University of Texas at El Paso
ScholarWorks@UTEP

Open Access Theses & Dissertations

2020-01-01

Race, Gender And Mediated Representations In The Farah Strike

Matthew Desiderio Minnich
University of Texas at El Paso

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.utep.edu/open_etd

Part of the Communication Commons

Recommended Citation

Minnich, Matthew Desiderio, "Race, Gender And Mediated Representations In The Farah Strike" (2020). *Open Access Theses & Dissertations*. 3106.
https://scholarworks.utep.edu/open_etd/3106

This is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UTEP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UTEP. For more information, please contact lweber@utep.edu.

RACE, GENDER AND MEDIATED REPRESENTATIONS IN THE FARAH STRIKE

MATTHEW D. MINNICH

Master's Program in Communication

APPROVED:

Stacey K. Sowards, Ph.D.

Richard D. Pineda, Ph.D.

Howard Campbell, Ph.D.

Stephen L. Crites, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School

Copyright ©

by

Matthew D. Minnich

2020

DEDICATION

For the women at Farah Manufacturing who went on strike in 1972. Viva la Huelga!

RACE, GENDER AND MEDIATED REPRESENTATIONS IN THE FARAH STRIKE

by

MATTHEW D. MINNICH

Department of Communication

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Communication

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

August 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank some especially important people for making this work possible. I would like to thank my parents for the support and motivation they provided me while I continued my education. Dr. Stacey Sowards, for her friendship, guidance, and continuing support during this process has been invaluable. I could not have asked for a better advisor and mentor during my research and writing. Dr. Mary C. Trejo, who encouraged me to go back to school to finish my education. I would also like to thank the following individuals who all had a hand in making this possible: Dr. Richard Pineda, Joseph Flores, Dr. Roberto Avant-Mier, Michael Brooks, Dr. Carlos Tarin, and Dr. Howard Campbell.

ABSTRACT

In May of 1972, 4,000 garment workers at Farah Manufacturing Company in El Paso went out on strike for the right to be represented by a union. The strike against Farah was one of the first major social movements in the El Paso area in the twentieth century. Over 80% of the striking workers were Latina. These female employees at Farah were at the forefront of the Chicana feminist movement. The labor battle at Farah illustrates the organic link between Chicana feminism and class struggle. The Farah strike caused a new family dynamic to rise from the ashes of the traditional Mexican household. Using Burke's terministic screens and framing theory as a lens through which to view newspaper articles and films produced during the strike, this project analyzed the way in which race and gender were framed in the media representations of these striking workers, their unions, and their families in national media outlets and documentary film of the time. National and local newspapers were chosen to give a wider breadth of assortment when analyzing print media to better understand the role that gender, race, and social memory played in their portrayal.

Keywords: terministic screens, framing theory, Chicana, labor movement, gender, race

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS……………………………………………………………………………...v

ABSTRACT……………………………………………………………...…………..…….…………vi

TABLE OF CONTENTS ……………………………………………………...……………..……...vii

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION…………………………………………………………….........1

1.1 Social Movements in Communication Studies……………..……….…………….........4

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE……………………………………………..……..7

2.1 Media Coverage of Social Justice Movements………...………………...………….............7

2.2 Chicana Feminism……………………………………. ……………..…………..……….8

2.3 Union Labor and the Chicano/a.…………………………………….……………….10

2.4 The Role of Chicanas in the Movement……………………….……………..….……...13

2.5 The Effect of the Strike on the Family Dynamic……………………...……………......16

2.6 Children of the Strikers……………………………………………………...………......18

2.7 Patron-Peon Relationship……………………………………………………...………...18

2.8 The Catholic Church and the Chicano/a Labor Movement…………………………..……20

CHAPTER 3: RHETORICAL CRITICISM AS A METHODOLOGY……………………..………22

3.1 Terministic Screens…………...22

3.2 News Framing.……………………………………………………………………………..23

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS & FINDINGS…..……………………………………………………......27

4.1 Unions…………………………………………………………………...……..……..27

4.2 Newspaper Articles…………………………...…………………………………...………28

4.3. Daybreak (1971)..……………………………………………………………………..…..31

4.4 The People v. Willie Farah (1973) ………………………………………………………...33

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION…………………………………………………………………….35

REFERENCES…………………………………………………………………………………..38

VITA…………………………………………………………………………………..………41

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Directly off the I-10 freeway in El Paso, Texas stands a mecca of U.S. American consumerism, The Fountains at Farah. The Fountains at Farah offers over seventy boutiques, department stores, and restaurants. The open-air atmosphere with numerous cascading waterfalls, entertainment venues, restaurants, and covered parking lots hides a past that many El Pasoans are unfamiliar with. Much of the current El Paso population does not understand the social significance of the space that The Fountains at Farah occupies, the former Farah Manufacturing Company and social justice worker strikes of the early 1970s. Unfortunately, there's nothing to commemorate the 4,000 displaced garment workers who went on strike in May of 1972 until March of 1974. In May 1972, 4,000 garment workers at Farah Manufacturing Company in El Paso went out on strike for the right to be represented by a union. When they walked out on strike, they demanded to be represented by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union and they were also confronting the city's largest industrial employer and pitting themselves against El Paso's famously anti-union local patriarch, Willie Farah. The strikers were virtually all Mexican American and the majority were women. The strikers had to deal with intimidation, financial hardships, strains on their familial ties, and public scrutiny. Their labor action, which lasted until they won union representation in March 1974, grew to encompass a national boycott of Farah pants. This union-organized boycott of Farah pants transformed the strike from a local dispute to a national campaign that was crucial to the workers' subsequent success in winning union recognition. In January of 1974, the National Labor Relations Board ordered Farah to offer reinstatement to the strikers and to permit union organizing, which resulted in a union contract that gave workers' pay increases, job security and seniority rights, and a grievance procedure. The strike against Farah was the one of the largest major strikes in the El Paso area in modern

times. The female workers involved in the strike were the largest group of female workers on strike since the 1959 strike by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) in San Antonio (Alaniz & Cornish, 2008).

The Farah strike and boycott of the early 1970s was one of the turning points in Chicana/o culture. The strike and boycott galvanized Chicano/as to mobilize on a scale not seen in the years since the Chicano walk outs of 1968 in Los Angeles and around the country. The site of the Fountains at Farah is built directly over one of the old manufacturing plants of Farah Incorporated. The El Paso based apparel manufacturing company, Farah Incorporated, was an apparel manufacturer in El Paso, Texas from 1920 to 1998. Farah Incorporated was the largest manufacturing company of any type in the El Paso region with seven domestic manufacturing plants, five in El Paso, one in San Antonio and one in Las Cruces. In 1970 Farah Incorporated employed 9,500 workers domestically. Farah Incorporated was the second largest employer in El Paso behind military base Fort Bliss and employed 10% of the population of the city of El Paso. The strike crippled Farah with a 40 percent drop in sales, the termination of 5,000 jobs and the closing of all domestic plants outside of El Paso (Corrales, 2004). The striking workers had the support of union relief funds, the national boycott, and the Catholic Church who all provided important source of political backing for the strikers. The striking workers had now acquired skills such as public speaking and organizing activities that brought new groups of people together. The company, its sales badly damaged by the national boycott, was ordered by the National Labor Relations Board in January 1974 to offer reinstatement to the strikers and to permit union organizing (Ontiveros, 2011, p. 497).

