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**Regional Mexican Radio in the U.S.: Marketing Genre,
Making Audiences**

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**Regional Mexican Radio in the U.S.: Marketing Genre,
Making Audiences**

by

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Dedication

Mom, Frank, Olivia, Joe, Kim and Sidra—thank you. I couldn't have done it without you.

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**Regional Mexican Radio in the U.S.: Marketing Genre,
Making Audiences**

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Melanie Josephine Morgan, Ph.D.

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This dissertation investigates how Regional Mexican radio in the U.S. tracks and drives changes in Mexican-American identity by combining different musical genres to create composite portraits of its audiences. Regional Mexican radio, which plays a mixture of ranchera, norteño, banda, and other regional Mexican genres to target a largely working-class audience of recent immigrants, is currently the most popular Spanish-language format in the U.S. Programmers for these stations act as mediators, navigating the public relation between notions of Latino identity constructed by national Spanish-language media conglomerates and local demographics. By modifying the generic composition of their playlists to strike a compromise between the two, they both monitor and produce the sociomusical categories that distinguish their listenership. Ethnographic research at Regional Mexican radio stations in Austin and San Antonio demonstrate the role that institutional organization plays in creating programming. National conglomerates that increasingly own these stations determine the broad outline of the industry, but local

programmers make most decisions about programming content. Based on a historical review of Tejano radio, I argue that the musical mixtures created by Spanish-language programmers have responded to both past and present social and economic challenges facing Mexican-American immigrants. Through detailed analysis programming at five Regional Mexican stations, I argue that each variety of music played signifies regional, generational and gendered variations of Mexican-American identity that stations combine in different proportions to reflect local listenership. I also explore the role of station-sponsored events in gathering information about listeners. Events encourage listeners to embody their status as part of the Regional Mexican audience, a concept ultimately constructed by the radio stations. Ultimately, this dissertation adds to existing literatures on Spanish-language media, radio and Mexican-American music.

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Chapter 1: Introduction:

Regional Mexican Radio and Immigrant Audiences

Latinos in the U.S. increasingly find themselves in the public eye, but what it means to be “Latino” is hardly settled. In “mainstream” channels of communication, praise for Latin American culture and success stories from the rising Latino middle class stand alongside outspoken critiques of immigration policy, and public conversations frequently confuse so-called “illegal aliens” with all speakers of Spanish. Meanwhile, within sites of public discourse that specifically target Latino interlocutors, different visions of Latino identity, as well as different national or sub-national identities, compete for attention. Spanish-language media is one of the most important institutions tying such people together within the contemporary U.S., and consequently it is an important battleground where competing notions of Latino identity fight for relevance in the public at large. And among all media channels, radio provides special insight into changing representations of this identity, due to its relatively decentralized structure. By comparison with television or print media, radio stations are often only loosely monitored by the national media conglomerates that own them. Rather than massive, trans-regional market shares, they are designed to capture fickle and dynamic listenerships within small-scale, highly localized contexts, and for this reason they often respond more quickly to evolving demographic patterns and taste preferences than large industry players. Moreover, successful patterns of local programming often travel upward, to higher levels

of media organizations, as companies seek to maximize profits by replicating local successes on broader scale. In creating local programming, then, radio professionals selectively circulate and modify the versions of Latino identity that are persuasive to people at each extreme, mediating between national or multi-national conglomerates and local listeners, in a larger process of Latino ethnogenesis.

Among contemporary Spanish-language stations no format has been more successful than Regional Mexican radio. *Format* is an industry term used to describe a station's particular combination of musical genres and other broadcast content, such as talk and advertising, that distinguishes the tone, feel, and flow of a broadcaster from its rivals. Formats are also designed to target listeners with certain sets of characteristics and are frequently replicated in many markets to capture that same listener segment. Regional Mexican stations play a mixture of regional musics from Mexico, primarily *norteño*, *banda* and *ranchera*, each of which symbolically marks different kinds of regional or gender- and aged-based Mexican American identities, as well as rural Latino immigrant identities more broadly. Through broad distribution of carefully crafted shared "tradition," Regional Mexican radio has been key in promoting a rural-immigrant identity that dominates contemporary representations of Mexican-Americans and Mexican immigrants. Regional Mexican radio stations constant innovate different combinations of musical genre, using them to bring together an audience made up of diverse individuals whose only connection is often the shared experiences of migration and of being Spanish speakers in an English-dominant environment. As programmers cobble together local audiences from this group, by combining musical genres that would not be heard together

in Mexico or anywhere else in the Americas, they create a powerful commercial product, one that can be sold to advertisers as a tool for reaching desirable immigrant markets. However, they also create a representation of Mexican-American and Latino identity that often does not sit well with listeners.

Despite the widespread success of this format and its associated imageries, close analysis of radio programming shows that the Regional Mexican identity propagated by radio stations is contested. Regional Mexican radio is a commercial medium largely under the direction of national media conglomerates that have a vested interest in producing a single, unifying identity for listeners across the country, thus allowing them to duplicate programming and cut production costs. National advertisers drive this impulse, demanding predictably delivered consumers and content across markets. U.S. Mexicans, however, are a diverse and ever-changing group. From one region to the next, and even from one city to the next, local communities may include Mexicans from some states but not others, of different ages, of different generations, and with varying lengths of stay. These individuals may not easily identify with the national commercial identities created for them. Local radio programmers, then, are the key actors in shaping the societal parameters of Regional Mexican broadcasting. They act as mediators between a generic, nationally-circulating image of “Regional Mexican” identity, and the real consuming desires and life experiences of local audiences. This dissertation explores how commercial ethnicity is a product of both national media conglomerates push for uniformity and the real experiences of those it seeks to include, and demonstrates how radio programmers behave as cultural mediators between these two notions of Mexican-

American identity. It takes two cities in Texas, Austin and San Antonio, as cases studies, in order to show how Regional Mexican radio has become an important space for creating and re-creating Mexican identity in the U.S. The comparison between the emerging Hispanic radio market in Austin and its established counterpart in San Antonio shows that discourses about music at both national and local levels help to shape the commercialized identities that are experienced and adopted by real listeners in their respective broadcast areas. Regional Mexican programmers change the combination of songs and artists, each embedded with their own identity makers, that they broadcast on a week-to-week basis, balancing national trends and local preferences. In so doing, they create solutions, however temporary, to the problem of being Mexican in a frequently hostile U.S. environment. If Mexicans experience discrimination in their daily lives and feel demeaned by low-paying jobs that offer poor working conditions and little respect, Regional Mexican radio creates a space that caters to them. If they are immigrants far from home, family and friends, radio provides comfort. And if listeners fear losing their cultural heritage, the music on the radio reassures them of a connection to their past, even if it comes packaged as a commercial, modernized pop tune. Regional Mexican programmers combine the power of a nationally organized Spanish-language media industry with a vested interest in recognizing and representing Mexican-Americans as consumers and localized understandings of their listeners to create a media product that reflects this group's diverse and changing identities.

THE U.S. IMMIGRATION DEBATE

Immigration has been one of the most important political issues in the United States for the past decade, and will likely remain so as the foreign-born population continues to grow. Between 2000 and 2008, the Latino population in the U.S. grew 33%, accounting for 51% of total population growth (Pew Hispanic Center 2010). For the sake of comparison, in that same period, the White, non-Hispanic population grew a mere 2.3%, accounting for 19.6% of total growth. The nearly 47 million Latinos currently living in the U.S. make up 15.4% of the country's population, and Latinos passed African-Americans as the largest minority group in the mid-2000s. Mexicans make up over half of U.S. Latinos, making them the largest national group among this expanding population (Ibid.).

The rapid growth of this population and the undeniable demographic changes that are underway in the U.S. have drawn increased political attention. Perceived threats to job availability, the theoretical burden on public services, and the ever-shifting center of U.S. mainstream culture have elicited many negative reactions, as well as positive counter-reactions. Even a brief survey of public events designed to heighten awareness of immigrant concerns over the past five years demonstrates the importance of the issue. In March of 2006 an estimated half a million people gathered on the streets of Los Angeles to protest legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives that would make it a felony to reside illegally in the United States. On May 1st tens of thousands more congregated in Los Angeles, Washington DC, New York, and other cities for a walk-out billed as "A Day without Immigrants." Later that year President George W. Bush's administration

pushed national-level immigration reform. Uncharacteristically for a Republican party that has been opposed to loosening immigration laws, Bush proposed a guest worker program, which would allow migrants easy access to temporary visas and allow them to compete for low-paying jobs unattractive to American citizens that they currently hold illegally. Technically, such a program is a fiscally conservative solution. It would sustain a needed manual labor force at low wages. However, the proposal was not popular among his conservative supporters. After months of debate, Congress decided instead to pass a bill approving a seven-hundred mile border fence, yet to be completed. By far the most explosive immigration debate of 2010 revolved around Arizona's SB 1070 legislation, which charged state and local police with "full enforcement" of federal immigration policies, and gave Arizona police authority to question anyone who looked "suspicious" about their immigration status.

Arizona SB 1070 has perhaps been the most overt move towards racial profiling of immigrants, but is important to point out here, that *all* of these prominent news stories have to do with *Latino* immigration. Immigrants come to the U.S. from places other than Latin America: Asia, notably, West Africa, more recently, and certainly from all regions of the globe. Nevertheless, public imagination increasingly paints the prototypical immigrant, the undocumented immigrant in particular, as being Latino, or even more specifically, Mexican. "Immigrant" has become a racialized category, and all of the negative stereotypes heaped on the undocumented become associated with broader ideas about Latinos. In her analysis of a wide array of public discourse from advertising to political rhetoric, Arlene Dávila argues that such processes have simultaneously de-

ethnicized and re-ethnicized Latinos in the public imagination. Media and public discourse stress on one hand Latinos' willingness to assimilate to a White middle class ideal, and on the other their racial other-ness. Per Dávila, this shift amounts to a substantial revision of the ways that we "talk or do not talk" about race in the U.S. (2008). In this environment, it is not surprising that Latinos have become more allied politically, but they have also been increasingly bundled together by the media that seeks to serve them. Spanish-language media has become more powerful because of both because Spanish speakers have come to view it as a refuge, and because advertisers have become more convinced of Latino unity through racialized public discourse.

Latinos and Radio

This dissertation addresses such processes of ethnicization by examining consumer culture, one of the primary mechanisms by which Latinos are incorporated into U.S. society. Despite its unglamorous reputation in the media world, where digital media, and even television, are perceived as more cutting-edge and consequently more interesting, radio remains an important vehicle for mass mediated culture. The radio consumer research agency Arbitron reports that radio has consistently reached between 94 to 96% of U.S Latinos every week over the past decade. Since the mid-1980s the number of Spanish-language stations has increased ten-fold. As of 2009 about one thousand stations in the U.S. broadcast exclusively in Spanish (Arbitron 2006-2009). Radio remains particularly important to Latino communities because it acts as a "lifeline" for recent immigrants who speak little English, offering them music, news, entertainment,

and information about immigrant-friendly goods and services. Because of high radio usage among Latinos, and because of the way stations work to group listeners into predictable audience segments that can be sold to advertisers, Spanish-language radio is a powerful tool for understanding the kinds of categories and identities through which Latinos are being channeled into U.S. consumer culture.

