"This is it!" [Is it?]: The Marketing of Nostalgia on Netflix´s *One Day at a Time*

"This is it!" [¿Lo es?]: El marketing de la nostalgia en la serie *One Day at a Time* de Netflix

"This is it!" [É?]: O marketing da nostalgia no Netflix *Um dia de cada vez*

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Abstract: Netflix has been producing a nostalgic sub-genre that takes its cues from the visual culture of the past and triggers a form of sentimental longing for the past in the viewer. In shows like *The Get Down*, *Stranger Things, Glow*, and *Fuller House*, the narrative elements serve a larger nostalgia for the '70s, '80s, and '90s. These and other Netflix original shows engage in anesthetics and politics of viewer reception that projects an image of these earlier times and spaces in which the critical historical viewpoint is marginalized in favor of nostos -return— which can also generate retro-futures, the futures that were once imagined in these pasts (Boym, 2001; Niemeyer, 2014). Through a critical textual and material analysis of Netflix's original show, *One Day At A Time* (ODAAT), this article will consider how Netflix capitalizes on a vision of the 1970s as a marketing tactic aimed at attracting a Latina/o audience by reviving an older show, creating an emotional atmosphere out of the reception space of fandom itself, as its viewers' anxieties about the shows cancellation and the narrative of saving a show are incorporated into the manipulated aura of the show itself. Created originally by Norman Lear in 1975, *ODAAT* told the story of a divorced working-class white woman from Indianapolis raising strong-willed daughters, and the family's interactions with the handyman for the building in which they lived. Lear revived the show in 2017 and hired writer, actress, editor, and producer Gloria Calderón-Kellet as the showrunner and cultural translator of the show. The publicity around the revival leans heavily on the concept that this is a Latina/o remake/reboot/reimagination/twist of the older sitcom. The selling point is to reimagine a show linked to 70s popular culture sieved through a 2010s emphasis on diversity. Several deployments of nostalgia produce this effect: the marketing, the narrative (storyline), and the storyline

provoked after the announcement of the possibility of an eventual cancellation of the show, creating identity anxiety among its fans. My interest is to explore whether nostalgia can be deployed as a source of creative renewal or as a means of critiquing present conditions of production, circulation, and consumption of Latina/o representations.

Keywords:

Resumen: Netflix ha estado produciendo un subgénero nostálgico que se inspira en la cultura visual del pasado y desencadena una forma de anhelo sentimental por el espectador. En programas como *The Get Down*, *Stranger Things*, *Glow* y *Fuller House*, los elementos narrativos sirven a una mayor nostalgia por los años 70, 80 y 90. Estos y otros programas originales de Netflix se dedican a la anestesia y a la política de recepción del espectador que proyecta una imagen de estos tiempos y espacios anteriores en los que el punto de vista histórico crítico está marginado a favor de los nostos -retorno- que también pueden generar retro-futuros, los futuros que alguna vez fueron imaginados en estos pasados (Boym, 2001; Niemeyer, 2014). A través de un análisis crítico textual y material del programa original de Netflix, *One Day At A Time* (ODAAT), este artículo considerará cómo Netflix aprovecha una visión de la década de 1970 como una táctica de marketing destinada a atraer a una Latina / audiencia reviviendo un programa del pasado, y creando una atmósfera emocional fuera del espacio de recepción del fandom mismo, ya que las ansiedades de sus espectadores sobre la cancelación de los programas y la narrativa de guardar un programa se incorporan al aura manipulada de la serie en sí. Creado originalmente por Norman Lear en 1975, ODAAT contó la historia de una mujer blanca de clase trabajadora divorciada de Indianápolis que cría hijas de carácter fuerte, y las interacciones de la familia con el personal de mantenimiento del edificio en el que vivían. Lear revivió el programa en 2017 y contrató a la escritora, actriz, editora y productora Gloria Calderón-Kellet como directora y traductora cultural del programa. La publicidad en torno al renacimiento se basa en gran medida en el concepto de que se trata de una Latina/el remake/reinicio/reimaginación/giro de la comedia de situación más antigua. El punto de venta es reimaginar un espectáculo vinculado a la cultura popular de los años 70 tamizado a través del énfasis de 2010 en la diversidad. Varios despliegues de nostalgia producen este efecto: el marketing, la narrativa

(argumento) y el argumento provocado después del anuncio de la posibilidad de una eventual cancelación del programa, creando ansiedad de identidad entre sus fanáticos. Mi interés es explorar si la nostalgia puede desplegarse como una fuente de renovación creativa o como un medio para criticar las condiciones actuales de producción, circulación y consumo de representaciones latinas.