Life at Farah Manufacturing after the strike also proved hard for some returning employees. Farah's sales had declined 40 percent during the strike and never really recovered.

Farah Manufacturing continued to struggle, never recapturing its place as a major apparel manufacturer, although it continued in existence for another twenty years. The effects of the labor dispute were long lasting. The company endured several quarters of losses and laid off record numbers of workers, resulting in the resignation of several members of the board. Willie Farah resigned as chief executive in 1977. A year later, he returned, firing most of the company's top executives with the help of armed guards. In 1989, he again stepped down as chief executive officer, but he remained the company's largest shareholder and a board member. He tried to regain the post through a proxy fight in 1990, arguing that the company's business was failing and needed his leadership. The board fought back and removed him as a member. Already weakened by the strike and poor leadership, the economic climate of the border also helped in the decline of Farah Manufacturing. After this loss, the factory and other local manufacturers relocated their manufacturing across the border and became part of the already growing Maquiladora Industry. By the 1990's with the implementation of NAFTA, the transfer of other companies across the border increased even more. Many of the companies which closed their production lines in El Paso, eventually transferred their business to Cd. Juarez. In 1994, the same year that NAFTA was launched, the Mexican Peso was devalued, therefore this lowered the cost of Mexican labor. This difference on labor payment made it impossible for El Paso and other border American cities to compete with the low salaries paid in Mexico (Gereffi, Spencer, Bair, 2002, p. 48).

The official print media in El Paso at the time consisted of two English language newspapers, *The El Paso Times* and *The El Paso Herald Post*, with the *Herald* representing the Republicans and the rival *El Paso Times* editorializing for the Democratic Party, the two papers served as rallying points for the community. While they were both on political sides of the

spectrum, during the strike letters to the editor usually chastised the Farah strikers for their ungratefulness, ignorance, and gullibility to external agitators. Although their letters appeared less regularly than those of their opponents, strikers and their supporters answered in kind (Ruiz, 2008, pp. 129-130). The workers also had a newsletter, La Huelga, that they distributed throughout the community to give updates about the status of the strike.

Social Movements in Communication Studies

To begin with, social movements are important in the study of communication because communication is so critical at every stage of an organization's process in bringing about meaningful change in society. Communication provides the framework for advocacy and activism. It is central in sustaining the social movement itself, as well as in shaping how the movement influences social change. Social change is a process dedicated on changing the social order of society. These social justice initiatives take place on a local community level and can suddenly become social movements on a much larger scale. Periods of social change most often precipitate social movements. Social movements attempt to initiate changes in society. The nationwide Farah strike and boycott of the early seventies was a perfect example of this. The way in which the media portrayed these workers and their families in relation to their employers is a topic that has not been covered in any meaningful academic research. Specifically, the way in which race and gender are framed in the media representations of these striking workers, their unions, employers, and their families in national media outlets.

Secondly, in our consumption-oriented, mediated society, much of what comes to pass as important is based often on the stories produced and disseminated by media institutions. Much of what audiences know and care about is based on the images, symbols, and narratives in radio,

television, film, music, and other media. How individuals construct their social identities, how they come to understand what it means to be male, female, black, white, Asian, Latina/o/x, or Native American is key in understanding the process which media portrayed the workers and their employers. Brooks and Herbert (2006) argue that, "American is shaped by commodified texts produced by media for audiences that are increasingly segmented by the social constructions of race and gender" (p. 297). Media, in short, are essential to what eventually comes to represent our social realities. While sex differences are embedded in biology, how we come to understand and perform gender and race is based on culture. We view culture "as a process through which people circulate and struggle over the meanings of our social experiences, social relations, and therefore, our selves" (Byers & Dell, 1992, p. 191). Just as gender is a social construct through which a society defines what it means to be masculine or feminine, race also is a social construction. Race can no longer be seen as a biological category, and it has little basis in science or genetics. Identifiers such as hair and skin color serve as imperfect indicators of race. The racial categories we use to differentiate human difference have been created and changed to meet the dynamic social, political, and economic needs of our society. The premise that race and gender are social constructions underscores their centrality to the processes of human authenticity (Brooks & Herbert, 2006). Working from and within racial/ethnic/gender lenses compels us to understand the complex roles played by social institutions such as the media in shaping our increasingly gendered and racialized media culture. By looking at the role that the media played in forcing these stereotypes and constructs on a workforce composed entirely of marginalized individuals, we can gain a better understanding of a snapshot in time that had repercussions throughout the southwest and Chicano history. Willie Farah was the son of Lebanese immigrants that had inherited Farah manufacturing from his father, Monsour (Fred)

Farah in 1937 and took over operations of the plant in 1964 after the death of his brother James. While Willie Farah was an immigrant, he was seen as hardworking and patriotic in comparison to the workers who were striking. The factory prided itself on the fact they would only hire American workers and would not hire citizens from Mexico. He prided himself on purchasing only goods manufactured in the U.S. and only selling to stores within the border (Ontiveros, 2011). Willie Farah was completely Americanized and gave the impression of the "good" immigrant that came to America and pulled themselves up by the bootstraps and became successful, unlike the troublemaking employees who were also American but Mexican American. To that end, I address the following research questions.

RQ1: How did certain aspects of national media set the agenda to influence public opinion about striking workers and the employers they are striking against by creating a patron-peon narrative?

RQ2: What role did gender, religion, and race play in the portrayal of Mexican American workers during the Farah Strike?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following chapter we get an understanding of the history, politics, and social customs at the time of the strike and use it as a backdrop to what was happening to the workers and how they may be portrayed in the media. Understanding the events at Farah Manufacturing in a historical context we can understand how media portrayals come into play when news articles and stories are written about the workers and the strike. Awareness of the political arena that surrounded the strike and the workforce that was comprised mainly of Chicano/a workers puts many of the mediated representations in the context of the political culture of the border.

Media Coverage of Social Justice Movements

Social movements often seek to draw attention to issues they deem important by organizing public demonstrations with the aim of attracting mass media coverage. But only a small proportion of all public demonstrations receives any media attention. Smith, McCarthy, McPhail, & Augustyn (2001) asked whether even the minimal coverage that demonstrations receive reveal any influence of social movements in shaping how issues are framed by the mass media. Analyzing newspaper and television news stories on Washington, D.C. protests held during 1982 and 1991, Smith et al. (2001) discovered that,

> Social movement actors engaging in protests as a means of attracting media coverage to their grievances ideally seek thematic framing of the reports on their protests, since social movement aims are best served by coverage that addresses the underlying structural sources of the problems they target. However, the majority of news coverage of protests is episodic or, at best, represents some mixture of episodic and thematic framing (p. 1420).

Protest activities or organizers are often portrayed in a manner that reporters believe will appeal to their mass audience (Gitlin, 1980). Conveying protesters' specific policy or issue concerns is of secondary importance to those reporting on public protests. This could be a function of media gatekeepers whose motivations, routines, and professional interests tend to support the status quo or it could result from the failure of social movement organizers to participate in methodical efforts to become sufficiently familiar with media news production routines so that they can develop strategies that effectively engage the media.