Radio is inherently about grouping things: without exception, every commercial radio station's primary goal is to group music and other on air content in such a way that it will draw a particular group of listeners. Stations map out the characteristics of the social group they mean to target, label them as an "audience"—as though the members of this group were inherently connected before this media work—and then "sell" them to advertisers, who buy time on stations based on detailed understandings of who they will be advertising to. Format is the primary mechanism through which radio stations accomplish the process of co-constituting groups of people and the musical genres that represent them as audiences, both to advertisers and to listeners themselves. In targeting focused audience segments, formats draw on musical and cultural imagery to create identity categories. The portraits created by these categories become an important way in which media companies, advertisers, and even political and public interest groups understand U.S. Latinos. For the audiences who in turn come to inhabit these categories, selective rejection and adoption of cultural symbols both feed individual and community identities, helping to define what it means to be a minority Latino in the U.S., and cycle back to influence the industry that created them.

Regional Mexican radio is by far the most successful format in contemporary Spanish-language radio. In 2009 Arbitron reported 330 Regional Mexican stations in the U.S., with a listenership of about 10 million weekly, and Regional Mexican formats pull a 20% share of Hispanic audiences, ¹ more than double that of the next most popular format, Spanish Contemporary. Its audience is primarily Mexican, though it may include other Latinos. It is about equally male and female (although this is a recent shift, up until this year male listeners were the majority), and it is most popular with the highly valued 18-35 age segment. Regional Mexican listeners are also typically understood by station operators and advertisers to have immigrated to the U.S. within the past ten years, to be Spanish-language dominant, and to work in manual labor or service industry positions.

Ostensibly, the format combines music from different regions of Mexico based on the sending states of potential listeners . However, in addition to its core genres of *banda*, *norteño* and *ranchera*, it also includes subgenres, including *banda sinaloense*, *duranguense* and *tierra caliente*. Furthermore, Regional Mexican stations mix national with local programming. Most stations broadcast nationally syndicated morning talk shows like Univision’s “Piolín por la Mañana” and “Raul Brindís y Pepito,” or Liberman Broadcasting’s “Don Cheto,” but afternoon music programming is usually generated by

¹ A note on terms: “Hispanic” is the term most commonly used by the media and marketing industries. While it has been criticized for over-emphasizing the Spanish heritage of the largely mestizo population of Latin American countries, here it alludes to a reliance on the Spanish-language to identify audiences. I use “Latino”: to refer to a multi-national population from the Spanish speaking countries of the Americas, emphasizing the terms use as a political grouping more than an ethnic one. I use “Mexican-American” to refer to second-generation and later descendents of Mexicans who have settled in the U.S., and ‘Mexican’ to refer to first generation migrants. I will also use the terms ‘immigrant’ and ‘migrant’ interchangeably to de-emphasize the importance placed on the U.S. – Mexico border as a historically permanent international boundary.

local staff who consult with both national trends and local preferences. Programmers, then, rely on national playlists and talk shows for much of their programming, but they also must remain highly attuned to the preferences of their local audiences. And though they select much of their content based on the national popularity of particular songs, bands, or genres, their perceptions of local taste, which vary greatly from one market to another, determine which tracks they will select from those larger pools of audience preference.

The local differences that such programmers respond to reflect the different sending states of the local Mexican and Mexican-American population, and the range of ages and occupations, and gender distributions in a given area. This means that Regional Mexican programmers often possess an unusually detailed sense of the demographics and the corresponding tastes in the particular broadcast area. Much of this local information is accumulated through face-to-face contact with listeners, a practice much more common in Spanish-language radio than with English-language counterparts. Much of this local “audience research” comes from the feedback promotions and programming staff receive at live remote broadcasts at nightclubs, concerts and grocery store parking lots.

On the other hand, in most markets, shows recorded in major cities like Los Angeles and Houston occupy at least half of the broadcast day. By fashioning each radio day out of a combination of local and national preferences, Regional Mexican programmers mediate between commercial interpretations of Latino identity at the national level and individual and community-level identities. Radio personnel both pass commercial ideas down to local audiences and funnel listeners’ reactions back to national

corporations as they create market-oriented combinations of on air content. For media companies, this information helps them better understand their audience, but it also helps them capture, characterize, and sell this audience to advertisers. For audience members, media representations of identity may or may not be useful, but they provide a set of tools with which Latinos can define identity in opposition to English-dominant cultural influences.

Regional Mexican radio's dominance also has the effect of limiting the categories at hand for understanding Latinos. "Regional Mexican" has become a convenient shorthand for reaching Latino consumers. It is proven and profitable, but in the end, it discourages media producers and advertisers from finding ways to reach other segments of this market. Both Dávila (2008; 2000) and Rodriguez (1999) have remarked on media and marketing's tendency to base their understanding of Latino audiences on stereotypes of recent immigrants, rather than second-generation and onward Latino consumers that, in fact, are the more affluent and consequently more desirable audience. In Dávila's words, "ironically... it is the highly feared Latino 'immigrant,' whose putative newcomer status makes him or her more culturally authentic and hence more easily marketable, that has long been constructed as the model 'Latino' consumer" (2008:74). The fact is that of that 15% of the U.S. population who is Latino, about 66% were born in the U.S., only a third are immigrants. Regional Mexican radio does not even take the entire foreign-born population as its target; programmers are most interested in the most recent immigrants, finding it easiest to reach those who have resided in the U.S., at the very outside, no more than ten years. Even as it becomes a dominant paradigm for commercial understandings

of U.S. Latinos, the format makes no claims of reaching first-generation Latinos who have lived in the U.S. over a decade or native born Latinos. Because of its organization at both national and local levels, Regional Mexican radio is a highly effective tool for transferring this immigrant identity to a broader spectrum of Latinos. Precisely because programmers do adapt to local demographics, they incorporate longer stay immigrants, second generation Mexican-Americans and even non-Mexicans into the Mexican immigrant identity propagated nationally by the format.

By focusing on the structure of Regional Mexican radio in two Texan cities, this study both fills in a gap in Spanish-language media research in that state, and shows the high degree of variation that can occur even between two closely situated markets. As part of the U.S. territory that was once part of Mexico, Texas has a special history of immigration and extended Hispanic–Anglo contact. While California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah and parts of Colorado all share this dubious honor, each state is quite different. Intellectually speaking, Texas is the home of Mexican-American studies, pioneered by Americo Paredes’s work on the border. Politically, Texas Latinos were removed from West Coast Chicano activism and the outpouring of art, literature, and community activism inspired by that movement. Tejano music is certainly one notable exception to this that continues to be an expression of cultural identity and a part of Spanish-language radio programming. While this unique Texas heritage is shared across the two cities, each has its own history of immigration and ethnic relations as well. The differences between Austin, a relatively new destination for immigrants with a lower percentage of Latinos, and San Antonio, a city with among the top ten highest Latino

populations in the U.S., bring to light the same kinds of differences that can be observed across the country. Texas thus provides a good entry point to the study of Regional Mexican radio.

What it means to be Latino is a crucial question on multiple fronts: mass media and advertisers want to know more about Latinos so they can market consumer goods more effectively, politicians want to know so they can capture their growing numbers at the polls, non-Latinos want to know so they can gauge how American society is changing. Latinos themselves do not need corporations to tell them who they are, but it is no secret that the goods, media, and music we consume help us define ourselves. Regional Mexican radio is an important medium for creating and circulating the symbols that, in shifting configurations, come to make up Latino identity. As radio professionals mediate between national and local versions, they show us that the process of defining identity does not lie in the hands of few, but in the hands of many, and that this process is far from resolved.

RADIO, THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN IDENTITY

Several existing bodies of literature are useful in understanding the social effects of Regional Mexican programming, but none adequately captures the way that industry operations interact with local demographic patterns and social histories to produce broader notions of Mexican-American identity. Existing analyses of Spanish-language radio in the U.S., for example, provide valuable perspectives on the development of Spanish-language radio, but few of them focus on the musical aspects of radio

programming, and even fewer examine the distinctive role of format in structuring listeners' experience. While the broader body of radio research does touch upon the historical evolution of format in ways that are relevant to its continued development, such research usually focuses on the medium's "Golden Era," leaving the present day relatively untouched. Elsewhere, popular music literature has provided useful models for understanding industry institutions, including the way that they are organized and how that structure affects their output. Nevertheless, most studies of popular music's industrial structure have dealt with the highest levels of industry organization, rather than the lower-level operations that interest me here. Looking at the everyday operations of particular stations and their employees provides an opportunity to see how structure matters at lower levels, where individual mediators rather than large-scale anonymous corporate structures determine the parameters of cultural production. Finally, insofar as this study deals with what it means to be Mexican or Latino in the U.S, it is concerned with social identity. Identity has been a central but often under-theorized area of study in ethnomusicology, and while numerous studies deal with the topic, few define their orientation toward this concept in a satisfactory manner (Rice 2007). Literature on Mexican-American identity, including Tejano identity, presents a wide range of options for theorizing this particular identity formation. I find that the notion of the borderlands, outlined by Alvarez (1995) and exemplified by Anzaldúa's "new mestiza" (1987), is the most valuable for understanding Regional Mexican radio, an industrial format that, like the borderlands itself, is a transformative space drawing together various distinct iterations of Mexican and Mexican-American identity and placing them in dialogue with

one another. Overall, by focusing on the developing interrelation between Mexican Regional radio, Mexican-American identities, and the actions of media agents, this dissertation suggests that formats, as business mechanisms, are always evolving in a co-constitutive manner with the social identities that they ostensibly serve.

Radio and Spanish-language Radio in the U.S.

Ethnomusicologists and anthropologists have crafted a number of studies treating the operations of radio as a medium, but with few exceptions, these have dealt with international contexts, and with issues that are peripheral to the concerns I treat in this study. Several anthropologists have explored radio as a tool for community and nation building (Clements 1974; Fisher 2009; Kaplan 2009; Katriel and Nesher 1987; Rupert 1983; Spitulnik 1993 and 1994; Vokes 2007), from a linguistic perspective (De Gerdes 1998; Kunreuther 2006; Leedom Shaul 1988), and as material culture (Collins 2006; Schiffer 1993). There are few dedicated studies in ethnomusicology (Grandin 2005; Hamm 1991a and b, are notable exceptions), but a number of works on broader topics have included radio in their analysis. Austerlitz's work on Dominican *merengue* (1997), for instance, discusses how Trujillo used both merengue and radio as means of building and controlling the Dominican nation. McCann's *Hello, Hello Brazil* also places radio in a nationalist context (2004), and comes closer to my concerns here by adding and elements of audience and class to the analysis of radio's community-building power. Many of the fan club members that McCann describes as central participants in early Brazilian broadcasting were not only ethnic minorities and of low socio-economic status,

for instance, but were also recent migrants to Rio from rural areas of Brazil. Nevertheless, here fan club solidarity seemed to be more based on shared catharsis during stars' performances, rather than cultural and racial definitions that bind together Regional Mexican audiences, and McCann does not treat the means through which such links are constructed. Finally, a number of ethnomusicologists provide passing examples of radio use in the context of making other arguments, but the diversity among these works does not provide for a more generalized theory from the field (Chew Sanchez 2006; Manuel 1991; Meintejes 2003; Scannell 2001; Simonett 2001; Wallis and Malm 1984).

