

Charles Phelps Taft Research Center
at the University of Cincinnati
Graduate Summer Fellowship Award

Each section (I-III) should be placed at the start of a new page. All required materials must be included in a single document, uploaded to the electronic submissions system, no later than 5PM on the published day of the deadline. Departmental review is required for this program, as well as a letter of support. Applicants should submit their application with enough time to receive review prior to the close of the deadline. Taft does not accept an obligation to review applications that have not received intradepartmental review by the close of the deadline.

I. General Information

- a. Name: Vanessa de los Reyes
- b. M#: xxxxxxxxxx
- c. Department: History
- d. Project title: From Ricky Ricardo to *Chico and the Man*: Latinos in American Popular Culture, 1951-1978
- e. Project Location: UCLA Film and Television Archive and UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center in Los Angeles, California
- f. Probable Results of a Grant (such as publications, working papers, and presentations): I have applied to a conference in January 2016, and if accepted, I will include the work that develops from this Los Angeles trip. I anticipate completing at least two chapters of my dissertation from this grant including one on Latino representations and Chicano activism in the 1970s. I will also submit a portion of this work for consideration in an academic journal.
- g. Have you already or will you in the future apply for other grants for this travel, including departmental support? I will be applying to my department for summer support. GSGA has already awarded me the research fellowship in 2013. I am not eligible for funding from other sources for this trip.

II. Taft Grant History

Please list your grant history with Taft for the last 5 years, in reverse chronological order, including project title, grant type, grant date, and amount of award, as well as project development subsequent to the grant, e.g. publication.

Project Title: Going Latin: Latin America in U.S. Popular Culture

Type of Award: Taft Graduate Student Travel Grant (April 2014)

Amount of Award: \$450.00 (only used \$242.14)

Project Presented at the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association National Conference in Chicago, IL

III. Project Narrative

My dissertation, "From Ricky Ricardo to *Chico and the Man*: Latinos in American Popular Culture, 1951-1978," focuses on the representation of Latinos in popular culture, specifically in film, television, and advertising, from the 1950s through the 1970s. The intellectual problem I address for this project has two parts: the production and the consumption of these images. First, I will trace how Latino representations in the entertainment and consumer industries have changed over time. I am exploring how Hollywood, the television industry, and the advertising industry pushed certain images of Latinos in the era of Cold War consensus in the 1950s, the civil rights era of the 1960s, and the rise of identity politics in the later 1960s and 1970s. The second part of the problem concerns how Latinos, both producers and consumers of these images, responded to these depictions and how their responses evolved. Latinos reacted to these images by either appropriating them or organizing to combat them. My goal is to discover how extensive and influential these methods were. This problem is worth addressing because the production of these images were both informed by and reflected greater issues on the American landscape such as the Cold War, civil rights, immigration, and identity politics. The acceptance of or resistance to these representations had social, political, and economic implications in the lives of Latinos such as providing a justification for restricted immigration and limiting employment and educational opportunities. It was also this negotiation between the producer and the consumer that led to the formation or reformation of Latino identity.

This current project represents the continuation of a research agenda begun with my master's thesis, which examined actor Desi Arnaz's and *I Love Lucy*'s role in the representation of Latino culture. I am now interested in what other depictions of Latinos were available to mainstream audiences in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, and how Latino organizations participated in discussions of those representations. The documents available in the UCLA Film and Television Archive and the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center are essential in contributing to my ongoing project. I have compiled a list of the materials I need to acquire at both institutions, which include films, newsreels, interviews, organizational papers and more. The Film and Television Archive contains films that are not accessible to me here at UC despite numerous efforts made through OhioLink and WorldCat. One example is a 1950s Disney short film called *Wetback Hound* that focuses on a canine sneaking across the border. The Archive also has interviews with Latino actors (many now deceased) which were compiled for a documentary, *The Bronze Screen*. The Chicano Studies Research Center has various papers belonging to activists in the Chicano movement and newspapers intended for those audiences such as *La Gente de Aztlan*. I am planning on traveling to Los Angeles

for a time frame of one to two weeks this summer and will use this fellowship to pay for transportation, lodging, and meals.