Palabras claves:
Netflix, nostalgia, One Day At A Time, Latinidad, Norman Lear

Resumo: A Netflix está produzindo um subgênero nostálgico que leva suas pistas da cultura visual do passado e desencadeia uma forma de desejo sentimental pelo passado no espectador. Em programas como The Get Down, Stranger Things, Glow e Fuller House, os elementos narrativos servem para uma nostalgia maior dos anos 70, 80 e 90. Esses e outros programas originais da Netflix se envolvem em anestésicos e políticas de recepção de espectadores que projetam uma imagem desses tempos e espaços anteriores, nos quais o ponto de vista histórico crítico é marginalizado em favor de nostos -return - que também pode gerar retro-futuros, os futuros que já foram imaginados nesses passados (Boym, 2001; Niemeyer, 2014). Por meio de uma análise textual e material crítica do programa original da Netflix, Um dia de cada vez (ODAAT), este artigo considerará como a Netflix aproveita uma visão da década de 1970 como uma tática de marketing destinada a atrair um público latino-americano revivendo um público mais velho. show, criando uma atmosfera emocional a partir do espaço de recepção do próprio fandom, à medida que as ansiedades de seus espectadores sobre o cancelamento dos shows e a narrativa de salvar um show são incorporadas à aura manipulada do próprio show. Criada originalmente por Norman Lear em 1975, a ODAAT contou a história de uma mulher branca da classe trabalhadora divorciada de Indianápolis que cria filhas de vontade forte e as interações da família com o trabalhador manual do prédio em que moravam. Lear reviveu o programa em 2017 e contratou a escritora, atriz, editora e produtora Gloria Calderón-Kellet como a executora e tradutora cultural do programa. A publicidade em torno do renascimento se apóia fortemente no conceito de que este é um remake / reinicialização / reinicialização / reimaginação / reviravolta na Latina da comédia mais antiga. O ponto de venda é reimaginar um programa vinculado à cultura popular dos anos 70, peneirado por uma ênfase de 2010 na diversidade. Várias

implantações de nostalgia produzem esse efeito: o marketing, a narrativa (enredo) e o enredo provocados após o anúncio da possibilidade de um eventual cancelamento do programa, criando ansiedade de identidade entre seus fãs. Meu interesse é explorar se a nostalgia pode ser empregada como fonte de renovação criativa ou como meio de criticar as atuais condições de produção, circulação e consumo das representações latinas.

Palavras-chave:
Netflix, nostalgia, Um dia de cada vez, Latina, Norman Lear

1. Introduction: From Reruns, Reboots, Revival and Reimaging

There is a long history of media using its technologies and platforms to project nostalgia for earlier pop culture texts. During the last decade, the interest in the intersections of media, history, memory, and its relationship to the past has been explored theoretically (van Dijck, 2007), while generating at least two edited collections (Niemeyer 2014; Boyce et al. 2017) that tackle film and television, fiction and non-fiction. Netflix, in particular, has mined a lucrative vein in nostalgia. In fact, nostalgia is built into Netflix's business model if we consider that the streaming service algorithm is based on the "because you watched" premise, thus creating a personalized genre for each client. This model is not, of course, new: TV has long profited by providing audiences with access to classics through VCRs, cable, syndication, and endless reruns. Netflix, however, had altered these dynamics.

In contrast to a decade ago, viewers now do not have to wait on networks to fill their late-night slots with the old programming they want to see, as Netflix or Hulu have accelerated this process by buying up the rights to masses of old TV shows and making them available on their platforms (Breger 2015). The catalog of TV classics now available for streaming includes a number of perennially popular shows, such as *The Andy Griffith Show*, *Cheers*, and *Party of Five,* but has expanded from its former English-language base to include Spanish-language TV classics, sitcoms like *El Chapulin Colorado*, and famous telenovelas like *Yo Soy Betty La Fea*, *El Clon* and Thalia's trilogy of *María la del Barrio*, *Marimar* and *Rosalinda*.