A handful of communications and historical studies of Spanish-language radio provide an important base for my study of the Regional Mexican format. Three key sources in particular have traced, in as much detail as is possible, the origins and early development of Spanish-language programming. América Rodríguez (2004) outlines Spanish-language radio's early years, when it first appeared as block programming on English-language stations in the 1920s. At that time programmers were entrepreneurs, buying off-peak hours of broadcast time, and supporting their programs with advertising that they sold person-to-person, often door-to-door in the Spanish-language communities where they operated. Rodríguez's brief historical outline extends through the 1960s, a period during which Spanish came to dominate what prior to WWII had been a diverse spectrum of foreign languages on the airwaves. Replacing German and Polish language stations as those groups assimilated into English-dominant culture, Spanish grew to over 60% of all foreign language stations in the U.S.

By contrast, Tony DeMars looks at one of the first full-day Spanish-language stations in the U.S., San Antonio's KEDA (2005). Besides further fleshing out the hazy history of the medium, DeMars argues that station owner Manuel Dávila was largely responsible for the creation of the tejano genre through the type of music he aired. Dávila pulled musicians from local bars to play on air, earning his station the nickname "the cantina station." By giving the music a new venue, he helped to make it more respectable. More importantly, his promotion of particular musicians and their music made a permanent impact on the genre. DeMars's study fuses historical, institutional and musical analyses in a way that is unique to radio studies in general. While the influence of today's large radio conglomerates on musical change is more difficult to map, DeMars provides a model that I follow in describing the more recent emergence of Regional Mexican radio in Texas.

Gutiérrez and Schement's work on Spanish-language radio in the Southwest (1979) is by far the most comprehensive work on the medium. While ostensibly an "internal colonization" treatment of the subject, the work's historical, statistical, and institutional analysis overpowers its political argument. As an ethnographic study of one station in San Antonio, it mirrors my approach, providing an excellent counterpoint for a more longitudinal study. Musical analysis is beyond the scope of the study, so playlist comparisons in my research will largely come from other sources, but there are remarkable continuities between the two periods, thirty years apart. In spite of reports from many DJs that worked in Spanish-language radio in the earlier period, Gutiérrez and Schement note a similar degree of playlist control I observed in stations today. They also

discuss issues of language preservation and audience cross-over to English stations that still threaten Spanish-language programmers today.

In addition to historical studies, authors in the field of communications have discussed how economic and regulatory changes over time, as well as a delayed recognition of Hispanic consumers, have all been reflected in institutional organization. O'Guinn and Meyer (1983/4) analyzed the possibilities for segmentation of the Hispanic audience at a time when this strategy was still untested with minority audiences. Schement and Singleton (1981) questioned the impact of minority ownership on programming, arguing that FCC policies to promote minority station ownership during the Carter administration did not have the direct impact expected on programming diversity. FCC deregulation in 1996 in particular spurred interest on the part of media scholars, who feared the effects of industry consolidation. Casteñeda Paredes (2001; 2003) and Chambers (2006) trace the growth and consolidation of Spanish-focused conglomerates like the Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation (HBC) and Univision, noting both the increase in audiences and the threat of homogenization of programming content. Casteñeda Paredes concurs with Levin (2001), finding that "station managers are now admitting that Spanish-language radio used to play 'a little bit of everything' but now, the impetus to attract a niche, saleable audience has forced radio stations to offer specifically defined programming" (2001:12). Chambers argues that in this push towards homogenization, in which national and even transnational corporations make the most of the economies of scale available to them, *perceived* differences in local programming become more important than actual differences. This tension between national and local

programming, real or imagined, is also central in this dissertation. My research suggests that consolidation initiated in 1996 was the impetus for the current wide distribution of the Regional Mexican format, but suggests that Chambers's idea that stations are concerned with "appearance" of local differentiation has not yet been fully explored. Stations are primarily concerned with appearing different from market to market and from their competitors, but this preoccupation with the outward appearance of unique station identity does often lead to real, if slight, variation between markets.

The paucity of studies on Spanish-language radio reflects the broader status of radio within media studies where it has, on the whole, remained marginal, particularly given its continuing centrality to the lives of everyday consumers. Susan Douglas's excellent *Listening In* (1999) suggests that while consumers and academics may have been more interested in television as an exemplary mass medium, radio was at the forefront of major cultural shifts in the United States throughout the 20th century. Michele Hilmes (2002) traces the academic dismissal of radio to two key issues; first, radio was quickly eclipsed by television as the dominant mass medium in the 1940s and 50s, and secondly, because when radio was cast aside, it became linked with fringe, often "undesirable" audiences and lowbrow entertainment that it relied on for survival. While studies of film and television entered the academy along with popular culture more generally in the 1960s, the persistence of this lowbrow reputation, along with the complications involved in analyzing a solely aural, largely "authorless" medium left radio out of the picture. The convergence of the Birmingham School's recognition of "low" cultural forms, the development of feminist and critical race theory, and the move to a

new historiography in the early 1980s created an opening for new radio studies (Barbrook 1990; Breen 1990; Ditingo 1995; Frith 1988; Hendy 2000; Hennion and Méadel 1986). However, a high percentage of the studies that resulted from this move have focused on radio's Golden Era from the 1920s to the 1940s, when national network programming functioned as a "social glue" holding the U.S. together in times of crisis (Cox 2005; De Long 1980; Douglas 1987; Sanjek 1983, 1988 and 1996; Taylor 2005). Moreover, such studies have rarely addressed the music that makes up over 80% of radio programming, most likely due to a lack of specific vocabulary and analytical tools necessary to initiate a musical discussion. And finally, Hilmes points out that studies of radio after 1950, following the shift to commercialized, music-driven, "format" programming, as well as audience-focused studies of everyday listening, are each still lacking.

On the opposite ends of this fifty-year gap in scholarship on radio between the 1930s and the 1980s, a handful of interesting models for the analysis of radio do exist. Before the invention of television and its large-scale adoption in U.S. homes, radio was an exciting and new medium. Not even a century ago the very existence of a medium that could send a disembodied voice over nations into private homes was nothing short of mind-boggling. Arnheim's *Radio* (1936) focused on notions of aurality and aesthetics, and Cantril and Allport's *The Psychology of Radio* (1935), through scientific experimentation, attempts to chart the "mental world" created by radio. A number of other studies during this period explore radio's psychological impact (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, ed., 1933; Burns 1938; Fisher 1926; Raven-Hart 1930 and 1931) as well as its more technical aspects, particularly for hobbyists (Dykema

1935). While these studies uniformly understand audiences as “blank slates” defenseless against radio’s influence, and leave out the organizational elements that shape content, the emphasis on the specific powers and tendencies carried by the medium are important to keep in mind. The uniqueness of radio’s disembodied voice, its pervasiveness and invisibility, still affect its reception today. By the 1940s and 50s writing about radio had already taken a retrospective, even a nostalgic bent, marking the beginning of the gap in critical scholarship (Columbia Broadcasting System 1950; Fisher and Potter, eds. 1946; LaPrade 1947; Lazarsfeld and Kedall 1948; MacLaurin and Harman 1949; Midgley 1948; Robinson 1943; Siepman 1946; White 1947).

Hennion and Méadel’s “Programming Music: Radio as Mediator” (1986) builds on earlier emphasis on the mode of transmission, if unintentionally. For them, transmission has come to include not only sound over airwaves, but the structure built up around the radio industry. They develop a “model of transformation” for the ways that radio fundamentally changes the music it distributes. Radio generates no original content other than the way that it combines and mixes existing (musical) materials. Radio, they find, “is *nothing but* an intermediary, it is the privileged site for understanding the reality of mediators and the effectiveness of the transformations they make” (Ibid.:287). They also rather strongly advocate a total dismissal of audience research, a move that in practice is accomplished in most popular music and communications literature, but rarely articulated. They find that statistics, polls and direct interviews with the public, “only reproduce in less rich form, the social measuring machines that are the media” (Ibid.:301). The authors are right to critique audience research that takes the concept of

audience for granted, but examining how the audience is constructed and how listeners do or do not fit into that category is still significant (Ang 1991). However, their notion of radio as a mediator is very useful in understanding how Regional Mexican radio creates identity through combining particular kinds of music. Based on Hennion and Méadel's theorization, I take sample radio hours, mediated composites of pre-existing music and media, as their own uniquely meaningful cultural products. By mediating music, programmers, and the medium of radio itself, creates transforms the songs played in a given period into an independent expression.

My account of Regional Mexican radio also draws upon existing work on the nature of radio formats. Several scholars have conducted general studies in this area, providing good background information for more genre-focused research. Rothenbuhler and McCourt (2002), for example, discuss the birth of the format system, noting that a transitional period occurred between the network era (1920s – late 1940s) and a format era (1950s – today), dominated by a tightly structured Top 40 format. In 1947 the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) loosened regulations on station interference, opening up large numbers of new low-power frequencies for purchase at lower cost. New stations drove down the price of advertising, eating away at network stations' profits. At roughly the same time, more radios in cars—nearly 60% by 1956—and the introduction of the portable transistor radio in U.S. markets encouraged individual listening and the fragmentation of the audience. By 1956 Top 40 stations had standardized playlists, stripping all decision-making authority from the DJ (Routt et al. 1978; Simpson 2005). Nevertheless, the brief, intervening period between the demise of the networks and the

rise of Top 40 radio was one of widespread experimentation and possibility, where strategies were in flux, and it provides unique parallels for the kinds of experimentation that began roughly a decade ago in Spanish-language radio.

Format, in the sense that it was constructed in the late 1950s, is a U.S. invention. Keith Negus (1993) and Line Grenier's (1990) discussions of format systems in Britain and Canada, respectively, bring light to how, exactly, format functions by mapping it into new national contexts. In both countries, the national government retains far more control over radio than in the U.S. Grenier discusses how "transformat" music like ballads highlight power struggles between business interests trying to glean the benefits of a format system and government regulators charged with maintaining programming diversity. Negus's study describes how format is essential to music labels' promotion of new artists and new songs, comparing this process to label "pluggers" in the U.K. who focus promotional efforts on making inroads to the nationally supported Radio One, which still dominates the industry. Both authors highlight how a powerful intervening force—format—interacts with local industry and taste. In both cases format is imported as a supposedly superior business model, but is shaped to accommodate the needs of very different markets. Contemporary Regional Mexican radio is in this same situation, in which a nationally defined format acts as a hegemonic force, but is undermined by the necessity of adapting to local listeners.

While Top 40 was the first format and set a standard for how playlists would be generated and disseminated, a rapid proliferation of different formats thereafter has been largely overlooked. Studies on different formats like Regional Mexican are necessary for

understanding how formats change, and if different formats do in fact function by slightly different rules. The business rationale and technical structure of a formatted station are more or less constant across formats, but, because format is the sum of a relationship between radio producers, advertisers, and listeners, differences in the kinds of advertisers and kinds of audiences making up the rest of this equation impact the meaning of the format model.

Perhaps more importantly, studies of other formats should provide a richer model for the way that radio work intersects with social identities, particularly those marginalized and/or minority identities that are often associated with the medium. A handful of studies of minority radio have already called attention to the relationship between emergent formats and subaltern communities. Rothenbuhler and McCourt (2002), for example, attribute the growing fragmentation of radio audiences to minority-targeted stations that launched in the late 1940s and early 1950s, notably Memphis's WDIA and Chicago's WVON, among the first stations in the country to target Black audiences, and KCOR in San Antonio, the first all-day Spanish-language station in the U.S. (see also Kloosterman and Quispel 1990). Other communications have contributed to the topic, showing how ethnic radio can be used as a political forum (Downing 1990), and how minority audiences are systematically undervalued by advertisers, leaving stations with less revenue and consequently fewer programming options (Napoli 2002). Nevertheless, work on a greater variety of formats, and how they use music to build ethnic audience segments, remains to be seen, and given the sheer prevalence of so-called minority radio within the current radio climate, the issue deserves much more attention.