This project will explore the mainstream representations of and reactions to Latinos on television, film, and advertising in the 1950s through the 1970s. I am not only interested in the representations themselves, but also in the production and inevitable consumption of these images. I will investigate how producers (actors and the entertainment industry) and consumers (people living in the United States including Latinos themselves) participated in the creation of Latino characters and identity in popular culture. How did actors navigate these roles and Hollywood's specific attributes for "Latin" characters (e.g. hot-tempered, sexual, and musical)? How much control did they have over the representation? How have Latinos organized to change their images in popular culture? How did consumers receive these representations? Through the course of answering these questions, I expect that it will push me to intellectually develop a path of identity formation and creation. My hypothesis is that there was a shift from the Cold War consensus of the 1950s to the identity politics of the 1960s and 1970s and the negotiation between producers and consumers affected visual depictions of Latinos, but without the documentation, I will not have a strong argument to defend in my dissertation.

I have started tackling those questions and have mostly researched the subjects that will constitute first and second chapters (1-*I Love Lucy* and the Cold War Latin and 2-*West Side Story* and issues of immigration) of my dissertation. I am now diverting my attention to the piece on protest and activism (3-Frito Bandito and other advertising, 4-Latino activism and protest of representations, and 5-*Chico and the Man* and the question of authenticity). I plan to travel to the UCLA Film and Television Archive and the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center to research the activism that occurred in Latino communities and organizations as a reaction to Latino representations. Gathering this information will contribute to the formation and completion of chapter 4 and parts of chapters 3 and 5 of the dissertation. These chapters could serve as articles for submission to a peer-reviewed journal and as material for presenting at regional or national conferences.

I anticipate that this project will enhance the current historical scholarship on the representations of Latinos and their subsequent response to these representations in the post-World War II era in two specific ways. First, it will add to the historical scholarship on Latinos and popular culture. Historians have discussed Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, and others, but not the broad spectrum of the group categorized collectively as *Latinos* in the United States. Secondly, my use of nontraditional sources will participate in the new methodologies within U.S. historical scholarship that have turned to popular culture as

a way to examine and explain historical change.¹ Popular culture sheds light on the serious struggles of Latino identity and provides a more thorough analysis of national Latino representation.

¹Examples of this shift include Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*, (Berkeley: University of California, 2004); Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Jacqueline Najuma Stewart, *Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black Urban Modernity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Anthony Macias, *Mexican American Mojo: Popular Music, Dance, and Urban Culture in Los Angeles, 1935–1968*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Robin G. Kelley, *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Curriculum Vitae

Education

Ph.D. University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH August 2012-Present

In Progress- doctoral candidate in U.S. History, expected graduation May 2017

Qualifying Exams passed on November 21, 2014

Exam fields: Major- United States History, Minors- U.S. and the World, Modern Latin America

M.A. Miami University, Oxford, OH August 2006-May 2008

Graduation Date: May 2008

Degree: Master of Arts in History with an emphasis on the social and cultural history of the United States in the twentieth century

Thesis: *I Love Ricky: How Desi Arnaz Challenged American Popular Culture*

B.A. Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY

January 2001-May 2006

Graduation Date: May 2006, Cum Laude

Major: History, Area of Concentration: Psychology

Teaching Experience

Instructor at University of Cincinnati

January-May 2015

HIST 2099- Special Topics: 1950s Pop Culture

Teaching Assistant at University of Cincinnati

August 2012-2014

HIST 1014- World History 20th Century

HIST 3051- Global History of World War II

HIST 1001- United States History I

History Instructor at Gateway Community and Technical College

August 2010-May 2012

Classes taught:

HIS 102- World Civilization II (in-person)

HIS 108- History of the U.S. through 1865 (in-person)

HIS 109- History of the U.S. since 1865 (in-person and online)

HIS 120- The World at War, 1935-1945 (in-person)

HIS 265- History of Women in America (in-person)

Adjunct Instructor at Northern Kentucky University

August 2008-June 2010, July-August 2013

Classes taught:

HIS 102- History of the United States through 1877 (in-person)
HIS 103- History of the United States since 1877 (in-person/online)
HIS 380- History and Film: America in the 1950s (in-person)

Graduate Assistant at Miami University

August 2006-May 2008

HST 198- World History since 1500
HST 111- Survey of American History (U.S.) I
HST 112- Survey of American History (U.S.) II
HST 112- Survey of American History (U.S.) II