Netflix began its business as a provider of films and TV series made by other companies, but it made a significant turn in 2012 with its first self-made production, *House of Cards*. After this turn, it has become more and more a studio, a large player in the production of TV and

movies. It has established its brand by exploring the nostalgic aesthetics (e.g., sets, props, costumes, etc.), with shows that are situated in past eras designed to provoke a nostalgic reaction in the audience to make nostalgia the hook that drives viewership. Shows like The Get Down, Stranger Things and Everything Sucks bank on nostalgia for the '70s, '80s, and 90s, respectively. These shows are examples of what James Poniewozik (2016) refers to as a "rethinking nostalgia approach". He explains that this kind of productions are not based on an existing franchise but "[t]hey tickle our memory centers without inviting unflattering comparisons to some sainted original [and] trying to reproduce part of what made us love our childhood favorites way back when: the joy of discovering something for the first time" (paragraph 5). There's a logical paradox involved in this sensation of "seeing something for the first time," in as much as the "first time" seventies audiences saw seventies tv shows, those audiences recognized quite easily that the shows about their own epoch. In the case of The Get Down, a musical drama series created by Baz Luhrmann and Stephen Adly Guirgis, the premise is meant to transcend the "remember that?" approach, and to visit, freshly, the rise of hip-hop and disco music through the eyes of a group of teenagers during the Bronx of the 70s. In this case, the show is solidly grounded in historical fact. In the case of shows like Stranger Things, the material culture and references from the early 80s frame an aesthetic of 80s storytelling (e.g., the synth music to Benguiat typeface of the title credits) founded on fantasy-horror. Arin Keeble (2017) argues that Stranger Things grafts itself into a specific sequence of cinema history: "Every haircut, every rippling synth pattern, BMX chase and adolescent gesture of friendship seemed to come from an 80s movie" (paragraph 1). Transcending the nostalgia provoked by Netflix's originals, the streaming media platform is getting attention for their revival, reboots and reimaging dynamics of productions.

In its simplest terms, a TV revival is a series that presents itself as a continuation of the original version, with, optimally, at least some original cast members. According to Kathleen Loock (2018): "Netflix's revival model might be unique in that it repackages and updates past media texts and TV experiences to promote a nostalgic and arguably less challenging mode of viewing (in terms of both form and content) in the present" (p. 305). Two of Netflix's most publicizes revivals were *Arrested Development* and *Gilmore Girls*. Fox's critically acclaimed Arrested Development was canceled in 2006 but revived by Netflix for a fourth season in 2013. Another TV revival was the WB/CW series *Gilmore Girls*, a hit that ended in 2007 and was

taken up by Netflix as a limited series entitled *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life.* In industry terms, a reboot is a show that may share a title and inherent premise with the original, but establishes its continuity by including new characters and a new cast (Mitovich, 2018). That is the case of Netflix's sitcom, *One Day At A Time*. Created originally by Norman Lear in 1975, *ODAAT* told the story of a divorced working-class white woman from Indianapolis raising strong-willed daughters. An ongoing theme in the show was the family's interactions with the handyman for the building in which they lived. For the new version, Lear hired writer, actress, editor, and producer Gloria Calderón-Kellet as showrunner and "cultural translator*"* (Piñón, 2011) to produce a new version of the series that was meant to be its a Latina/o remake/reboot/reimagination/twist.