Chicana Feminism

Strong women have always been a part of Mexican culture and they have participated in the political, educational, and economic spheres of their community. They have been, as well, a major source of strength for their families. There are many noted feminists throughout Chicano history who have striven for self-identity, and for the improvement of their communities and their nation. For example, one of the first feminists on the American continent was Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez, who participated in Mexico's fight for independence from Spain. When she was arrested and threatened with death, she stated, "It would be an honor to shed my blood before these young men, to teach them how a woman can die in defense of her ideals," (Cotera, 1976. P.36-39). Chicana feminist participation in the United States has been as varied and as active as that of Mexican women. Maria Hernandez was a Chicana activist and writer who began her work in the 1920's. She wrote, "One should act politically to the public consciousness because this type of effort is owed to the family, the community, and the nation," (Cotera, 1976. p.77). This philosophy has been echoed and sustained by the hundreds of thousands of Chicanas since, who have continued to be involved in social movements. Chicanas have participated in many different

societal and civic activities because they themselves are a diverse group with divergent ideologies and lives. An injustice has been done when they are grouped together as a passive and unmotivated group.

The myth that Mexican and Chicano culture values passiveness in women and that the culture itself impedes women's growth and evolution is a falsehood inconsistent with reality. Chicano families and the roles of both men and women within these structures were undergoing changes in varying degrees, in most, if not all the families involved in the strike. These changes were due, in large part to factors such as aspirations to be more than a worker, a need for education, to have a better understanding of the industry they were battling, and a realization that equality and fairness in the workplace were rights they were owed as citizens of this country, were all brought about by the strike. The female employees at Farah Manufacturing were at the forefront of the Chicana feminist movement. The labor battle at Farah Manufacturing proves the organic link between Chicana feminism and class struggle. The role that these women played in the strike, their struggle against Mexican American *machismo*, and the revolt against the white oppressors of Farah Manufacturing, paved the way for Chicana feminists of today. Martinez (2000) states, the Chicana feminist movement, "exemplifies successful movement against the racist-sexist-heterosexist-classist forces of the dominant US American culture but also is itself a unique contribution to the development of theory and methodology that serves the interests of those for the objects of oppression" (p. 4). The women involved in the Farah Manufacturing strike were not only fighting the oppression they felt at home from their traditional Mexican American husbands, but the oppression from their white employers in the workplace. Garcia (1997) wrote,

> You have the strike against Farah Manufacturing which was primarily an issue of women. Most of the workers in the factory were women, and 85% of them were Chicanas. The women who went around the nation to ask people to strike Farah Pants for Chicanas did a fantastic thing—the quiet non-obtrusive, submissive women were coming to say, "You'd better strike Farah Pants" —Because we are workers. Because we demand workers' rights. All these things are part of the history of the Tejana and they are things that Chicanas all over the nation admirer and identify with (pp. 54-55).

Establishing a space is most important in Chicana feminism. Flores (1996) writes, For Chicana feminists to create their own space, ultimately their own homeland and thus, their own identity, they must first reject the definitions imposed on them by others. Such opposition is the beginning of the breakdown of boundaries constraining Chicana feminists (p. 147). How much of this space was allocated by the media during the strike? By studying the role of the Chicana in the media during this time I hope to understand the way in which the mainstream media portrayed the female worker.

Union Labor and The Chicano/a

Alaniz and Cornish (2010) examine the importance of the history of autonomous organizing in the Chicano/a community. Organizing has been key in the Chicano/a community sustaining and fighting for their rights as residents of the United States. The organizing outside of official channels can sometimes be the first step for minority groups to feed the grassroots base for all of their social justice initiatives.

The work of the United Farm Workers (UFW) was one of the first for members of the Latino/a community. The remarkable success of Cesar Chavez and other core organizers of the

UFW in the creation of a lasting farm labor organization can largely be credited to a distinctive and brilliant style of labor organizing. Chavez brought methods used in community organizing from his work with the Community Service Organization to the task of organizing farmworkers. He named his initial organization the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). His plan involved building unity by offering services to farmworkers (Lopez, 2007, p. 103). By serving genuine needs and developing organizations within which farmworkers could develop trust, Chavez and the NFWA founders created a climate for forging bonds of solidarity among workers. Chavez politicized farmworkers so that they engaged in large public protests. The protests encouraged farmworker visibility and renewed public support for the plight of farmworkers. According to Matt Garcia in his article,

Alaniz and Cornish (2010) state that, “through autonomous movements…. they can provide leadership to the entire working class and address issues that are central to proletarian struggles” (p. 74). The Chicano movement from the 1960’s provided the necessary changes in Chicano culture at the time in the issues of immigrant labor rights, control of police, education, and healthcare. Alaniz and Cornish (2010) analyzed what was the driving force in the struggle of Chicano/a labor organizations. They found that, “it is necessary to smash the white racism that props up the labor aristocracy, and keep the working class tied to the capitalists. It is the responsibility of serious radicals of all colors to lead the labor movement” (p. 78). Many times, Chicano/as responded to the discrimination they faced by forming and joining labor unions.

In Cameron Ruiz’s (1994) article he discusses the history of the Latino in the U.S. labor force. The labor force in southern California is sustained to a growing, low-wage Latino workforce coveted by employers, southern California became "ground zero" for American labor organizing in the 1990s.

> Labor has scored three of the decade's biggest private sector organizing victories among Latino workers there. These victories--wherein previously non-union employees chose union representation and then successfully negotiated first contracts--included 1,500 foundry workers who joined the International Association of Machinists at American Racing, Inc., in Long Beach; 3,000 drywall installers who joined the United Brotherhood of Carpenters in the home construction industry stretching from Santa Barbara to San Diego; and 1,000 janitors who joined the Service Employees International Union through its "Justice for Janitors" campaign at high-rise office buildings in Century City on Los Angeles' Westside. And this winter saw the addition of the largest organizing prize in modern labor history: 74,000 government-paid home care workers who joined the SEIU in Los Angeles County.

These successful union negotiations would not have happened if it were not for the courage of a few thousand workers at the Farah Manufacturing plant who set the precedent in regards to labor disputes. Ruiz (2000) laments on the future of the Chicano/a and union collaboration:

> If the heyday of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers is any indication, there is some reason to believe many people at the core of labor's new movement, especially Latino workers, hunger for more than business unionism; they also want justice, morality, and spirituality. It would seem that now is the time to discuss organized labor's role, if any, in pursuing these goals (p. 55).

Organized labor disputes and the minority worker are key in bringing about any useful change. Ruiz is aware of what needs to be done through social justice initiatives and the Chicano/a's organization of their own people to create a meaningful and lasting change in their working environment. In 1977, three years after the strike's end, Coyle, Harshatter, and Honig conducted

oral histories of approximately thirty Chicanas, who had been involved in the strike, and subsequently described their experiences in *Women at Farah: An Unfinished Story* (1978). Through these women's voices, we gain a better understanding of the family life of the striking workers during and after this time period. Honig revisited the women at Farah Manufacturing in 1992 and conducted further interviews about their lives twenty years after the outset of the strike. The issue with oral histories is the amount of time that has passed since the event and the expanding knowledge about labor rights and disputes that may have permeated the women's memory of the events. Even though the memories of these women has been clouded by time and life experience, we cannot deride them of their shared lived experience of a social movement event. Examination of personal narratives have helped to introduce marginalized voices to the mainstream and they've also provided counter narratives to challenge misrepresentative generalities or counter universal claims about a marginalized portion of society. Barbe (1989) furthers, "For women, claiming the truth of her life despite awareness of other versions of reality that contest this truth often produces both a heightened criticism of officially condoned untruths and a heightened sense of injustice. (p. 18)" It is through personal narrative that we can gain a perspective that we don't find in the mainstream media during and after an event. Personal narrative sources can show a societal historical dynamic that has been purposefully stifled or distorted by the other side.