My study fills gaps in the study of contemporary formats, and more specifically of Spanish-language formats. Drawing on Hennion and Méadel's emphasis on radio's role as a mediator, it analyzes radio programming hours as media texts. Expanding on their programming-centered approach, I incorporate advertiser and audience discourse as means of interpreting the meaning of that text. Finally, one of the central contributions of this study will be to add musical analysis to the communications framework for Spanish-language radio. Music makes up the vast majority of radio programming, and it is key in understanding how the medium functions. In Regional Mexican radio, particular kinds of music become markers of the different regional, gender, and generational identities of subsets of its listeners. These links between music and identity are facilitated by discourse about musical genre. As collections of musical and extra-musical characteristics, genres are in turn combined with one another to create market-specific versions of the Regional Mexican format, each representing a theoretical composite of listeners in that city.

Genre Studies and Format

Musical genres, the symbolically loaded units that make up particular formats, are crucial means through which stations target particular listeners, and programmers combine different musical genres to attract particular audiences. An account of genre formation, then, is key to understanding how radio responds to *change* in its targeted demographic. Because radio workers react so quickly to perceived changes in their listenership, shifts in genre are excellent sites for understanding changes in Mexican-

American identity markers and their real-time incorporation by consumers. Indeed, its shifting musical makeup has made Regional Mexican into a forum for the wide-scale distribution of several new genres, like duranguense and tierra caliente, which suggest the evolving demographics and the emergent self-image of the format's Mexican-American audiences.

Genre has only recently become central to studies of either popular or erudite music, where approaches tend to draw upon models from linguistic anthropology. Contemporary genre studies are based on a critique of Aristotelian fixed genre categories, emphasizing instead the change and boundary crossing that are a part of genre's evolution. In *Aesthetic Theory* Adorno (1970) understood genre as a manifestation of the tension between the Universal and the Particular, arguing that particular exemplars of a given genre are conditioned by universal notions of its generic home, even as their intrinsic features re-invent that genre. For Adorno, genre categories were constantly in flux, and in addition to serving as a critical tool, they acted as a framework in which rules could be broken, resulting in new traditions. Musicology did not revisit genre theory until the 1980s, when an American Musicological Society (AMS) group, including Treitler, Newcomb, Dryfus and Kallberg, drew on developments in linguistic studies, to theorize genre as a "contract" between listener and composer. The notion of contract stressed the relationship between the two, and also allowed for deviation, understanding genre is a contract which is meant to be broken and to be perceived as such by users (Dubrow 1982).

Fabbri is one of the first scholars to suggest a working model for understanding genre in popular music. Based in a case study of Italian popular song, Fabbri defines musical genre as “a set of musical events, real or possible, whose course is regulated by a definite arrangement of socially accepted rules” (1982b:136). His definition critiques Aristotelian, positivist, static and archetypal definitions of genre, and extends sociological definitions, dodging the semiotic nature of genre evident in the “relationships between levels of expression and content” (Ibid.). His emphasis on music as “events,” as well as on the semiotic elements of genre, both musical and extra-musical, are useful, and have been largely left behind in subsequent studies. The notion of an “event” implies that a piece of music is not just a two to three minute sound bite, but also depends upon the venue for distribution, style and presentation, and the network of people, including production-side culture workers and audiences, for its communicative efficacy. That is, that all of these elements help to establish its genre, and suggest interpretative frameworks for its users. Fabbri does not mention Hebdige’s (1979) work on subcultures and style, but inserting a consciousness of how (subcultural) symbols circulate in musical marketplaces as genre markers would be an important addition. He also does not cite Becker’s (1982) concept of “art worlds,” which might add to our understanding of how networks surrounding the production of cultural products also help to produce their meaning. All in all, Fabbri’s work remains one of the only studies that alludes to the larger set of symbols and practices that go into creating meaning in genre. In Regional Mexican radio the event—live remote broadcasts, festivals, concerts, and the

clothing, food, and other elements that go along with them—are crucial in understanding the meanings of musical genres included in the umbrella.

Simon Frith has also argued for the importance of genre (1996; 2004), advocating for the introduction of value judgment into studies of popular music, and mapping the elaborate interactions between different arms of the industry and consumers that influence genre labels. Frith (2004) notes that there is consensus among popular music scholars that musical meaning is genre-dependent, and that little scholarship has been devoted to the topic. The present case-study on Regional Mexican radio is certainly one attempt to understand exactly how genre-driven processes of creating meaning function. He argues that genre categories are a critical ground for aesthetic judgment, and, consequently, are a first step in creating a more musical-critical turn in the field. His use of genre here is based in a longstanding tradition of genres as a language for musical criticism which corresponds with Adorno's view outlined at the beginning of this section, but it is also consistent with most genre studies, which understand genre first and foremost as a tool for talking about music. This idea of genres as ways of talking about music is key in my research, but whereas Frith emphasizes the role of critique in academia, I focus exclusively on the meanings of this discourse among audiences and producers. He also outlines the close relationship between the industry and consumers in creating genre labels, arguing that understanding how genres work is first and foremost about understanding how the music industry reads the market (1996:76). Genres follow public taste, but transform the consumption patterns of diverse swaths of listeners into a “fantasy consumer” that epitomizes a genre's target market (Ibid.:85). This back and

forth relationship between industry and consumer is essential in Regional Mexican radio. Frith also suggests that genre change happens at different rates in different mediums based on that particular media forms' relationship with consumer demand (Ibid.:77). Whereas Frith focuses on the complexity of genre label interactions at high levels of industry organization and on an industry-wide scale, I trace the role of individual radio stations and programmers as mediators, investigating the local-level processes through which Frith's "fantasy consumer" is constructed. I also use Frith's perspective to understand exactly how these mediators shape genre labels and how those labels become linked to identity. This process is not entirely consumer driven, as Frith suggests, but rests on a balanced interaction between industry and consumer input. On one hand, mediators transform the format of Regional Mexican into an umbrella genre by putting different styles in close proximity, and thus supporting national industry initiatives and nationalized Mexican-American identity. On the other, they also reify the differences between these genres. By playing more of one regional style to suit their local market, they reinforce regional identities. While listeners inform these processes by agreeing or not agreeing, in whole or in part, with these identity constructions, the saturation of Regional Mexican radio increases the medium's power to shape both musical and identity patterns to some degree.

Keith Negus defines genre through the often tense interaction between "economics," or music as commodity, rooted in business strategies and organization, and the musical "culture" created by musicians, fans and industry workers. While this is not entirely dissimilar from Frith's discussion of how genre labels are created, Negus's

increased emphasis on the balancing act between an industry invested in maintaining genres to control fickle consumer behavior and the “musical culture” of consumers more closely mirrors my approach. Drawing upon institutional ethnography in the British music industry as well as his own musical experience, he notes that musicians tend to resist defining themselves by genre, thinking of their work more in terms of a unique form of expression than categories. This creates tension with the music industry, however, which demands that they do fit into categories, so that their music can be marketed and sold. He argues that the industry often controls what it does not really understand, establishing “specific control strategies and dominant agendas while a considerable amount of musical production, distribution and consumption is beyond the immediate influence and understanding of the corporations” (1999:175). In the same way, national Spanish-language media conglomerates set parameters for the Regional Mexican format that help them coordinate radio programming with their other business interests, like television and record sales, as well as with advertisers. In spite of these guidelines, which are necessary from a business perspective, the processes for creating Regional Mexican content in local stations are often beyond their purvey. Individual stations and programmers work to strike this balance between what is necessary to unify the industry and what is practical in a particular market.

Fabian Holt’s *Genre in Popular Music* (2007) is the most recent addition to this body of literature, and is also the most audience-focused work on genre to date. Drawing on U.S. case studies, he argues that corporate categories do not necessarily respond to popular or public ones. He stresses the importance of authenticity discourse to genre,

exploring how audiences help to define genre parameters by ascribing or denying “authenticity” to artists and their music, and treating authenticity as a rhetorical tool rather than a discrete quality. However, he does not discuss the vastly different ways that audiences and musicians outside of the U.S. rock-pop category determine the parameters of authenticity. For people involved with Regional Mexican music and radio, it is rooted in ideas of cultural authenticity, not originality or personal sincerity. Authenticity is an important element of the discourse that surrounds genre construction. This study explores the different kinds of authenticities that are at play within different genres as one form of genre discourse among many. Linguistic approaches to genre have explored how change and individual will work within written and speech genres. Bakhtin argues that “speech will” is manifested in the speaker’s choice of a particular speech genre, a choice which frames the interpretation of meaning, even as speakers also manipulate speech genres to create added layers of meaning, thus “re-accentuating” these genres. In Regional Mexican music, performers draw on a set of genres with long traditions in Mexican popular music history, but add new lyrics, and combine sonic symbols from other genres, re-accentuating the meanings attributed to those genres. I would also argue that combining genres within a format is a form of re-accentuation, giving genres new meaning by putting them in a new context, juxtaposing meanings in a way that recalls Hennion and Méadel’s ideas about radio as the quintessential mediator.

William Hanks’s “Discourse Genres in a Theory of Practice” (1987) draws on Bakhtin as well as Bourdieu to account for historical purpose, change and instability within genres. In his analysis of official Mayan linguistic change in colonial Mexico, he

takes Bakhtin's assertion that speech genres are, "the outcomes of historically specific acts, of which they are both products and the primary resources" (Ibid.:671), or are representative of form and ideology, largely on an unconscious level. Drawing on Bourdieu, Hanks argues that genres are a central element of the linguistic habitus, and manifest native categories and individual, creative, initiative towards change. Hanks concludes, that the "unstable blends of different kinds of discourse, only partly replicated through time" exhibited in Official Maya linguistic change "effectively contributed to the transformation of linguistic habitus and discourse practices in colonial Maya society" (Ibid.:689-90). The emphasis on change in forms, even more than the content of those communications, is very useful in popular music. The popular songs heard on the radio are most often rote, non-inventive, and based on genre-determined characteristics, with some re-accentuation often drawn from tropes of other genre categories. However, the evolution in genre form, per Hanks, becomes part and parcel of larger historic change. Regional Mexican radio's genre work is occurring at a historical crossroads in the U.S., helping create lasting change in the ways in which Latinos' and Mexican(-American)s' place is being redefined.

Two further perspectives drawn from popular music and media studies are useful in understanding how the industry understands audiences, and how audiences understand themselves in a genre context. Levine's (1990) work on the origins of the divide between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" culture has been an important source work in popular music studies. He argues that in the 19th century, cultural activities, like watching Shakespeare, cut across socio-economic classes. However, increasing fragmentation in U.S. society

along class, ethnic and racial lines has created a more hierarchical organizational scheme for public culture. Even fans of Regional Mexican radio tend to understand that it is a low-brow medium; the humor in the morning shows is crass, the music is not of a high musical quality. Ang's (1989) suggestion of "women's genres" in her work on the 1980s night-time soap opera *Dallas* is also useful in understanding the implications of radio's lowbrow reputation. Gender is key in stations' understanding of their audiences and in how they sell audiences to advertisers. Regional Mexican radio used to attract more male than female audiences, but, within the past year or so, has found a more equal gender split. As Regional Mexican music becomes more and more understood as "pop," it becomes more accessible to female audiences. Specific time slots and, in a few cases, Regional Mexican off-shoot stations playing increasingly popular *corridos prohibidos*, narrative songs that tell stories of violence, often drug related, centered around the border area, may be re-separating out male audiences. High-low and male-female divides are key means through which stations divide up the musical realm, and determine how to combine genres in order to attract audiences.