This article will tackle the problematic that emerges when nostalgia is used as a 1) marketing tactic to promote the show; 2) as a narrative template to reboot a sitcom about a white working-class family adapted to a Latina/o (Cuban-American) working-class family; and as 3) a provocateur of anxiety prompted by the announcement of a possible cancellation of the show. The first section will explore the media exploitation of nostalgia, using it as an exemplary instance of the industrial and creative reasoning behind Lear's adaption of *ODAAT*. The second part will move on to a closer textual analysis of three seasons of the show, taking into account not only the narrative tropes (i.e., Cuban cultural heritage, bilingualism, coming out story, cultural translation, moral dissonance, etc.) but also the aesthetic decision to reimagine the past through nostalgic markers, primarily through the character of Abuelita Lydia, interpreted by award-winning academy actress, Rita Moreno. My argument is that Lydia is the embodiment of nostalgia for a prerevolutionary Cuban past that still defines the cultural politics of the older generation of the Cuban exile community in the United States. Finally, I will analyze the announcements of the possible -and eventual- cancellations of the show and the social media movement response, particularly on Twitter in 2018 and 2019. My interest is to explore whether nostalgia impedes or supports the creative renewal of our consciousness of the recent past and helps us critique the present: in this case, current representations of Latina/os in the media.

2. Media and Nostalgia

The term nostalgia derives etymologically from the Greek *nostos*, meaning to return home, and *algia*, meaning a painful condition (Pickering and Keightley, 2006). The term was

coined during the 17th century by the Swiss physician Johannes Hofner as a diagnostic label for what was then considered a disease produced by prolonged and usually involuntary absences from home. But after it disappeared from the medical discourse in the late 19th century, it began to be associated homesickness provoked by "a shift from spatial dislocation to temporal dislocation, and the sense of feeling oneself a stranger in a new period that contrasted negatively with an earlier time in which one felt, or imagined, oneself at home" (Pickering and Keightley, 2006, p. 921-922). As the concept crossed over from the medical to the sentimental field, it changed its orienting definition: nostalgia came to describe a reaction to modern temporality and "a desire to imaginatively return to earlier times" as a symptom of dissatisfaction with the present. For Svetlana Boym (2001), "the object of romantic nostalgia must be beyond the present space of experience, somewhere in the twilight of the past or on the island of utopia where time has happily stopped, as on an antique clock" (p. 13).

In media studies, nostalgia has been extensively explored during the last two decades, with a strong focus on TV as both the site in which the nostalgic narrative is enacted (through shows, advertising, etc.) (Armbruster, 2016) and itself an agent in the production of the mood and mode of the nostalgic structure of feeling (Grainge, 2002). More recently, the edited volume *Netflix Nostalgia: Streaming the Past on Demand* (Pallister, 2019) interrogates the ways nostalgia pervades the streaming service of Netflix. The essays included in the volume examine nostalgia as a business model, as a factor in commodifying the past for specific demographics, and as a medium through which ideology can be articulated. The edited volume also tackles the way nostalgic content engages in discussions around diversity, particularly the way queerness (Freeman, 2019; Mclantoc, 2019) represents race and ethnicity (Davis, 2019; Yanders, 2019).

One of the challenges of the intersections of media and nostalgia was addressed by Ryan Lizardi's work, *Nostalgic Generations and Media: Perception of Time and Available Meaning* (2017). In his book, he argues that one of the problems with nostalgic media is that it is "myopic, individual and uncritical" (p. 24). Pallister (2019) adds to this discussion when she states that nostalgic media fails to "to interrogate the real challenges faced by marginalized people" (p. 4). Against this background, I'd like to pose the question: what is at stake when Latinx representations are part of a project of nostalgia?

3. The Old and The New of *One Day at Time*

One Day At A Time is one of Netflix's most critically acclaimed series. The NYT reviewer wrote that it was "a rare reboot that's better than the original" (Poniewozik, 2017), while the New Yorker reviewer wrote that the series "wrings every drop of potential from the tropes of the sitcom" (Long, 2019). In general, the critical consensus is that it compared favorably to the 1975 original. Created by producer Norman Lear, the first *One Day At A Time* (CBS) was about a divorced working-class white woman from Indianapolis, Ann (played by actor Bonnie Franklin) raising strong-willed daughters, Julie and Barbara (interpreted by Mackenzie Phillips and Valerie Bertinelli), and the family's interactions with Schneider (played by Pat Harrington Jr), the cocky handyman for the building in which they lived. The show lasted nine seasons and aired its final episode in 1984.