The Role of Chicanas in the Movement

The role of the Chicana is typically that of the mother, wife, and caregiver. While family structure is important to the Chicana woman, she also wants to be recognized as an intricate part of the family and the larger community. Many of these women felt they could be a wife, mother,

caregiver, and also an activist for social change. Utilizing the talents of the women and seeing them as equals was an important part of the strike movement. Female workers at Farah Manufacturing also shared certain gendered characteristics as a result of their upbringing. Ontiveros (2011) found that the women's history played just as much of a role in their need for change than anything else in their lives,

Most came from families where females were not expected or encouraged to get an education beyond the elementary level. Even those who tried to attend school were driven out by the systemic discrimination found in the El Paso school system, which included penalties for speaking Spanish, a strict tracking system, and active discouragement of finishing high school. Most of the workers lived in the Segundo or Second Ward, an impoverished barrio in south El Paso near the Mexican border. Because they grew up in severe poverty, they were encouraged to leave school early to go to work and/or get married. Finally, they were raised in a culture where they were expected to concede to the men in their lives (p. 486). The oppression these women felt at work, but also in their societal sphere at large had to have played a part in their need for fair labor practices. The women's upbringing and cultural environment had just as much to do with their need for equality and better treatment at work and at home.

One early Chicana role model in labor movements was Dolores Huerta. Dolores Huerta, a prominent figure and cofounder of the United Farmworkers Association is all but forgotten in the history of the movement. Chávez often occupied the spotlight and received much of the credit for their joint work, however. Though Huerta's unparalleled skills as an organizer and negotiator were essential to their success, she faced widespread sexism in the movement and ridicule from people who believed that she belonged at home with her children rather than on the front lines. Huerta used her children in the protest and was able to find a middle ground that suited her as

mother, activist, and woman (Cotera & Tafolla, 2012, pp. 472-475). Huerta helped pave the way by breaking the barriers that Chicanas would have faced in the sheer magnitude of an oppressive culture.

The representation of women in early Chicano/a social movements was almost nonexistent in brochures and posters that were distributed. The Farm Workers Strike used the male form in almost all of their literature. José G. Izaguirre III (2020), points out the absence of female representation throughout the farmworker's movement.

> Even at this moment in the history of the Chican@ movement, the use of the representative male and the lack of women in text and illustrations exposes the movement's gendered and racial compromises with their "revolutionary" history. Although not positing a strict nationalism in a Zapatean sense or in the sense of Chican@ movement discourse (e.g., Aztlán), the manifesto's racial affirmation nonetheless reproduces intersectional forms of exclusion by drawing strict racial lines through the image of a man (p. 62).

The "Boycott Farah Pants" campaign featured a female figure prominently displayed with her right fist in the air in an act of protest. This would appear to coincide with the rise of the Women'

The role of the Chicana in the Farah Manufacturing strike was one that changed dramatically over the course of the two-year strike. In 1977, three years after the strike's end, Coyle, Harshatter, and Honig conducted oral histories of approximately thirty Chicanas, who had been involved in the strike, and subsequently described their experiences in *Women at Farah: An Unfinished Story* (1978). Through these women's voices, we gain a better understanding of the family life of the striking workers during and after this time period. Honig revisited the women

at Farah Manufacturing in 1972 and conducted further interviews about their lives twenty years after the outset of the strike.

The Effect of the Strike on the Family Dynamic

The Farah Manufacturing strike caused a new family dynamic to rise from the ashes of the traditional Mexican household. Moraga (1981) offers a re-envisioning of the family that can be seen as a direct result of the strike, Family is not by definition the man in a dominant position over women and children. *Familia* is cross-generational bonding, deep emotional ties between opposite sexes, and within our own sex. It is finding *familia* among friends where blood ties are formed through suffering in celebration the shared (p. 111).

The women who were striking began to take up new responsibilities that involved organizing the striking workers while they were unable to work. The women suddenly found themselves in positions of power that had been previously out of reach in their time at the factory. The women began to spend less time at home while participating in all of the activities required of them due to the strike, that tensions at home began to build. The husbands in these traditional marriages did not feel it was appropriate for their wives to be spending so much time outside of the home. Coyle et al. (1979) theorizes that, "for many women the changes in their marriages were more profound than a few disagreements over meetings or money. The strike made them more confident of their ability to make decisions. They began to question their own attitudes towards their husbands" (p. 42).

The stress of the strike had a profound impact on the women and their families. Ruiz (2008) observes that,

> Tensions among kin and friends took its toll and, as the strike wore on, financial pressures mounted. Many families lost their homes, automobiles, and other possessions. Although the union had an emergency strike fund and distributed groceries and clothing, many Farah Manufacturing activists found themselves in severe economic straits (p. 131).

These issues could potentially have an effect on the way that the children in the home viewed the consequences of the strike. Food stamps were a sudden reality of life for the striking workers. The workers could not collect unemployment insurance because they were on strike. While economic hardships were commonplace in the families who were participating in the strike, the unexpected result of divorce was an all too real outcome in families struggling in dire economic straits. Coyle et al. (1979) found that, the strike divided families. Several women told of walking out while their sisters remained inside the plant. There was even one family where the husband was on strike and his wife was continuing to work at Farah Manufacturing. "He drives his wife up to the door and," one striker recalled, "and get out of there as fast as he could. Now this was ridiculous!" (p.30).

In an interview with a former employee of Farah Manufacturing, Elsa Chavez, Ruiz (2008) was able to offer this view of the family dynamic during the strike, "You wouldn't believe the number of divorces caused by the strike. A lot of couples broke up either the wife was inside and the husband was outside or the other way around" (p. 132). This can also be looked at in the way in which the media portrayed the striking workers. Were they shown as upstanding members of the community who happened to be striking for better work treatment or were they seen and families that were in disarray and the strike was a result of the strife at home.

Children of the Strikers

The role that children played in the strike was important to the cause because children offered additional help to the striking workers. Coyle et al. (1979) discovered,

> The strike also transformed the relationship of the women workers to their children. Many brought their children to meetings and to the picket line. Children who were slightly older took an active part in strike support work and formed their own opinions about unionization (p. 42).

While perhaps mothers initially brought their children to the line because they had little choice, the youngsters began to prove themselves useful in distributing leaflets outside stores. Adults were less likely to make abusive comments toward a child. Women also reevaluated their own ideas about raising children and the hopes they had for their children. One mother, when questioned about her children's role in the strike was quick to answer with, "I would never want to them to feel oppressed. I want my daughter to be able to do what she's got to do, and not always comply to whatever her boyfriend or husband wants…that she should be the person that she is. And I want my boys to be the person that they are" (Coyle et al., 44). The hope that their children will make different choices than they made in their lives before the strike is evident in this passage. The women were learning their value in society and sought the same kind awakening and knowledge in their children.