In sum, Negus's model, which stresses the role of an ongoing and tense relationship between economic and cultural forces in creating genres and their meanings, is particularly applicable to the situation of Regional Mexican radio. Radio's programming content is defined by economic interests, most centrally, by the best way to group people into saleable consumer groups for advertisers. However radio, particularly a still young format like Regional Mexican, responds quickly to changes in consumer taste, giving audience feedback significant sway. Audience feedback is elusive by nature, so it

is difficult to gauge how accurately radio responds to its listeners. Regardless, the idea of “knowing your audience” remains one of the central tenants in radio programming, and Negus’s model can be greatly amplified by considering the way that perceptions of audience habit feed back into the genre determinations made by industry figures. From the level of a musical and semiotic analysis of genre, Bakhtin and Hanks offer useful models for understanding change and personal expression in relation to genre categories, and for understanding how genre use can lead to permanent historical change. From an extra-musical side, Fabbri’s emphasis on the “musical event” in understanding genre may also point towards useful resources in understanding subcultural style (Hebdige 1979) and “art worlds” style networks in genre production (Becker 1982).

Structural Perspectives on the Music Industry (and Mediators)

Music scholars have long been interested in how the structure of the music industry affects its output, beginning with Adorno and Horkheimer’s (1979) critique of the culture industry. Initially, scholarship on the structure of the music industry focused on large-scale economic structural change and its impact on companies’ highest organizational levels, assuming that dictates from central executive offices had a direct correlation with the kinds of music being produced (Chapple and Garofalo 1977; Garofalo 1999). Garofalo’s more subtle overview of the music industry in the twentieth century (1999), however, provides one model for thinking through contemporary developments in Regional Mexican broadcasting. He examines how economic conditions and structural re-organization have shaped commercial music production, from sheet

music to recording companies to transnational organizations. Major labels' retreat from the ethnic recording industry during World War II supply shortages famously opened a space for independent African American labels like Atlantic, Chess, Sun, King, Modern, Specialty, and Imperial. In the southwest, this same shift gave birth to new tejano labels as well. Industry re-structuring in the 1950s, when television took over radio's national audience, not only created a pressure for more local forms of radio, but in doing so created distribution tool for new music genres.

Garofalo focused on how these processes fostered rock and roll's development, but the same holds true for musical developments within the Tejano² recording industry, which were more directly influenced by shifts in Mexican-American immigration to Texas. Initially the industry catered to the state's large tejano population, but when immigration from the north of Mexico continued to bring large influxes of new Mexican-Americans the industry began to produce as much norteño as tejano catering to the distinct musical preferences of the northern region. In an echo of these earlier historical developments, the invention of the Regional Mexican format can also be tied to industry factors. In the 1980s, national labels become interested in Tejano music again, as they began to recognize the growing consumer power of U.S. Latinos. Major broadcasters initiated an industry shift from regional to national control that peaked in radio after the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which removed bars on the number of radio stations a company could own. Spanish-language media companies and divisions within English

² A note on capitalization: "Tejano" is capitalized here to designate the ethnic or identity group that founded and operated this industry. "Tejano" will also be capitalized when referring to the radio format by that name, but will appear in lower-case when it refers to the musical genre "tejano."

media companies became increasingly consolidated. A few stations in Los Angeles had begun testing a combination of banda and norteño that would come to be known as the Regional Mexican format in roughly 1993 (Simonett 2001), but it was the consolidation of the Spanish-language radio industry that helped rapidly replicate this format in cities across the U.S. While these macro-level structural conditions only partly determine the content of Regional Mexican radio, industry organization and large-scale immigration trends are indispensable to a holistic understanding of the medium.

As useful as these efforts at industry research are, it has remained unclear exactly how centrally mandated verdicts on content are passed down to lower-level workers and the musicians themselves. Negus's (1993) institutional ethnography moved beyond such overarching analyses, showing how company ideologies circulate among producers and musicians, imposing limits on the kinds of music circulated through genre discourses as well as other such controlling ideologies. It also showed how the decisions made were ultimately subordinated, at least in part, to developments outside the confines of the music industry itself, broader social forces that are well beyond the control of any industry executive.

In *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures* (1999) Keith Negus critiques the deterministic top-heavy industry analysis offered by Garafolo and others. Mirroring Golding and Murdock's (1993) critique of "institutionalism," the idea that corporations have over-arching profit-driven goals that dictate the functioning of the entire organization, Negus finds that corporate goals break down at lower levels of the organizational structure, where human unpredictability results in flexibility and even

chaos (1999:15-17). He argues that “the ‘intuitive’ assumptions that staff make... are based on beliefs informed by a series of gender, class and racialized divisions” (Ibid.:21), and this notion is especially powerful in explaining how local Regional Mexican stations, who are in no way technically controlled by national corporations, end up mirroring many nationally prescribed programming tactics. While programmers at smaller companies have access to the same reporting as their national competitors and work to understand their techniques in order to compete, this alone cannot fully explain an ideological uniformity that runs through both large and small companies. Stereotypes about Regional Mexican audiences have become so embedded in the industry and in U.S. society at large that they often become silent partners in station decision making.

Hennion, too, argues for the essential role of the mediator in musical production, particularly for radio (1989; see also Hennion and Mèadel 1986). It is crucial to understand Regional Mexican radio programmers as intermediaries who draw on industry and audience-produced ideas about music and identity. Within their organizations they have varying degrees of power, but they are always a point of direct connection between these two parties and add the element of unpredictability to programming content. Hennion traces the notion of the intermediary to sociological views of the social actor, who in cultural as well as other areas of production, works to exert individual influence (1989:403). For Hennion, mediators in the recording industry do the work of representing musical artists to the public and the public to the musical artists, filling in what at first glance appears to be a void between the technology of production and the market. The process of making these two points meet requires trial and error, much as Regional

Mexican producers test, embrace, or reject new ways of interpreting their format. Hennion, in fact, argues that the medium of radio itself acts as a mediator, continually mixing existing cultural symbols in order to “reproduce itself.” Thus radio programmers, as intermediaries within a medium that is itself an inherent mediator, are ultimate manipulators of musical symbols for cultural meaning. Because their creative product defies singular authorship, and because it is so ephemeral, radio programming is only as valuable as it is current, this role has not been recognized as often as it should.

The contemporary situation of Regional Mexican regional radio is best interpreted by combining the insights of all of these theoretical perspectives. Grand-scale changes in the structure of the Spanish-language media industry, along with economic and demographic changes in their target audience of U.S. Latinos, have all played important roles in shaping their content, even as the mechanisms of content change are complexly related to the internal structure of these corporations. Radio stations rarely operate independently, and Regional Mexican stations largely fall under the control of regional or national media companies. The amount of autonomy given to programmers at individual stations or station clusters varies from company to company and can play an important role in defining the parameters within playlists are created, and, consequently, the limits of the kinds of identities being conveyed. Likewise, rote discourses about musical genre, often tied up with race, class, gender, and cultural stereotype become important ways that central offices exercise control over the output of individual Regional Mexican stations. But these stereotypes do not typically originate within the industry. Rather, they tend to reflect larger cultural assumptions, which is exactly what makes them so powerful.

Treating them as powerful cultural mediators, then, is key to understanding how Regional Mexican programmers become key figures in creating musical definitions of Mexican-American identity. The variations in Regional Mexican programming from one city to another can be largely explained through the work of such mediators, who alter nationalized notions of what the Regional Mexican format should sound like, adding a degree of unpredictability to the industry mechanism (Hennion 1982; 1983; 1989), as well as important layers of cultural meaning that could not be achieved through a purely centralized content authority.

Mexican-American and Immigrant Identities

Scholarship on Mexican-American identity has not presented a clear picture of what this identity is or how it is formed, but has presented a variety of different approaches, each tied to the historical contexts of the period being discussed and trends in academic theory. Américo Paredes is most frequently credited as the father of Mexican-American or Chicano studies. His work on the folklore of the Lower Rio Grande border argues that identity and different forms of cultural expression stem from inter-cultural conflict between Anglos and Mexicans. Paredes's students Manuel Peña and José Limón have continued this line of inquiry in the same region, but each has expanded the scope of conflict to include class and race struggles among Mexican-Americans. Peña's suggestion that tejano music acts as a "response" to conflict provides a good framework for understanding how Regional Mexican radio, and Tejano radio before it, also respond to changing social conditions facing Mexicans in the U.S. Limón, meanwhile, suggests

that working-class Mexican-Americans in south Texas offer a postmodern critique of their economic entrapment through folklore and expressive culture, suggesting that attention to other, similarly overlooked modes of working-class Texas Mexican cultural expression might act as spaces for the cultivation of alternate identities. Beyond Texas, Chicano studies has frequently emphasized the development of Mexican-American political consciousness, privileging activism over other kinds of identities (Meier and Ribera 1993). Because Regional Mexican radio is by and large apolitical, especially in terms of the music it plays, these theories are less useful in this context. Sociological investigations of assimilation suggest that while “straight line” assimilation is not a reality, different adaptation outcomes like intermarriage and “mainstream” cultural shifts play important roles in establishing Mexican-American identity (Massey and Sánchez 2010; Alba and Nee 2003; Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Likewise, programmers imagine Regional Mexican radio as a temporary home for the least assimilated audiences, and imagine these listeners moving to Pan-Latin, and then English formats as they adapt. While transnationalism has been an important focus for many studies of Mexican-American identity (Rouse 1992), I will not draw heavily on this paradigm here. Many Regional Mexican listeners live transnational lives, but the format actually works against transnationalism, uniquely tied as it is to the United States minority and immigrant experiences.

By contrast, the literal and figurative notion of the borderlands, is quite useful in understanding Regional Mexican radio, and it unites some a few of the most relevant theories I have mentioned here. For Paredes, Peña, and Limón, conflict is a defining

feature of Mexican-American identity in Texas, an understanding that is shared by borderlands theory. The borderlands are also characterized by a sense of inbetween-ness that in many ways defines Regional Mexican radio. Local stations chart out a territory between national and local representations of Mexican identity, placing listeners in between their actual experiences of their own lives and very large scale commercial categories that work to subsume them. Producers also refer to Regional Mexican radio as a “temporary” home that listeners will inhabit from a point of arrival in the U.S. until they become more assimilated and begin listening to the greater number of musical offerings in English. Thus, Regional Mexican programming acts as a fuzzy area between Mexican and more acculturated identities. And because liminality is embedded in this programming, Regional Mexican stations are able to reproduce a borderlands sensibility where ever they operate, be it in south Texas, Utah, or North Carolina.

Of Paredes’s vast body of work on the folklore of “México de Afuera,” or of the Mexico that exists where ever Mexicans live, his 1978 essay on “The Problem of Identity in a Changing Culture” is perhaps his most succinct contribution on identity. He argues that conflict between Anglos and Mexicans is a catalyst for expressive culture along the border. For Paredes, a border is “a sensitized area where two cultures or two political systems come face to face” (1993:20), and the Lower Rio Grande is historically the first point of contact between Anglos and Mexicans. The border culture of food, cattle herding, and smuggling, among other activities spread from this area outward, after the institution of the new political border in the mid 1800s, when the rest of the Mexican territories relinquished to the US. California, New Mexico and other parts of Texas,

remote when they were a part of Mexico and remaining so after they were annexed. The Lower Rio Grande, however, was very tangibly split by the institution of the river as a new political border. This experience, of a community being dramatically cut in half in a political sense, but continuing to operate as a unified locale, skirting around official demarcations, was experienced more broadly as the rest of the border area developed. Thus, regardless of where they live and regardless of political imposition, Mexican-Americans continued to think of themselves as Mexican, and Mexicans from south of the border continued to feel an ownership over the land on the other side.

