined suggest many issues for

further research. I am certain that, in the coming decade, media participation and production will occupy a central role in education, and after-school programs. New media technologies depend on how they are being used. Indeed, this is best achieved through dialogue, reflection, and critical thinking with media processes we engage in and promote. While my concluding comments are necessarily more abstract, I trust that they are fully grounded in the concrete experiences I have described.

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