Patron-Peon Relationship

A major element in the Spanish American rural social organization was the patron-peon pattern. Although the pattern is no longer in use, the underlying cultural values remain and created many complications in the transformation and acculturation of the Spanish Americans to

the dominant English-speaking society of the modern southwest. Knowlton (1962) argues that, "the patron-peon system was one of the first Spanish-American social organizations to succumb to influences of the dominant English speaking society" (p. 13). Knowlton (1962), defines the patron as, "a person who is able to provide employment, social and economic security, and leadership to those who must work for a living" (p. 12). The large landholder patron supplied a protected, self-sufficient village, supported the church, and provided the necessities of life for his peons. in exchange, he expected obedience and loyalty. The village patron did not only provide employment, but was respected as a village leader. Both the village patron and the landholder patron were expected to be generous, hospitable, brave, courageous, and to display the personal qualities of leadership. Although the patron-peon relationship is almost non-existent today, the following values and attitudes are outgrowths of the relationship and are seen as characteristic of Spanish-Americans and the indigenous peoples in the New World. The basic relationship between the landowning patron and the peon was not wholly economic in nature. In many respects, it resembled the lord and vassal system of the Middle Ages. The patron was responsible for the entire economic and social well-being of his peons and their families. Values and attitudes that for the most part still exist and in a large measure still determine the attitudes of Spanish Americans toward government, political activities, welfare, employment, and patterns of leadership. Among these values are the following:

(1) a blind loyalty toward ethnic leaders that is frequently reflected in voting patterns.

(2) a tendency to endeavor to enter into a secure political or economic position of dependency upon a prominent political leader or a person with wealth.

(3) a reluctance among many to make decisions and a tendency to postpone decisions as long as possible.

(4) a dislike of competition and of personal initiative so important to English-speaking Americans.

(5) a preference for a stable hierarchical social system with well-defined statuses and roles.

(6) a preference for friendly person-to-person primary relationships rather than the formal impersonal relationships of our urbanized world, and

(7) a strong dislike for and resistance to social and cultural changes (p. 15).

The role of Willie Farah as the Patron in the Farah strike is one that I am hoping to discover in the available media representations of the strike.

The Catholic Church and the Chicano/a Labor Movement

The role of the Catholic church in labor disputes and the Chicano/a worker is one that has been tangled in politics and discrimination against the minority worker. This was seen during the early days of the Delano grape boycott during the 1960's. The 1965-1970 Delano grape strike in southern California was a turning point in the Chicano/a workforce and the presence of unions in the workforce that was primarily a minority workforce and a majority of them were Chicano/a.

Marco Prouty (2006) sheds light on the inner working of the Catholic church and its views and public stance on the farmer workers' strike. Prouty used archival sources of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for his research. Catholic vineyard owners and growers stood together in opposing catholic farmworkers during the beginnings of the Delano grape strike. The United Farm Workers Union (UFW) was attempting to organize the migrant workers for better working conditions. The church entered the dispute late since both the growers and the farmworkers were Catholic. Prouty puts it in terms that we can all understand, "The

farmworkers filled the pews, and the growers enriched the coffers (p. 4)." This direct conflict over money seems to be the key in why the Catholic church took so long in voicing their support for the strike. Throughout the early days of the strike there was one supporter from the catholic church, Monsignor George C. Higgins, the so-called labor priest and a member of the Committee on Migratory Labor. Higgins used his extensive journalistic and advocacy skills to support Chavez's efforts. Higgins and Bishop Joseph Donnelly, together with Monsignor Roger Mahoney, steered the USCCB's ad hoc committee on farm labor. They helped change the Church's position from one of reluctance to full support for the UFW. In 1969 the Church endorsed the grape boycott (Prouty, 2006). The shortcomings of Prouty's research was the fact that it was very one sided. There is not any information from the point of view of Monsignor Higgins or the UFW themselves. By using archives produced exclusively by and for the Catholic church, I don't feel that there can be a real sense of the issues or the side of the farmworkers.

The holes in the available literature are evident in the research provided due to the simple fact that there is little to no research on the intersectionality of religion and race played at a crucial time during the uprising of social justice in their communities. The role of women was studied once with much lag time in-between the actual event and the interviews. The use and role that the Catholic church played in this process will also be of importance to the study and how it played a key role in the perpetuation of the patron-peon relationship as well as media coverage of the Farrah strike.

CHAPTER 3: RHETORICAL CRITICISM AS METHODOLOGY

Through a comprehensive study of newspaper articles and films produced by the workers and their employers, this project explores the connection between the media portrayals of the workers and their gender, race, religion, and familial situation. For this analysis, I evaluated a film produced by the Farah Company, *Daybreak* (1971), in response to the strike and possible unionization of the workers; the short documentary film, *The People vs. Willie Farah* (1973) and three New York Times articles published at the beginning of the strike (September 11, 1972), at the height of the strike (June 16, 1973), and after the strike was over (February 25, 1974). I specifically looked for references to religion, race, gender, and family structure. I chose national newspapers to maintain a national sense of the sentiment for the strikers during this time. Local newspapers would not offer me the same "distance" from the issue as *The New York Times* would. The films I chose were made specifically at the time of the strike and offered both the viewpoint of the workers and the company.

Using the Burkean theory of terministic screens and framing theory, I hope to answer the following questions:

RQ1: How did certain aspects of national media set the agenda to influence public opinion about striking workers and the employers they are striking against by creating a patron-peon narrative?

RQ2: What role did gender, religion, and race play in the portrayal of Mexican American workers during the Farah Strike?

Terministic Screens

Kenneth Burke's notion of "terministic screens" seems particularly useful when examining the ways in which the different parties involved in the Farah strike cases portrayed the

situation and delivered their arguments. By using Burke's theory of the terministic screen, we can examine not only how each group's perspective was formed and delivered, but also how each group utilized their perspective to create an argument. Burke describes his terministic screens as ways in which attention is directed regarding a particular subject. To explain simply, Burke compares terministic screens to color filters on a photograph. When the same photograph is altered with a filter it can look quite different and seem to actually depict a different image. As Burke (2000) describes in *Language as Symbolic Action*, "here something so "factual" as a photograph revealed notable distinctions in texture, and even in form" (p. 1035). Thinking along the same lines, Burke stresses, can be applied to a plethora of other situations. In particular, he attributes a similar experience to our choice of vocabulary when describing a situation, "much that we take as observations about "reality" may be but the spinning out of possibilities implicit in our particular choice of terms (p. 1035)". Depending on our word choices and the perspectives from which we observe a situation, our understanding of that situation could differ drastically. Burke's notion of terministic screens can be used to examine not only how the public viewed the striking Farah worker's and Willie Farah and his employees' stories, but how the two organizations directly involved viewed their situation as well.

News Framing

Framing theory was developed in the mid 1960s in the field of sociology. Since its inception, it has become a multidisciplinary model for most methods of social science applications. James Tankard et al. (1991), defined media framing as, "the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration (p. 62)." Simply put, framing is selecting the

news or story that the author wants us to read, emphasizing certain parts of that story to appeal to the audience, excluding parts that would contradict with our preconceived notions about the subject, and elaborating on those stories to provide the audience with the way they want us to view the purpose and slant on a specific issue. This is done quite often in news stories on television and in print. Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) writes,

> News messages, therefore, are textual and visual structures built around a central axis of thought, from a certain perspective, and by information professionals (but not only by them), who will provide an interpretive framework for the audiences exposed to the news messages (p. 424).

Felix Gutierrez (1977), in his research on the portrayal of Chicano/as in newspaper articles in San Antonio discovered five elements which were pervasive in the articles he researched. In these articles he found:

> (1) historically coverage has been low and concentrated in periods when Chicanos or even the subject of public issues are perceived as posing a threat to be established order.
> (2) in these, the news media have used symbols often with negative connotations to designate groups within the Chicano community.
> (3) these symbols served to trigger stereotypes which crystallize public perceptions and actions regarding Chicanos.
> (5) reporters covering Chicanos tend to rely on sources outside the Chicano community for information on Chicanos and coverage of Chicanos has tended to emphasize negative or unfavorable aspects of the community (p. 12).