Norman Lear, who famously introduced into American television more politically and socially aware situation comedies like *All in The Family* (CBS, 1971-79), also introduced mostly black ensemble sitcoms like *The Jeffersons* (ABC, 1975-85) and *Sanford and Son* (NBC, 1972-77) into the previously all-white commercial television landscape. His comedies were famously written to "confront the racial, political, economic, and social issues gripping the nation rather than sweep them under the rug or create a comforting illusion of harmony" (Means-Coleman, 2001, p. 92). Lear tried to use his formula for black ensemble series to introduce a Latinx sitcom in 1984 with the sitcom *a.k.a. Pablo* (ABC), but this didn't even last a full season. However, the form he created did pave the way for such Latinx themed shows as *Chico and the Man* (NBC, 1974-78), which made an icon out of Freddy Prinze. Thirty-two years later, ensemble series revolving around people of color were not unusual. However, the industry is still dominated by white people. 2016 was a propitious year for producing a Latina-centric family comedy. That year, the *Latino Media Gap: A Report on the State of Latinos U.S. Media* revealed that Latino participation in programming and movies was minimal, showing that Latinx mainly appeared as criminals, law enforcers, and cheap labor. During a press tour at the Television Critics Association, Lear talked about his desire to remake a show with a Latinx family. He added: "I just love the idea because I don't see enough of that representation on the air in any place, I don't mean to say it doesn't exist — I don't see it any place. There isn't enough of it, and I think it's a rich idea" (Norman Lear Talks…, 2015, paragraph 4).

With that goal in mind, he contacted producer, writer, and actress Gloria Calderón-Kellet, known for her work in *How I Met Your Mother* (CBS) and *Devious Maids* (ABC) and asked her to co-produce the show. As a Cuban-American, Calderón-Kellet was supposed to re-imagine the show's elements as a family sitcom adapted to a Latina/Latino family. Since this show so strongly connected to the seventies, the show was an opportunity to exploit 70s nostalgia without actually going back in time. Instead, the style of the show, its conceptualization, aesthetic, content, and marketing strategy, would be attuned to a 'woke" interest in Latinx culture while immersing it in the structure of feeling of an earlier era.

3.1 Multi-camera Sitcoms

According to Andreeava (2017), broadcast networks have been phasing out multi-camera comedy series because of "a shift in viewers' tastes as the younger generation...gravitate towards single-camera shows [and because of] writers as very few want to write multi-camera sitcoms, so the majority of pitches are single-camera these days." She also argues that the nostalgia factor is an important element in the success of the reboots of such popular broadcast multi-camera…[and that]… [w]ith classic multi-camera sitcoms discovered by new generations via on-demand viewing, their return certainly makes sense" (paragraph 9). TV critic Emily VanDerWerff (2017) argues that multi-cams offer a safe space to talk about political issues that have us at odds while configuring a narrative where all ideas from a diverse political spectrum can come into play and be considered, and sometimes, adopt by all sorts of people. [Why?] She also states that "The multi-camera sitcom's artistic conservatism has helped Americans grow more comfortable with diversity" (paragraph 44).

3.2 Opening Credits

The opening credits offer essential clues to understanding the role of nostalgia in the narrative of *ODAAT*. The iconic theme song, "This Is It!" remains the same as the original show. The new version introduces Latin rhythms, performed in English and Spanish by Latina pop star Gloria Estefan. The selection of Gloria Estefan acquires particular relevance when considering her role as an icon of Latina/o popular culture since the mid-80s when she became one of the most successful cross-over performers in history. The visuals of the credits include a montage of images of the cast and the production team. The use of real photos of the cast and production

team (e.g., weddings, graduations, social events, etc.) induces a false nostalgia of shared moments, intended to make the audience see the characters as part of a shared past. This contrasts with the credits of the original version. The identifying show montage was a filmed sequence showing the characters excitedly moving into their new apartment – which, in the seventies, signaled the presence of a single mother as the protagonist, a charged topic at the time. The opening of the new version juxtaposes video footage from the present and past images of Echo Park, the community in which the family lives—and which, before gentrification, was a mostly Latina/o enclave with a significant Cuban presence. Since the show tells the story of the Alvarez, a Cuban American family, the opening sequence also includes images from pre-revolution Cuba. While the credits of the old version insisted on the present lives of the characters, the new version grounds the narrative in the historical past of the cast and, by implication, the community. That history is emphatically one of immigration.