Leadership Roles

President for the History Graduate Student Association **August 2013-May 2014**

Course Manager at Gateway for History **August 2010-May 2012**

Lead/Contact Advisor for the Beta Pi Tau chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
January 2011-December 2011

Academic/Scholarly Experience

Citation and reference editor for Dot Christenson's book, *Keep on Fighting: The Legacy of Marian A. Spencer*, forthcoming 2015 by Ohio University Press
August 2014-October 2014

Graduate Student Representative in the Distinguished Teaching Professor Award Committee for the University of Cincinnati **November 2013-January 2014**

Member of Graduate Student Governance Association Group Grant Review Committee **September 2013- May 2014**

Student Representative of the History Department Chair Search Committee
September 2013- May 2014

Student Representative of Graduate Studies Committee in History
August 2013- May 2014

Volunteer Judge at District 8 History Day, Cincinnati, OH **April 2008**

Publications

Articles

"R.A. Jones Manufacturing: A Centenary Company in Northern Kentucky." *Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine: A Periodical of Regional History and Genealogy* XII, No. 2 (2006): 2-12.

Encyclopedia Entries

"*I Love Lucy*," in Gina Misiroglu, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Women and Popular Culture* (New York: Facts On File, Inc.)-forthcoming 2012

"Pigeons – use of in secret communications," in Glenn P. Hastedt, ed., *Spies, Wiretaps, and Secret Operations: An Encyclopedia of American Espionage* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010).

"Television- espionage shows on," in Glenn P. Hastedt, ed., *Spies, Wiretaps, and Secret Operations: An Encyclopedia of American Espionage* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010).

Chapters

"The Fifties: 1950-1959," in Rodney P. Carlisle, ed. *Multicultural America: A Social and Cultural History*, vol.1 on Hispanic Americans (Croton-on-Hudson, NY: Facts On File, Inc., 2011).

Presentations

Presenter at National Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association (PCA-ACA) Conference in Chicago

April 2014

I was on the panel "Latin Americans and Latinos: Identity Issues and Cultural Stereotypes" and presented the paper, *Going Latin: Latin America in U.S. Popular Culture*.

Presenter at Queen City Colloquium at University of Cincinnati

April 2014

I was on the panel "Seeking an Escape: Film and Popular Culture in the Twentieth Century" and presented the paper, *Selling Peace, Pleasure, and Produce: U.S.-Latin American Entanglements in the Early Cold War, 1945-1955*.

Presenter in Dr. Vanessa Walker's Cuba and the U.S. Special Topics course at the University of Cincinnati on *I Love Lucy*

February 2013

I presented to a class of college students on how Americans viewed Cuba through the television show *I Love Lucy*.

Presenter at Mid-Atlantic PCA-ACA Conference in Philadelphia November 2007

I presented part of my thesis "I Love Ricky: How Desi Arnaz Challenged 1950s American Popular Culture" as part of a panel on American & Latino/a Studies.

Presenter at Queen City Colloquium at University of Cincinnati June 2007

I presented my paper "Cuban Influences on American Culture" as part of a panel on Identity Formation. I used PowerPoint for this presentation.

Scholarly Affiliations

- Member of Organization of American Historians, October 2006-Present
- Member of the American Historical Association, August 2005-Present
- Member of Phi Alpha Theta, April 2004-Present

Honors and Awards

- Zane Miller Prize, second place for outstanding paper by a graduate student in history (2014)
- Taft Graduate Student Travel Grant (2014)
- Graduate Student Governance Association Travel Award (2014)
- Graduate Student Governance Association Diversity/Interdisciplinary Research Fellowship Award Recipient, 2013-2014 (\$1,500)
- Teaching Assistantship at University of Cincinnati, 2012-present
- Teaching Assistantship at Miami University, 2006-2008

Teaching and Professional Development

- Attended PCA-ACA National Conference in Chicago, IL, April 2014
- Attended the Organization of American Historians (OAH) National Conference in Milwaukee, WI, April 2012
- Completed the Graduate Student Teaching Enhancement Program (GSTEP) at Miami University, Spring 2007
- Attended The 2006 Lilly Conference on College Teaching at Miami University, November 2006