I hope the news articles and films produced during the strike will offer a glimpse into the framing of the Mexican American worker who wanted union representation, the portrayal of the female workers, the family unit, and their employers.

In de Vrees' (2005) article on framing and the media, she introduces researchers to an integrated method of analysis when studying framing in the media. De Vrees' article showcases the many inconsistences in the application of framing theory to media studies. De Vrees presents a "typology of generic and issue-specific frames proposed based on previous studies of media frames (p. 51)". Her consolidation of different approaches seems to work best with the work that I am conducting. De Vrees (2015) writes,

> Frames have several locations, including the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. These components are integral to a process of framing that consists of distinct stages: frame-building, frame-setting and individual and societal level consequences of framing. Frame-building refers to the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames. Factors internal to journalism determine how journalists and news organizations frame issues. Frame-setting refers to the interaction between media frames and individuals' prior knowledge and predispositions. e consequences of framing can be conceived on the individual and the societal level. An individual level consequence may be altered attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. On the societal level, frames may contribute to shaping social level processes such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions (pp 51-52).

This framework for framing theory is one of the newer ways in which the theory has been revised within the last three years.

Entman (1993) has issues with the conceptualization of Framing theory, “Despite its omnipresence across the social sciences and humanities, nowhere is there a general statement of framing theory that shows exactly how frames become embedded within and make themselves manifest in a text, or how framing influences thinking” (p.52). While he has issues with the end result on the receiver, he can’t deny that frames exist. The texts that were created during the time of the strike may not have been purposely created with the specific frames they convey in mind, but they still provide a framework for analysis.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The purpose of this analysis is to gain a better understanding of the media portrayal of the employees at Farah Manufacturing who were on strike and the portrayal of Farah Manufacturing itself as an institution, and the owner, Willie Farah through the framework of Kenneth Burke's Terministic Screens and Framing Theory. My goal was to study the way in which media frames the labor force and the larger corporations that are trying to subvert the actions of the individuals in the labor force. Through this analysis, I discovered that the framing of the worker's narrative was part of an agenda setting process that the media was quick to use to portray the workers in a negative light in subtle ways to sway public opinion about the striking workers and the union that they were trying to implement at the factory. Framing allows specific aspects of an issue to be highlighted, while downplaying or neglecting others. In this way, the media has the power to influence what individuals think, including their political and social opinions, by affecting what exactly they think about (Entman 1989). When the media and the public's agendas merge into one, so that what the media finds to be noteworthy and in turn promote as important through news coverage, is eventually reflected by its citizens (Callaghan 2011. p. 34).

Unions

In their groundbreaking work, *What Do Unions Do?* Freeman and Medoff (1984) argued that researchers examining the effects of organized labor need to focus on both the monopoly and collective voice faces of unions. Each face has political and economic dimensions. The "monopoly voice" perspective argues that unions benefit their members but have negative effects for business and non- union workers. The "collective voice" face of unions counters that unions increase productivity, reduce inequality, and represent the interests of their own workers as well

as lower-income and disadvantaged people (Freeman and Medoff, 1984). Unionized workers are less likely to quit and as a result, increase skills that foster efficiency. In addition, unions create opportunities for workers to express their voice which also contributes to increased productivity rather than decreasing productivity. The idea that the union workers and the companies they are fighting against have separate "faces" can help to understand the dichotomy between the two.

It is with these assumptions in mind that we can begin to analyze the newspaper articles and short film produced by the Farah Company to showcase the all the reasons why a union was not needed at their factories in El Paso and the southwest.

Newspaper Articles

The editor of a newspaper may believe he was only printing things that people want to read, but in doing his job he was putting a claim on the public's attention, strongly shaping what they will be thinking about and talking about (Cohen, 1963). National newspapers did not have the local papers privilege of showing both sides of the issue because they were so far removed from the situation and could frame the strike in the way that they wanted to garner national support for Farah Manufacturing. The newspaper editors become gatekeepers as they make decisions as to how the story is to be slanted. The authors and editors may not have any idea of the far-reaching effects that this could have on a city over 5,000 miles away. According to Brimeyer, Silva, and Byrne (2016), "Politically, unions are seen as a special interest group lobbying for legislation that protects their own interests at the expense of others. To an extreme, unions are portrayed as uncompromising and vengeful toward anyone who stands in their way, be it workers or political leaders" (p. 517). It is this view of unions in the United States that

creates this false narrative of unions wanting to work against the manufacturers and even the employees they were claiming to protect.

In a New York Times article from September 11, 1972, the issue of the strike at Farah Manufacturing in El Paso was front page news. Bigart (1972) writes, “the immediate issue is not wages or working conditions, although the union believes that both should be improved. At issue is whether a fast-growing, family-controlled company with a strong-minded chief executive can be forced to accept unionization” (p. A1). The portrayal of Willie Farah, the chief executive, as a strong-minded man who will not be swayed by these union workers helps to maintain the narrative of unions as trying to undermine the hard-working self-reliant family business that is only trying to do good for the Latino employees in this largely Latino populated city. The workers are portrayed as thugs by the simple fact that the company accuses them of “have(ing) beaten up workers, slashed tires and fired a few shots at night through plant windows” (p. A1). This is in stark contrast to another article written three months prior. In this article, the author is very sympathetic to the striking workers and gives their strike narrative an almost religious viewpoint, “The strike of Chicano workers against the Farah Manufacturing Company, now in its second year, has settled into a kind of holy war of attrition” (Shabecoff, 1973. p. A23). The portrayal of the workers is intended to pull on the heartstrings of the reader. Shabecoff (1973) has also framed a narrative of the poor striking worker who is trying to survive on the pay provided to the striking workers. Shabecoff (1973) writes, “because he is on strike, Mr. Robles is now four months behind on the mortgage payments for his small, neat bungalow. He has heard that Texas may cut off his food stamps, which is all he and his family have to live on other than the $30 a week in strike benefits provided by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union” (p.

23A). The framework of the poor union worker who is just trying to make ends meet and buy their child a ten-cent rubber ball make the reader think about the employee in a different way.

Through these two articles we can see the difference in narratives that the same newspaper is trying to spin to convince the reader that the strikers were either hard working individuals who were trying to strive for better working conditions or low-level street thugs that would like nothing better than to see the plant burned to the ground. An interesting fact about both articles, they workers are referred to as Chicanos. This was not a self-identifier that many mainstream media outlets would have used when describing Mexican Americans in this time period. The term Chicano had many negative connotations associated with it for Mexican Americans and others. This may have been a reason why it was used. The use of the word Chicano may have influenced the reader in a subconscious way when thinking about these striking workers. The notion that a Chicano was causing issues for these hard-working Mexican American workers was surely on the mind of the reader when looking at the story.

In Perlmutter's (1974) article at the conclusion of the strike, the striking workers are referred to as Mexican-Americans. This would seem to fit into the framework that now, after the strike, the employees are no longer radical Chicanos, but mild-mannered Mexican-Americans who are good workers and not there to disrupt the status quo anymore. It's interesting to see how in subtle ways, even labels can be seen as setting up a framework in the media to influence readers. The role that the Roman Catholic Church played in the strike was also mentioned quite heavily in the article. In Shabecoff's (1973) article, he called the strike a "kind of holy war of attrition" without mentioning the Roman Catholic Church specifically, he frames the strike as a religious battle.