3.3 Storyline and Characters

The reboot keeps the central concept of the original—a single mother raising teenagers—but changes the circumstances. Just as the first show marked a moment in the entrance of autonomous women in the marketplace, this show marks the further evolution of female agency in the socius. Actor Justina Machado plays the mother, an Army veteran who served in Afghanistan and now works as a nurse. At the same time, her children are a queer, feminist, social activist daughter, Elena (interpreted by Isabella Gomez), and a confident, cocky son, Alex (interpreted by Marcel Ruiz). The landlord, again called Schneider, is a Canadian immigrant trust-funded hipster (played by Todd Grinnell) — signaling the historically real gentrification of Echo Park. Perhaps the most dramatic change in casting is the addition of a grandmother character, Lydia (played by Rita Moreno), a proud Cuban and an endearingly dramatic widow, who loves to dance and whose presence (bound up with the audience's awareness of Moreno's resume going back to *West Side Story*) works as the primary producer of nostalgia in the show *Abuelita Lydia and the Embodiment of Nostalgia.*

Lydia—or Abuelita, as the teenagers call her— sieves her living experience though a nostalgic image of the past, where her home country figures prominently. Constant references to her time in pre-revolution Cuba through anecdotes, rituals, and objects—like her use of recycled Country Crock containers as Tupperware, and her obsession with the coffee brand, Café

Bustelo—and even her thick accent, are some of the "technologies of memory" used by Rita Moreno's character to access "los buenos tiempos"—the good old times. Lydia's perpetual longing for earlier, better times in Cuba (a longing that has imbricated with the U.S. role in the Cold War, in which Cuba played an outsized symbolic part) produces narrative tension between her past and present. Like many real-world, first-generation immigrants, she is both a United States citizen for a host of political and socio-economic reasons and a product of her roots in her place of birth. Via this contentious relation between present and past, here (the U.S.) and there (Cuba), Latinidad and Cubanidad, the show can discuss racial identity, the sexual politics of a quinceañera, the journey towards American citizenship, shifting perspectives between generations, critiques of Donald Trump's presidency, and even debates on the existence of God. Nostalgia thus becomes a mechanism for a more in-depth exploration of both past and present – a device through which history can be presented.

With the presumable aim of reaching the broadest possible audience, the show not only uses Lydia's nostalgia as a means of tapping into the idea of a shared Latino/a experience but also employs a kind of intertextual nostalgia to connect with followers of the original series.

3.4 Intertextuality and the Marketing of Nostalgia

Julia Kristeva (1980) coined the term intertextuality to explain when a text reference another text. The early eighties witnessed the elevation of media studies from a subordinate discipline to a theoretically sophisticated field, with intertextuality, borrowed from literary criticism, becoming a useful way of conceptualizing the function of quoting and referencing other famous cultural artifacts in TV and film. John Fiske (1987) goes beyond the simple act pinpointing of references and focus on the role of audiences in (unconsciously) using codes created in other texts to read a particular text. As Brian Ott and Cameron Walter (2000) have pointed out, "intertextuality has been used to describe both an interpretive practice unconsciously exercised by audiences living in a postmodern landscape and a textual strategy consciously incorporated by media producers that invite audiences to make specific lateral associations between texts" (p. 430).

The premise of a reboot/reimagining of a TV show is pitched to the audience partly on the presumption that today's audiences have a sophisticated sense of intertextuality, which has been articulated in the marketing of *ODAAT* a sort of variation on nostalgic themes. During the

first season, Mackenzie Phillips, the original series star who had played the rebellious eldest daughter, did a guest-star appearance as Pam, a psychologist and the leader of a female veterans' therapy group that Penelope (Justina Machado's character) attends. Pam enters the scene, saying: "I'm sorry I'm late, you guys! I was at the movies, another remake, I mean, it was nothing like the original, but I like them both." This statement meta-theatrically reminds viewers of the original show in which Phillips appeared and for which, perhaps, they still nostalgically long, which is, in part, the very premise of the show. Another cameo was performed during the second season when Glenn Scarpelli joined the original *ODAAT* cast in 1980 as Alex Handris, the son of protagonist Ann Romano's boyfriend, joined the new cast as a desk clerk in one of the episodes (Leeds, 2019). Besides its casting choices, the show's second season reinforced the nostalgia device by using elements of the original show as technologies of memory. There are two instances in which the show uses a temporal or nostalgic "drag" to bring images from the original explicitly into the new version. In the sixth episode the older Alvarez child, Elena (played by Isabella Gomez), is hired by the new Schneider as his assistant; she decides to dress like the original Schneider – the iconic white T-shirt with a box of cigarettes rolled in the sleeve, a denim vest, blue jeans, and a tool belt.