Regional Mexican radio is characterized by exactly this kind of subtle conflict; its listeners are Mexican and claim full ownership of that identity, but they still must adapt to structural conditions that make them American, as well. Paredes's work on Mexican "machismo," too, provides insight into Regional Mexican radio, insofar as aspects of this cultural discourse figure centrally into Regional Mexican radio's representations of Mexican-American culture. Paredes (1971) argues that the concept of machismo is quite recent, and was associated with lower classes before the Revolution, and the middle classes today. Paredes has been critiqued for a degree of snobbery, and for devaluing lower class expressive culture. He views middle class representations of machismo harshly, suggesting that "moving-picture *corridos*," sung by Pedro Infante and Jorge Negrete, appear "foolish" and reveal the pretensions of an aspiring middle class (1971:24). Paredes also discusses how this particular trope of masculinity, an almost buffoonish hero who, through pure pretension, displays prowess, is evident in many cultures, and is not, as some scholars have claimed, uniquely Mexican. Gender

stereotypes and class conflict are both evident in Regional Mexican programming, and Paredes provides an interesting window here for understanding these. As predominantly new Americans, Mexican immigrants certainly are aspiring to a higher economic and social status, and hyper-masculine displays on radio may be a characteristic of this quest. Paredes's aversion to both machismo and the classes that favor it is also mirrored in contemporary criticisms of Regional Mexican radio as a "low-class" cultural expression.

By contrast, José Limón is highly critical of Paredes's class bias, even as he follows the senior scholar's overarching scheme of class conflict. Paredes discusses conflict between Mexicans and Anglos in terms of the physical "war of maneuver" and a cultural and intellectual "war of position" but suggests that both of these have largely concluded by the 1960s. Limón, however, suggests that the next step in this progression of conflict-driven identity can be understood in the frame of the postmodern economy, in which working class identity becomes influenced by the global economy and folklore and culture symbols become increasingly dislodged from their full social meaning (1994:111-12). The Anglo elite that still dominate south Texas are supported by a complicit Mexican-American upper-class while working classes, defined not only by poverty but also by their darker complexions, continue to struggle against the economic system. While folk traditions continue, in the postmodern moment, they are being replaced by a web of less meaningful cultural symbols: "In the urbanizing areas of south Texas in the late 1970s, one could already sense the clear beginnings—today more evident—of a world characterized by a kind of daily intercultural making-do, a social pastiche of everyday life, a growing depthlessness..." (1994:112). Regional Mexican radio is

decidedly part of this postmodern moment in which commercial musical genres gain association with different identity markers, even as they become detached from more intricate histories and meanings. When they are mixed in Regional Mexican radio, genres and other symbolic representations of Mexican-American culture become simplified, de- (and then re-) contextualized references to the deeper and more complex cultural associations that are lost in the commercial media industry. Because Regional Mexican radio is more interested in referencing composite Mexican-American identity, however, less complex symbols more easily fill this function of cultural short-hand.

Manuel Peña's work on tejano music follows the paradigm set forth by Paredes, and mirrors Limón's contributions in the area of class conflict among Mexican-Americans, in a way that provides a suggestive model for understanding contemporary developments in Regional Mexican broadcasting. In three monographs on tejano genres—*conjunto*, *orquesta*, and commercial Tejano—Peña suggests that musical innovation represents a direct response to social conflict. Conjunto and orquesta work as an opposing pair representing divergent social paths Mexican-Americans took following World War II. Conjunto became the music of working class Mexican-Americans who were not able to rise in status. Orquesta, which melded American, Mexican and even Caribbean or cosmopolitan musical influences, became the music of an assimilating Mexican-American middle class. Both represented conflict with an Anglo community that was limiting either economic or social opportunity and revealed the conflicts taking place within the ethnic group. Regional Mexican radio listeners are also caught in a bind between adaptation and exclusion, between embracing U.S. or Mexican culture. This

tension is captured in programming that asserts Mexican identity within a U.S. framework. Because of radio's mediating powers, it is perfectly poised to create the kinds of combinations of free-floating musical symbols that create ephemeral social "solutions."

The development of Chicano studies was a crucial move towards empowering Mexican-Americans underrepresented in both academia and in politics, and has provided some salient images of Mexican-American identity. Paredes is not only the father of Mexican-American studies broadly conceived but also of the more activist offshoot that developed in California during the American Civil Rights Movement. As research with a strong political agenda, Chicano studies have provided historical revision and platforms for empowerment (Anaya and Lomelí, eds. 1989; Mieir and Ribera 1993; Rosaldo 1995). However, these are not representative of the working-class and commercial realms in which Regional Mexican radio operates. Likewise, music research that came from this period tends to focus on styles that are intended, or easily interpreted, as resistance (Loza 1992 and 1993; Reyes and Waldman 2009). Chicano studies has followed the anthropological turn towards greater recognition of the diversity of its subject matter (Rosaldo 1995), but has rarely addressed the role of commercial media in Mexican-American identity. The commercial styles on Regional Mexican radio are in some ways the antithesis to this kind of politically motivated study. Rather than resist, these styles submit to the musical and topical norms of the commercial industry structure. Their importance is not in so much in the music itself, but in how it is used and interpreted by both radio stations and audiences, and even these are rarely oppositional.

Many radio professionals understand of Regional Mexican radio as one step in a pathway towards absorption by the English language media, an ideology that reflects academic discussions of assimilation. They target listeners who are the most recent immigrants, and expect them to change listening preferences as they adapt to life in the U.S. Mexican immigrants, programmers imagine, rely on Regional Mexican radio as a lifeline when they speak little English and are not familiar with the resources of their new city. When they begin to adapt, they move to Spanish contemporary stations, which project a more Pan-Latino identity, suggesting that immigrants first assimilate to status as U.S. ethnic minorities. Finally, Spanish-language will lose its appeal all together, and Mexican-American listeners will choose from the broader array of English language radio offerings. This notion of a progression of assimilation for radio listeners provides an interesting parallel to academic theories. The first studies of assimilation suggested that, after many generations in the United States, all immigrants regardless of race or country of origin would blend into a the “mainstream,” defined by the a white, middle class norm (Gordon 1964). This concept of “straight line” assimilation did not, however, match the realities faced by many immigrants of color who, after generations in the U.S., remained at an economic and social disadvantage. Portes and Rumbaut (1996) suggested that rather than assimilating into a white middle class norm, immigrants, especially the second-generation children of immigrants, assimilated into a stratified society, and often experience lateral or downward assimilation into the lower classes. Radio professionals suggest that over the course of one lifetime, individuals are likely to pass into through a U.S. minority identity, into a more strongly American one. When they do arrive at an

English listening preference, it may be country, hip hop or other genres that also carry a racial and class associations. Other scholars have suggested that while assimilation does occur, the “mainstream” is a moving target (Alba and Nee 2003). As U.S. society incorporates more immigrants, their cultural traits are incorporated in the mainstream, amounting to large scale cultural shifts. As an immigrant-focused medium, Regional Mexican programming does not show evidence of this last theory. If Regional Mexican radio retains its popularity even as listeners assimilate, and the format’s strength and transference to other kinds of media indicates this is a possibility, it may be that the new “mainstream” welcomes sustained ethnic identity. In this turn of events, Regional Mexican’s new kind of U.S., commercial, Mexican-American identity may be a welcome component of a multi-cultural mainstream. shift.

Theories of transnationalism suggest that for many immigrants, both their original and new homes will remain important and permanent parts of their social lives and identities (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1994). There is some confusion in this area of research that stems from transnationalism’s links to deterritorialization. Transnationalism is a kind of deterritorialization in that in order for individuals to “belong” to more than one place at the same time, we have to substantially rethink how identity is tied to place. However, when the concept becomes too closely linked with deterritorialization theories that stress amorphous flows (Appadurai 1996) or liminality (Bhabha 1994), it loses its distinctiveness among this set of theories (See Mendoza 2006; Goldring 1996). Many Mexican immigrants do in fact live transnational lives, traveling frequently back and forth between two homes on opposite sides of the border,

and remaining highly involved in social life in both places (Rouse 1992). However, just because transnationalism applies to some aspects of immigrant lives does not mean we should use it in as a blanket concept. Mexican-American identities are constantly changing, and Regional Mexican radio acts as a force towards greater identification with the U.S. side of social experience. By creating a market for Americanized Mexican music the Regional Mexican label actually becomes divisive force between Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Mexicans in Mexico and new arrivals to the U.S. often describe the music on Regional Mexican stations as “not Mexican,” as something that people listen to in the U.S. Even though many of the same bands are played on Mexican and U.S. Spanish-language radio, the organization of the Regional Mexican format, with its concentration on particular musical representations of Mexican identity, ties the medium firmly to U.S. experiences.

Borderlands is a more useful concept for the kinds of identities encouraged by Regional Mexican radio. In his review of borderlands studies, Robert Alvarez (1995) defines borderlands as, “a region and set of practices defined and determined by this U.S.-Mexico border that are characterized by conflict and contradiction, material and ideational” (Ibid.:449). Alvarez notes that some border scholars have embraced an a-literalist position, and use the notions of liminality and conflict to understand social conditions in the broader Mexican diaspora (Alvarez 1995; García Canclini 1989; Limón 1992; Rouse 1991; Rosaldo 1994a & b, 1989). Other scholars have expressed concern that an a-literalist usage of border theory takes attention away from the real, unique, conditions of life along the physical border (Heyman 1995). The Regional Mexican

format lies between Mexican and U.S. social worlds, and does not belong fully to either one. This notion of inbetween-ness applies to Regional Mexican radio in Texas on several fronts. First, Texas is, literally speaking, part of the borderlands; it shares a long physical border with Mexico and has a sustained historical experience of inter-cultural contact between Anglo-Americans and Mexicans. Consequently, when we analyze radio programming in Texas as a cultural product, it is important to recognize the impact of this real historical experience. Regional Mexican radio, however, also has the power to transport this sonic borderlands to other locations. Inside and outside of the physical borderlands, the format represents a meeting point of two cultural experiences. The format is an area for Anglo-American station owners and Mexican-American programmers to hash out their ideas of what Mexican-American commercial ethnicity looks like. It is also a space in which programmers balance internal conflicts over what it means to be Mexican in the U.S. As they combine different kinds of music, each bearing their own identity markers, they work to create a composite Mexican-American identity that will be commercially palatable to large and diverse listenerships. Thus, mirroring Gloria Anzaldúa's description of the "new mestiza," born of the borderlands, Regional Mexican radio is a transformative space where new ideas emerge, even as it is born of inter-cultural conflict. For Anzaldúa, the new mestiza is based on fluidity and hybridity, "she has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode – nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned" (1987:101). Symbols are generated both in global and local (immigrant or borderlands community) contexts; the good and the bad in these symbols remain a part of discourse that constantly re-

generates itself, traveling back and forth between large industry structures and individual listeners.