The role of the women strikers was not present at all in the articles. In every article that was studied, only men were interviewed. This gives the impression to the audience that only men were striking and causing all these problems down in the southwest. By creating this narrative of men looking for union representation and fighting the status quo of the garment factory industry, the audience would feel threatened by this swarthy Mexican worker that the media was trying to subtly portray.

Daybreak (1971)

The industrial film, *Daybreak* (1971), attempts to show the human side of Farah Manufacturing. From the company's founding through the 1960s, Farah was considered a patriotic American company that offered its employees on-site health care, cafeteria benefits, and a generous wage. The film shows the viewer the health care station, the large airy cafeteria, and the well-dressed employees on their way into work. The view of a factory that does not conform to the public's view of a factory as a workhouse or sweatshop helps to confirm this narrative of the factory as a caring and kind pace that only cares about its employees. This film describes the family atmosphere of the company where supervisors are sympathetic and called by their first name, where there are "no titles, no bosses, no distant executives", and employees are paid higher than the industry standard.

The film also portrays workers of all ethnicities. Employees are white, Latino, and black. At the time of this film, Farah had just expanded to include international operations, was the second largest employer in El Paso, and was achieving record-breaking sales according to the film. Due to this sudden growth, Farah began to demand that workers meet higher quotas and benefits were tightened. This film was likely a response to increasing tensions within the

corporation, tensions that exploded during the strike when over half their workers went on strike, resulting in the national boycott of Farah slacks. The film attempts to communicate to its employees that "all that technology and all those machines wouldn't amount to a 'hill of jeans' without the real wealth of Farah, its people." The film showcases the "bosses" of the company as white, dominate, older males. The fact that these men are used as the "voice of authority" only reinforces the thought that the employees of color are subservient to these men who are seen as in charge and not part of the employees as a whole. The film does focus on a Latino supervisor, but he is seen eating with the other employees and is not in frame with the white "bosses" show throughout the film.

The use of a Latino narrator for the film was also an interesting way for the filmmakers to set the agenda. The voiceover is a male voice with heavily accented English discussing the warm and family atmosphere of the Farah Manufacturing plant only seems to solidify the idea that, if one 'them' is reading the story, then it must be okay. The viewers of the film would wonder why the workers would be striking, surely not because of their culture because the plant is so "Mexican American". Willie Farah wanted to create a framework of the Mexican American worker and a multiethnic workforce that could be seen in the film and more specifically, through its narration. The factory was also seen as VERY clean and bright, not at all what a sweatshop would look like. The audience would wonder why anyone would have an issue with the working conditions of this factory. The entire purpose of the film was to create a framework and narrative that the factory and company were providing everything they could to the Mexican American worker and there should be no reason for a strike. The very white audience that this film was geared to would only have a frame of reference of Mexican Americans that included mariachis,

accented English, and grateful ethnic employees happy to work in such a clean and bright factory.

***The People vs. Willie Farah* (1973)**

This short film was produced by the Citizen's Committee for Justice for Farah Workers (CCJFW) and directed by Harold Mayer. Harold Mayer had produced and directed documentaries for all of the major the networks before forming his own company, Harold Mayer Productions, in 1961. Mayer, under his own company, produced and directed many documentary films for national public television as well as others, including those concerned with issues of social consciousness. His film*, The Inheritance* (1964) which brought the issues of labor unions and immigration from the past to their impact on us today was the forerunner to his film, *The People vs. Willie Farah*. The film is told from the perspective of the workers and their families. The role of *el patron* and the employees as *el peon* is one that is attributed to Willie Farah by George McAlmond, a lawyer for the workers. McAlmond states that, "The patron system is what is holding back social progress and real economic progress in this area…because once the workers win this strike, it is going to bring back control over their lives." According to Clark Knowlton (1962),

> Among the Spanish Americans, the patron was and is a person who is able to provide employment, social and economic security, and leadership to those who must work for a living. He is usually a person of substance belonging to a family that is socially prominent in the area. His position as a patron is not based primarily upon his personal characteristics, but rather upon his ability to perform the institutionalized role of a patron (p. 12).

The use of the term patron is in direct relation to the race of the employees. The Spanish system of the patron was one that not only kept the workers in a constant state of servitude and subservience, not only in their professional life, but also in their personal life. Willie Farah is the epitome of *el patron*. Not only is he directly in charge of the workers, but he is also well regarded in the community and on a national level. This framework, with Willie as the evil landowner who is cruel to his *peons* that work on his land is a nice touch when trying to find an analogy for the viewer to relate the situation to. This can be studied further in detail at a later date, but the concept of Willie Farah as an allegory of a time of colonization would have some effect on the viewing audience.

The film opens with a Mexican American father pushing his children on a swing in his backyard while describing his reason for striking. The family lives in row houses that are depicted amongst the stark El Paso desert. The male employee is interviewed in a medium shot from the waist up, this is in stark contrast to the female worker who is interviewed in a close up shot of her face. The narrator in this film is the filmmaker himself, Harold Mayer. This adds a certain credibility to the film. The film's use of a white voice of authority provides a legitimacy that *Daybreak* (1972) doesn't have. The women refer to Willie Farah as "Papa Willie", while creepy unto itself, this relegation of woman to child seems to trivialize the female workers who are putting themselves at the front of this strike both physically and politically. It would be one thing to have Mexican American men striking and being politically active, but the role of woman was to be subservient, especially that of the Mexican American wife.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Through the study of media portrayals of the workers at Farah I discovered a few interesting items. Newspaper coverage of Latino/a workers during the period surveyed can be summarized as the media quoting whites about Mexicans since the overpowering majority of sources and reporters were white. In addition, since reporters rely so heavily on public officials as sources, the themes of stories as revealed in headlines portrayed the workers as law-enforcement or public problems. Conversely, the little number of sources from textile organizations, legal agencies, Latino groups, academics, and the workers themselves which seem to indicate that sources which could lend a broader objectivity and insight to the issue were largely ignored by reporters.

The media's heavy use of the term Chicano during the strike acted as a symbol that undoubtedly reinforces the image of the worker as a law-enforcement or public safety problem. The symbol of the word "Chicano" has a negative meaning that brands those associated with it as lawbreakers and outsiders before the reader even reaches the context of the story

Given the historical use of negative symbols to describe Latino/as in the news, news organizations should have been careful in their use of the term to describe the striking workers. These media symbols whether intentional or not have come at times when oppressive public acts have been perpetrated on the Chicano/a community. The use of such a symbol and the negative stereotypes it triggers helps build public support for unusually harsh measures in dealing with those associated with the symbol. It is in this atmosphere of public theater that the general public allows violations of civil and other rights. These violations can take the role of either actions by government agencies or private individuals and groups as in the case of Willie Farah and the striking workers.

Women were all but absent in any newspaper articles during or immediately after the strike was over. This lack of representation shows the framework of the strike as a male issue. The role of the men during the strike was overplayed in the articles. The films chosen portray the women as mothers and diligent workers and not in the role they actually had during the strike. The exclusion of women in the media is representative and showcases the struggle women encountered just to be accepted and treated as equals to their male counterparts. Not only were women's issues and leaders excluded from the media. Women's omission from the serious news of the day was introduced as early as the 18th century by women suffragists and women's rights activists in Europe and North America. The first suffrage leaders wanted the attention of the news media to pass their ideas and activities on to broader platforms, but male managed newspapers and magazines essentially ignored the women activists. The news outlets that did cover women often belittled their goals (Byerly & Ross, 2006). Women who departed from the social norms of passivity and deference to male authority, and the traditional roles of wife and mother, risked being characterized as immoral, crazy or eccentrics, if they were covered at all. This male dominated media coverage had the effect of pushing the women workers of Farah into the shadows.