The second instance is not featured "within" the show, but within the marketing annexes that have become, increasingly, part of Netflix's marketing material. A series trailer recreates the opening credits of the 1975 version of the show with the new cast and the original theme song performed by Polly Cutter, making its appearance on the usual multi-modal platforms (like Youtube) as a marketing tool to promote the second season of the show. The new cast is, as it were, in "drag," cosplaying the old cast. The costume change results in some gender-bending as well as in the complete white-washing of the Latinidad inherent in the new show, which, at the same time, marks the Latinizing of a formerly white show.

4. Saving the Show Narrative

Whether as a creative template, an aesthetic feature, a narrative trope, or a marketing strategy, for *ODAAT,* nostalgia worked: the show has been critically acclaimed and celebrated by its audience—particularly the Latina/o community, where the audience appeared to be pleased to see themselves represented in a form that avoids stereotypical Netflix portrayals like those related with drugs and crime (like *Narcos*) and Spanish-only comedy-dramas (like *El Club de los*

Cuervos and *La Casa de las Flores*). From this perspective, *ODAAT* seemed safe from cancellation: it had a significant fan base, social media was talking about it, and it was receiving ravishing critical praise. According to Jacinta Yanders (2019), in spite of "positive responses from viewers and critics, *ODAAT* has always existed in a sphere of uncertainty" (paragraph 1). In early March 2018, however, news about the possible cancellation of the show provoked a different kind of nostalgia: nostalgia for a future where visibility onscreen is no longer insecure.

Typically, most series are canceled for a simple reason: low ratings. However, streaming services like Netflix are more complicated to determine a story of success versus one of failure. According to Roettgers (2019) "Netflix has traditionally bucked the trend of sharing the kind of overnight ratings that have long been a staple of the television world, with executives arguing that these numbers didn't matter to the company in the same way as they did to ad-supported TV networks" (paragraph 6). Their approach has been to cherry-picked information about some of its most successful shows while using vague statements to support a show's cancelation. For example, in regards to cancellations, Netflix CEO Reed Hastings "We can have small shows that do very well, we can have expensive shows that do very well…[t]he only case where we end up canceling is where it's pretty expensive and not so much viewing" (Roettgers, 2019, paragraph 8).

The situation with *ODAAT* was always unclear. Based on some trade journals, the show's viewership reportedly grew between seasons one and three (Fienberg, 2018). However, Netflix still expressed uncertainty about the possibility of renewal. Three months after the second season premiered on Netflix, the audience was still awaiting renewal for a third season, and TV critics started to react. Daniel Fienberg (2018) from *The Hollywood Reporter* stated, "Netflix's superb Norman Lear-produced multicam comedy returned nearly three months ago. What's the holdup on a third-season renewal?" (paragraph 1). Similarly, Vulture's columnist, Kathryn VanArendonk (2018) insisted that "Netflix should renew *One Day At A Time* […] there are so few TV series that have really nailed a sense of this American moment, right now" (paragraph 8).

Along with TV critics, the National Hispanic Media Coalition, UnidosUS, Voto Latino, and other Latino/a media and civil rights organizations joined the claims for renewal. They released an open letter to Netflix asking them to save the series. Besides making the case in terms of demographics -for instance, that Latinxs account for 17.8 of the nation's total population and that is 72% more likely to stream video than any other group- the letter argues for

the show's continuation based upon its positive take on diversity, equality, and inclusivity. The social media campaign to save the show went on for over three weeks when fans online were live-tweeting during episodes in the hopes of boosting the numbers to influence Netflix's decision. And it worked. On March 26th, *One Day At A Time* was renewed for a third season with 13 episodes to air in 2019.