METHODOLOGY & CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study is based on fieldwork conducted primarily in Austin and San Antonio, Texas from January–August 2010. Research focused on interviews with radio personnel, including programmers and general management; participant observation at radio station-sponsored events, and textual analysis of Regional Mexican broadcasts. Initially, I hoped to conduct research representative of all three primary areas in which the meaning of this format is constructed: the radio stations (institutions), the product they produce (radio text), and with listeners (reception). I shifted this strategy after spending time in my “field,” however, because of the difficulties inherent in audience research, well noted by numerous popular music and communications scholars (Hennion and Meadèl 1983, Rodriguez 1999b). Univision, one of largest Spanish language radio companies operating in Austin and San Antonio denied me permission to interview staff or audiences at their sponsored events after over three months of back and forth negotiations. Efforts to interview patrons at business that serve the Spanish-speaking community (such as groceries and restaurants) often ended with me being chased off the property by a conscientious proprietor, worried that I would chase off customers. Local non-profits were more hospitable, and provided a forum for arranging several focus groups. Within my time constraints, however, these did not provide enough data for a representative reception component to this study. Faced with these challenges, I redirected my research

to focus on institutions and text, analyzing instead how these two fields construct audiences. Lamentably, the voices of the listeners themselves will have to be saved for later research.

In my efforts to understand how Regional Mexican stations function at the institutional and textual level, and how they construct their audience in this process, I contacted over twenty radio stations, conducted ten formal interviews, including three with retired DJs who worked during 1960s through the 1990s. I also attended a dozen station sponsored events, and transcribed ten hours of programming on six stations. Research in Austin consisted of institutional ethnography, during which I spent time in radio studios and conducted interviews with radio station personnel; participant observation at radio station sponsored events and live remote broadcasts at concerts, community events and nightclubs; and text analysis of on air programming. For the sake of comparison I surveyed on air broadcasts in Houston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Chicago, and in Mexico City and monitored professional journals targeted to radio programmers and Hispanic businesses throughout the course of dissertation research.

This body of this dissertation is organized into four chapters. The first will give an overview of the structure of the radio industry, arguing that the structure of the industry affects the media products that it produces. While much of the industry is controlled by national and transnational media conglomerates, a number of “mom and pop” networks play important roles in the Spanish-language market, creating a complex relationship between nationalization and localization. Individual programmers also act as mediators in each station, using the authority allotted by different organizational schemes to craft

playlists that strike this ever-changing national-local identity balance. The second gives a history of Spanish-language radio in Texas, beginning with block radio programming and the first all-day Spanish-language station in the country, San Antonio's KEDA, through the shift towards La Onda Tejana and the variety programming of the 1980s. In this section, I will argue that Tejano is a source format for Regional Mexican radio, even though the two currently exist as competing formats. While the musical heritage between the two formats is not linear, both serve as responses to the social pressures and conflicts faced by their listeners. The third chapter will consist of textual analysis, sample hours of radio programming as constructed media products. This chapter will also take a closer look at how the Regional Mexican format is constructed from various genres, each with their own set of shifting identity associations. The fourth chapter will include audience driven analysis, discussing how companies construct audiences, and how stations help listeners feel like part of that audience through concerts and other events. Spanish-language radio stations value face-to-face contact with their audiences far more than English-language stations, as evidenced by daily live-remote broadcasts from an array of locations: supermarket parking lots to night clubs to concerts and special events. DJs gain a certain amount of celebrity, but audiences also freely express their opinions of the stations at these events as well. The existence of these events strengthens notions of community surrounding a station, and adds a visual presence, making stations even more salient vehicles for Mexican-American symbolic identities as well as sites for disputing possible identities.

Chapter 2: National and Local Structures of Spanish-Language Radio

UNIVISION'S PREMIOS TEXAS, AUSTIN, TEXAS, AUGUST 2010

The national Spanish-language broadcaster Univision hosts the “Premios Texas,” a people’s choice-style awards show, once a year in Austin, Texas. At the August 2010 event, a red carpet, surrounded by velvet cords, led up the stairs to the entrance of the Long Center for the Performing Arts, a brand new venue situated on the south side of Lady Bird Johnson Lake, with a panoramic view of Austin’s rapidly expanding skyline. A handful of women in inexpensive semi-formal dresses, who seemed to be average fans of Univision programming, lined the velvet ropes and talked with security guards, vying to get in to the event while keeping an eye out for the occasional celebrity. In spite of the organizers’ efforts at swanky ambiance, couples casually dressed in jeans and cowboy boots, and a dearth of actual celebrity appearances on the red carpet made the scene outside lackluster.

Inside the theatre, audiences were organized in sections according to how they came by their tickets. As I ascended the stairs to my mezzanine seat, ushers used broken Spanish to discourteously turn away some ticket holders from the VIP sections, while they cordially welcomed in others. Univision gave a certain number of tickets away in radio station raffles and on-site promotions, and these ticket-holders sat in the highest tier of the theatre. On the mezzanine, representatives from local businesses that advertise with Univision mingled with one another and with their sales representatives. I sat in this

section, as my date to the event got tickets through his employer, a personal injury law firm. He greeted other law office personnel, chiropractors, and other business contacts he recognized sitting nearby. Community figures of greater importance, and the musical acts being honored, sat in the orchestra section of the theatre, behind an extended circular runway. The area inside the runway nearest the stage remained empty until just before the performance, when security guards flooded the area with audience members from the upper seating levels.

As the awards program began, it was clear that producers' first priority was the television production value of the event, which would be edited and aired at a later date on Univision stations throughout Texas. A casually dressed middle-aged man warmed the crowd up before the televised masters of ceremony came on stage, and cameras swung on booms overhead. The program opened with a dramatically staged song and dance number paying tribute to the bicentennial celebration of Mexico's independence. A backdrop featuring the Premios Texas logo rose to reveal a multi-tiered mission-style adobe structure, and dancers dressed as peasants, with a couple in fancier Spanish-style dress, streamed out on the stage for a coordinated routine. String players sat inside the structure, playing mariachi-style arrangement until a singer entered, performing with grand gestures in a mariachi jacket and colorful flowing skirt. At the end of the song, the performers struck and held a pose, for what seemed a few seconds too long to be natural. Abruptly, the performance stopped and the live audience waited as the on-screen personalities and camera crew re-set themselves. This routine continued, as abrupt breaks punctuated emcee presentations, musical performances and the distribution of awards. Jackie

Guerrido, weathercaster for Univision's nationally distributed evening news program *Premier Impacto*, and Raul Brindís, a radio morning-show host syndicated out of Houston, acted as masters of ceremonies. They presented together at the beginning and end of the show, but in the middle, they took turns announcing from a spot at the edge of the mezzanine level, a shot much more pleasing to a television audience than the live one, two thirds of whom could not see the presenter in this position.

While ostensibly determined by Univision's Texas audiences, the selection of nominees and winners in the event's ten categories was a bit mysterious. The awards do not favor local musicians, and only one of the winners, Tejano performer Michael Salgado, was actually from Texas. But they also did not seem to favor the most popular acts nationally. In the Regional Mexican category, for instance, nominees Conjunto Atardecer, El Güero y su Banda Centenario, Dareyes de la Sierra and Diana Reyes, while popular, are not nearly as well known as acts like Banda el Recodo, Los Tigres del Norte or even Intocable, groups with regular Billboard Latin ranking and top radio play. Awards, statues in the shape of the state of Texas crossed with a guitar-shaped cut out, were given in the categories of Tejano, Regional Mexican, Spanish Rock/Pop, Alternative, Urban Hip-Hop, Best Male and Female Artists, Album of the Year, New Artist of the Year and Best Austin Band. It seemed that the artists who won each category were informed of their selection well before the event, since the winners were all slated as performing acts and featured in the printed program. While a few groups who were not nominated also performed, the only nominees to perform turned out to be category winners.

In spite of this apparent “rigging” the winners and performers were not all on Univision’s payroll, at least not directly. Some, like Ana Isabelle and Cristina, gained fame through Univision television by winning the talent competition/reality program *Viva el Sueño*. Others, like Irvin “Pee Wee” Salinas earned their popularity on Mexican television, and his initial fame came as lead singer for A.B. Quintanilla’s Kumbia Kings. However, his recent resurgence is most tightly linked to his appearance on a Televisa reality show and novela. Televisa owned Univision up until the 1980s, and even since the sale it provides Univision with a significant portion of its programming content. Furthermore, although some Capitol and EMI artists appeared on the winner’s and performers lists, three performers at the Premios Texas were signed to labels under the umbrella of Universal Music, which had bought Univision’s set of music labels (including Univision Records, Fonovisa, Disa and La Calle) in 2008 (Cobo 2008). By drawing national stars, however minor, into a regional people’s choice awards, the event strives to balance the national celebrity associated with the most powerful Spanish-language media company in the U.S. with regional identities in one of its most important markets, Texas. Unfortunately, the production fell a little flat because of how over-produced it seemed. However, the effort to bridge national and local audience identities at the event, and the struggles producers faced to accomplish this, mirrors the challenges Regional Mexican radio programmers face every day. Unlike the Premios Texas, though, Regional Mexican radio’s honed practices for bridging national and local consumer identities are successful more often than not. Through repetition and a careful balancing act, Regional Mexican stations become a site at which these tensions can be resolved.

Univision is one of the largest Spanish-language radio owners in the U.S., and includes a large number of Regional Mexican stations in its portfolio. As an extension of this company's corporate identity, the Premios Texas ceremony highlights the complex organizational relationships that go into producing Regional Mexican radio as well as the company's other media products. The event drew three kinds of audiences: Univision artists and representatives, Univision advertisers, and average but dedicated radio listeners and television viewers. The interaction between these three groups was uneasy. Some of the audience was bullied by the ushers in the theatre as difficult to manage low-class rabble, but these audience members were crucial to creating the excitement necessary for a live-filmed event, as they danced and interacted with the performers in the stage-front pit. The advertisers comprised a social network unto themselves: they had social relationships with their sales representatives and with one another that made them feel part of a local Spanish-language-friendly business community. The elite were an eclectic hodgepodge of largely minor celebrities who could be cajoled by Univision to come to a small, regional awards ceremony. The event fused the company's television and radio interests, offering one television and one radio personality each as masters of ceremonies to bridge the divide. Even though the Premios are principally produced for television, they promoted Univision radio in this way as well.

The awards ceremony also revealed hazier connections between Univision's national corporate level organization and national music labels. Television celebrities from both Univision and from former parent company Televisa received awards and were highlighted in performance numbers. It is unclear exactly what the current relationship is

between Universal and Univision, but a slight tendency to favor Universal artists in the awards and performers implies that there is some kind of relationship. The aura of disorganization that pervaded the event, from the less-than-glamorous red carpet entryway to the mismatched collection of minor celebrities, is also representative of the Spanish-language radio industry, which remains in an emergent state, one where notions of celebrity and stardom are not as consolidated as they are in other sectors of the Latino and Anglo entertainment businesses. Univision makes calculated, business-driven decisions about their company and the programming it offers, but it has yet to dedicate its vast resources to working out the details that would make a regional event such as this one come off as a polished representation of a powerful media company.

All in all, the “Premios Tejas” represent an attempt by a national Spanish-language media company to cater to a regional audience, while providing a window into the way that the parent company in question manages the tension involved in catering to national and local audiences. As a national company, cross-promotion between Univision’s radio and television divisions, and with the Universal label represents a full maximization of the organizations’ promotional potential, allowing them to market all of their media products among all of their viewers and listeners. These connections also make it possible for local organizers to bring in celebrity performing artists: even though they were not the most popular celebrities, smaller companies are unlikely to have the resources to produce any celebrities at all. While Univision mitigated this nationally-defined agenda with an admittedly thin homage to Texas regional tastes, the event took

something of the tone of a personal invitation for Texas audiences to join the larger, nation-wide Hispanic audience that remains Univision's primary concern.