REFERENCES

Alaniz, Y., & Cornish, M. (2008). *Viva la raza: a history of Mexican Amercian identity and resistance.* Seattle, WA: Red Letter Press, 2008.

Ardèvol-Abreu, A. (2015). Framing theory in communication research. Origins, development and current situation in Spain. *Revista Latina De Comunicación Social*, (70), 423-450.

Baker, S. (1999). Mexican-Origin Women in Southwestern Labor Markets. In Browne I. (Ed.), *Latinas and African American Women at Work: Race, Gender, and Economic Inequality* (pp. 244-269). Russell Sage Foundation.

Barbre, J. W., & Personal Narratives Group. (1989). *Interpreting women's lives: feminist theory and personal narratives*. Indiana University Press.

Bigart, H. (1972, September 11). Classic Labor – Organizing Drive Splits El Paso. *The New York Times*. p. 1A

Brimeyer, Ted, Eric O. Silva, and R. Jolene Byrne. 2016. "What do Unions Do? Media Framing of the Two-Faces of Labor." *Working USA 19,* no. 4: 517-532.

Brooks, D. E. and Hebert, L. P. 2006. "Gender, race, and media representation". In *The Sage handbook of gender and communication*, Edited by: Dow, B. J. and Wood, J. T. 297–317. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Burke, K. (2000). "Language as Symbolic Action." In *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present.* Ed. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000. 1034-1041.

Byerly, C. M., & Ross, K. (2006). *Women and media : a critical introduction.* Blackwell.

Byers, J., & Dell, C. (1992). "Big differences on the small screen: Race, class, gender, feminine beauty, and the characters at "Frank's Place." In Lana F. Rakow (Ed.), *Women making*

meaning: New feminist directions in communication (pp. 191–209). New York: Routledge.

Clark, S. K. (1962). Patron-Peon pattern among the Spanish Americans of New Mexico. *Social Forces, (1),* 12-17.

Cohen, B. C. (1963). *The Press and Foreign Policy.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cotera, M. (1976). *Diosa y hembra: the history and heritage of Chicanas in the U. S. Austin*, Tex.: Information Systems Development, 1976.

Cotera, M., & Tafolla, C. (2012). *Great Lives from History*. Salem Press.

Coyle, L., Hershatter, G., & Honig, E. (1979). *Women at Farah: an unfinished story*. [s.l. : s.n.], c1979.

Dickerson, N. T. (2006). "We are a force to be reckoned with": Black and Latina women's leadership in the contemporary U.S. labor movement. *Working USA, 9(3),* 293-313.

Flores, L. A. (1996). Creating discursive space through a rhetoric of difference: Chicana feminists craft a homeland. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *82*142-156.

Freeman, R. B., & Medoff, J. L. (1984). *What do unions do?* New York, NY: Basic Books.

García, A. M. (1997). *Chicana feminist thought: The basic historical writings*. New York: Routledge.

Gereffi, G., Spener, D., & Bair, J. (2002). *Free trade and uneven development : the North American apparel industry after NAFTA*. Temple University Press.

Gitlin, T. (1980). *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making and unmaking of the New Left*. University of California Press.

Gómez-Quiñones, J. (1994). *Mexican American Labor, 1790-1990*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Gutierrez, Felix. (1977). Through Anglo Eyes: Chicanos as Portrayed in the News Media. Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism. Seattle, WA, August 13-16, 1978.

Honig, E. (1996). Women at Farah revisited: political mobilization and its aftermath among Chicana workers in El Paso, Texas, 1972-1992. *Feminist Studies*, (2), 425.

Honig, E. (1997). Striking lives: oral history and the politics of memory. *Journal of Women's Histories*, 9139-163.

Izaguirre III, J. G. (2020). "A Social Movement in Fact": *La Raza* and *El Plan De Delano*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 50(1), 53-68, DOI: 10.1080/02773945.2019.1685125

Lieberman, Stuart. (2003). A transgenerational theory. *Journal of Family Therapy. 1.* 347-360.

Lippman, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace.

López, A. A. (2007). *The Farmworkers' Journey*. University of California Press.

Martinez, J. M. (2000). *Phenomenology of Chicana experience and identity: Communication and transformation in praxis*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Moraga, C. (1981). "La Guerra." In *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of color,* (Eds.) Cherrie Moraga & Gloria Anzaldua. New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press.

Ontiveros, M. L. (2011). Building a movement with immigrant workers: The 1972-74 strike and boycott at Farah manufacturing. *Employee Rights & Employment Policy Journal*, *15*(2), 479-505.

Prouty, M. G. (2006). *César Chávez, the Catholic bishops, and the farmworkers' struggle for social justice*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Ruíz, V. (2008). From *Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Seib, P. (1987). *Who's in charge? how the media shapes news and politicians win votes*. Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

Soldatenko, G. d. (2002). International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union labor organizers: Chicana and Latina leadership in the Los Angeles garment industry. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, (1), 46.

Tamboukou, M. (2016). *Gendering the memory of work: women workers' narratives*. Routledge.

Tankard, J., Handerson, L., Sillberman, J., Bliss, K., and Ghanem, S. "*Media Frames: Approaches to Conceptualization and Measurement"* (paper presented at the AEJMC annual convention, Boston, MA, 1991).

VITA

Matthew Desiderio Minnich
matthewminnich@yahoo.com

Completed my BA at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) with a major in communication studies and a minor in theatre in 2016. My MA in communication studies will be complete in Summer of 2020. I spent the summers as an instructor in The Talk of Texas Speech and Debate Camp hosted by UTEP. While on the UTEP Forensics Team I was awarded Outstanding Student in Oral Interpretation (1997) by the UTEP Department of Communication. National awards received were 7th Place Poetry Interpretation at the AFA-NIET National Tournament (1996) and 12th Place Program Oral Interpretation, AFA-NIET National Tournament (1995). In 2014 I was named Outstanding Alumni by the UTEP Forensics Program (2014).

During my graduate studies, I was the Graduate teaching Assistant for the UTEP Forensics Team from 2017-2018. While a graduate student I taught; COMM 1301: Introduction to Public Speaking, UTEP, Spring 2017 – Fall 2018, COMM 2201: Practicum in Forensics: Debate, Spring 2017 – Fall 2018 and COMM 2202: Practicum in Forensics: Individual Events, Spring 2017 – Fall 2018.

While in my graduate work, I was awarded Moira Murphy's Best Student Paper Award at the UTEP Women's History Month Conference (2018). I also presented the paper, *The 1972-1974 El Paso Farah strike: A look at mediated representations of race and gender* at the conference.

Departmental and university service that I participated while at UTEP were as follows, Member, UTEP Forensics Program External Advisory Board (2017-present), Representative of the Graduate Student Advisory Board (GSAB), Department of Communication, UTEP (2018), Captain, UTEP Forensics Team, UTEP (1994-1997), Vice President, University Players, Department of Theatre and Film, UTEP (1995-1996), Treasurer, University Players, Department of Theatre and Film, UTEP (1994-1995).