In 2019 the show went through the same process. According to Alejandra Torres (2019) "Many A-listers (Hey Lin-Manuel Miranda, hey Busy Philipps!) have rallied up and spoken out in order to try and keep the show going and renew it for a fourth season" (paragraph 1). This time, a more organized approach, "One Day at a Time campaign," started with a series of influencers requesting the renewal and organized under the #RenewODAAT. In addition to the organization through hashtags, other strategies were implemented. For example, nearly 100,000 people added their signature to an online petition through Change.org asking for a season four.

Once again, TV critics joined the effort by asking their readers to watch the show and nostalgia played a role in these petitions made by TV critics. Lelanie Seyffer (2019) argues that "if you're a fan of the original series, then this show is definitely for you. Norman Lear produces it, and the show is nothing but respectful to the source material (while also updating the story in a way that feels fresh and exciting). So save us all from living in the darkest timeline and binge-watch (and then re-watch) *One Day At A Time* so that it can be renewed for a well-deserved 4th season. I promise you won't regret it" (paragraph 25). Besides, recommendations were offered by the production team, according to Becca Bleznak (2019): "Here's what you can do to help If you're a fan of the show, know someone who is, or just want to help support quality TV, Kellett recommends watching the show. You can also recommend it to friends. She posits that international numbers are very important, so if you don't live in the U.S., or know someone in another country who you think might like *One Day At A Time*, that's a good start. For now, let's keep hoping that Netflix comes decides to give us a Season 4" (paragraph 7). But in spite of all efforts, Netflix canceled *ODAAT* on March 2019. However, four months after the cancelation, Pop TV, a cable channel owned by the CBS ordered a 13-episode Season 4 of the show.

5. Conclusion

When examining contemporary American TV series revivals, Kathleen Loock (2018) argues that the end of a television series qualifies as the destruction or abandonment of a

community not only of characters but also of viewers. In the light of this metaphor, the reimagination of a show that was canceled could be seen as the occupation of an abandoned space, the insertion of new characters into that space, and the hopes that the community of viewers that once existed, came back into the mediated space to support the new show. This is where nostalgia – with its roots in the nostos of returning home – intersects with Netflix's marketing, conceptualization, and narrative of ODAT on many levels. The level of the fictitious setting of the show, Echo Park, was undergoing gentrification, throwing out working-class Latinx people in real time. Also, the level of multicamera shows that, in its audience format, references the 'family shows" of the network era. And finally, the level of narrative tropes on which, for example, the theme of a soldier 'coming home", which has been part of the nostos epic since the Odyssey.

ODAAT is also a souvenir that reminded us of some of the few previous representations of Latinxs on television. During the 70s, while the original *ODAAT* was on the air, the sitcom *¿Qué pasa U.S.A.?* (PBS) became America's first bilingual situation comedy. The show also explored the livelihoods of a Cuban-American family in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood, as they struggled to cope with a new country and a new language. Just like our object of study, *¿Qué pasa U.S.A.?* also received enthusiastic critic reviews yet, they were not sufficient to keep the show on the air. According to Yeidy Rivero (2009), "scheduling problems, lack of promotion, and new Hollywood opportunities for some of the show's actors (Stephen Bauer and Andy García began their careers with *¿Qué pasa U.S.A*.?), probably all contributed to the end of the show" (paragraph 8). Perhaps a reminder of Norman Lear's first failed attempt to represent a Latinx family during the 80s with *a.k.a. Pablo* (ABC), canceled after six episodes.

To conclude, the complexity of nostalgia as a structure of feeling and a marketing pitch, a re-imaging of network sitcom aesthetics in the Cable era, and an appeal to a sense of the past to an American Latinx audience with a different vision of that past is tested in one of the shows in Netflix's signature nostalgia portfolio. Nostalgia, as we have shown, can encompass meta-textual references to the show's fictionality as a TV show, which inflects the emotional atmosphere provoked by anxieties of cancellation and narratives of saving a show among its fanbase. This produces opportunities for a certain variant reflection on the past that foregrounds a non-reactionary critique of the present. Nostalgia as an aesthetic choice to frame discussions of the

present and the future is not necessarily a dead end, but can condition creative approaches to changing the future.

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