In a similar fashion, Regional Mexican radio operates within the parameters of a precarious balance between national media companies, with a vested interest in solidifying the U.S. Latino audience, and local radio programmers, whose flexibility at adapting to changing audience taste is crucial to their survival. The relative chaos of the Univision event, its seeming hodgepodge of minor celebrities and elegant awards show trappings, underscored the reality of a heterogeneous listenership, containing factions with different kinds of interest in Spanish-language media, mirrored the flexibility that the vagaries of radio consumption forces upon Regional Mexican radio stations as well. National media agendas provide some of the outward trappings of the format, but local programmers' efforts to corral different groups of listeners into one medium make these national efforts locally sustainable. It is, then, these kinds of agents who produce the dynamic that links local subjects to broadly-defined subject positions, who determine the proper relation between Latino, Mexican, Mexican-American, and individual identities through the evolving business of programming.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATION OF SPANISH-LANGUAGE RADIO

Who decides what kind of music and talk programming is played on Regional Mexican radio? Usually local stations are immediately responsible for on air content, but most stations are owned by larger regional or national corporations. These corporations are in turn linked to one another and to even larger media conglomerates in a complex

web of partial ownership, content sharing deals and other business arrangements. Where, in this complex network are content decisions made? Are stations accountable to audiences, or to their owners? Looking at national, local, and regional companies as institutions with their own histories, ideologies and sets of operating patterns shows that variations in organizational structure have a strong influence on what stations sound like. Regional Mexican programmers navigate this dichotomy between national programming strategies that unify broadcast content across regions, on one hand, and local, audience-derived trends that create market to market variation, on the other, creating in the process a cultural product that illustrates the tenuous balance between national and local definitions of Latino and Mexican-American ethnicity.

Since its inception, Spanish-language radio has been controlled by a mixture of local, national, and international interests. However, after the Telecommunications Act of 1996 removed limits on the number of stations individual companies can own, the industry has become increasingly more consolidated. Big companies like Liberman Communications, Univision, and the Spanish Broadcasting System (SBS) created a national trend when they developed and began to disseminate the Regional Mexican format. Mid-size companies that make up the bulk of station owners in the U.S. often have more flexible corporate structures that mix concessions to national trends with the specialized targeting of local audiences. Independent local stations, while they do still exist, have been overshadowed by competitors tied to regional and national companies.

For Spanish-language radio, this increased consolidation has coincided with tighter station formatting. Variety programming, in which DJs mixed a vast array of

artists and styles based on personal tastes and intuition about listeners, was common prior to the 1990s, but contemporary Spanish-language radio stations are more precisely defined by the limited kinds of music they play and the predetermined kinds of listeners they hope to attract. From the 1990s onward, national companies began to set standards for very specific Spanish-language formats, and these were gradually adopted across the U.S. Some formats, most notably Regional Mexican, have experienced unparalleled growth, fueled by advertisers hoping to tap the buying power of Mexican-Americans, but others, such as Spanish Urban and Tropical, have experienced a downward slump. And these trends in format have become indicative of the national influence on Spanish-language programming. Stations are now obliged to adopt a format to tap into a preset formula for selling time to advertisers. Advertisers, meanwhile, are more likely to buy time on closely formatted stations because they feel more confident of reaching a particular consumer market than they would with a variety station.

Ideas about this audience nation-wide are based in part on the local realities of Mexican-American expansion. The sending states from which Mexicans hail in Texas and California, for example, vary substantially, creating different sets of musical preferences that need to be balanced in creating a “national” audience. National advertisers, however, also play a large part in creating the national audience, drawing on stereotypes to project what their desired national audience *should* like. This does not mean that every station will interpret a nationally-defined format in the same way. In spite of the shift towards consolidation, many programming decisions are still made at the local level, and in radio, as in broadcast media more broadly, the audience is king.

Numbers of listeners convert directly to advertiser dollars and thus determine the profitability of any station. Local station personnel are in closer contact with audiences than national level decision makers, and consequently they have a unique monopoly on the knowledge that advertisers crave. Programming Directors at individual stations, then, are charged with creating playlists that both respond to national format mandates and attract a dedicated local following, thus balancing national company's demands for predictable audience segments to sell to advertisers, with existing local patterns of taste.

The case studies of Austin and San Antonio that I examine here demonstrate Programming Directors' latitude in selecting music and their strong allegiance to the local audience. But they also suggest that nationalized perceptions of what Regional Mexican audiences like are often just as important, despite a programmers' rhetorical commitment to "being local." Programmers create local identities for their stations by playing some locally-targeted selections, but also rely heavily on national ideas about their audience to select reliably popular hits. As much as programmers value this local edge, "local" programming does not have to include locally-produced music. Rather, "local" refers to the idiosyncratic tastes of a particular audience, who largely define musical preferences in relation to a national or international pool of artists. Even stations with the most adamantly marketed "local" identities trace their connections to local audiences through such musical means, and not necessarily through support for local artists.

The Spanish-language radio industry is characterized by rapid turnover of stations, companies, and formats. For example, from the summer of 2006 to the winter of

2010 five companies—Univision, Border Media Partners, Emmis Communications, Encino Broadcasting and Mexican Grupo Promomédios—operated Spanish formats on ten AM and FM frequencies in Austin. Univision tried three different formats—Spanish Oldies, Spanish Pop, then Regional Mexican—over the course of a single year on one of their frequencies. Border Media pulled what was then the top-rated Spanish-language station, La Ley, in 2009, and yanked three other stations shortly thereafter. Emmis Communications, a newcomer to Spanish-language broadcasting jumped in to fill this void, launching a new Regional Mexican station only two months after La Ley went off air. In San Antonio stations came and went just as quickly. Two of Border Media Partners’ three San Antonio frequencies remained the same over the period: the Regional Mexican La Ley (a name shared by many of Border Media’s Regional Mexican outlets), and Norteño AM, but a third FM frequency transitioned from Spanish Pop to Regional Mexican, then to Norteño in a little over a year’s time.

The high turnover demonstrated here could indicate several things. On one hand, it may simply be that the audiences in these cities, as in many Spanish-language markets, are permanently in transition. Regional Mexican radio especially targets immigrant audiences, a demographic that is always in flux. This explanation, however, seems unsatisfactory since all radio audiences are in one way or another transitory. Listeners grow older, experience changes in lifestyle, and invariably, changes in musical tastes, and the English language radio industry has devised ways to adjust for these inherent changes. Alternately, it may be that Spanish-language radio is still adjusting to the relatively recent introduction of the format model. Definitions of individual formats have

not crystallized, and companies have not entirely worked out which formats best suit which demographic groups. In this case, the negotiations that take place between local stations and the companies that own them over what constitutes “Regional Mexican” represent a defining moment not only for the format, but for national constructions of listeners’ Mexican-American identity.

At a national level, companies are interested in creating predictable audience segments that can be sold to advertisers, often relying upon stereotype more than the realities of the audience (Dávila 2000; Rodriguez 1999). Programmers, from their position between national interests and their actual listeners, combine on air content to please both factions. Each day of Regional Mexican programming thus strikes a balance between national and local ideas about Mexican-American identity that is in turn reproduced for millions of listeners. Radio stations create this shifting identity category for strictly commercial purposes, but, as listeners come to understand their own world within its confines, the Regional Mexican audience becomes something quite real. Examining institutional structure of large, medium and small companies, and how individual managers and programmers behave within these gives the clearest picture of how, exactly, these national and local versions of Mexican-American identity are balanced in Regional Mexican radio.

MUSIC INSTITUTIONS

From Adorno and Horkheimer’s explorations of the “culture industry” in the 1940s through contemporary investigations of the transnational music industry, popular

music scholars have long viewed the music industry through the lens of political economy (Burnett 1996; Gebesmair and Smudits, eds. 2001; Taylor 1997). Research on commercial music institutions has suggested that the ways that music companies are organized, along with the ways they respond to larger economic conditions, determines the nature of the cultural products they produce. The shape of the industry does play an important role in its function as a producer of culture. For example, major labels responded to World War II materials shortages by pulling out of ethnic markets, making space for the birth of both African-American and Tejano independent labels. Local radio stations flourished in the 1950s when national network radio was replaced by television. Stations both increased in number and were able to provide distribution options for the newly established independent labels. These kinds of institutional changes were important in the development of Spanish and Regional Mexican radio, and had a strong impact on the kinds of music that would be produced during this era. However, research on music institutions has often focused exclusively on the upper-most levels of industry organization, failing to investigate lower tiers at which content decisions are often made. Reebee Garofalo and Steve Chapple (1977) initially argued for a clear relationship between large scale industry structure and musical output, but Garofalo later retracted his statements, saying that “there is no point-to-point correlation between controlling the marketplace economically and controlling the form, content and meaning of music” (1986:83).

Even as industry scholars have recognized the disjuncture between structures and output, however, few have worked to trace the mid-level decision making through which

institutions do exert their influence. In one of the exceptions to this rule, Negus fuses political economy and cultural studies to explore how “industry produces culture *and* culture produces industry” (1999:14). He finds political economy perspectives have been overly deterministic, and either ignore the complicated connection between organization and the cultural products created, or assume a direct relationship between the two. Mirroring Golding and Murdock’s (1993) critique of “institutionalism,” the idea that corporations have over-arching profit-driven goals that dictate the functioning of the entire organization, Negus finds that corporate goals break down at lower levels of the organizational structure, where human unpredictability results in flexibility and even chaos (1999:15-17).

Such unpredictability within institutions can be understood by drawing on cultural studies approaches that recognize the broader social contexts through which mediators make decisions and gather information about their potential audiences (Hennion 1982, 1983 and 1989; Bourdieu 1993 and 1996). As decisions are made by cultural mediators, including A&R (Artists and Repertoire) representatives and radio programmers, these individuals often define their response to broader social structures as “intuition.” Negus argues that “the ‘intuitive’ assumptions that staff make... are based on beliefs informed by a series of gender, class and racialized divisions” (Negus 1999:21). He demonstrates how workers in different genres like country, rap and salsa draw on these social divisions in Anglo-owned major labels. Likewise, gender, class and racial stereotypes inform Regional Mexican programmers’ choices, but, interestingly, programmers are often members of the racial minority they essentialize. Programmers simultaneously create

content that will appeal to an “insider” audience of predominantly Mexican-American Spanish speakers and meet Anglo advertisers’ frequently stereotypical expectations of the Hispanic audience. The national level Spanish-language media industry, in particular, has honed these kinds of ideas about Hispanics to capture national advertisers. But local programmers quickly become complicit: they not only draw on the stereotypes that have proven successful to court national advertisers, they have, in many cases, come to internalize these stereotypes themselves.

Unlike Negus’s work with record producers in the Latin division of a major label, many Regional Mexican radio stations are housed within Spanish media companies. They face fewer cultural barriers to communicating with upper management, but also face the challenge of defining and manipulating this “insider” identity. Institutional studies of Spanish-language media suggest that minority ownership may have little effect on content. Schement and Singleton (1981) studied the outcomes of a Federal Communications Commission incentive program encouraging minority ownership and found that minority leadership did not have a direct correlation to programming diversity. Arlene Dávila (2000), meanwhile, argues that advertising professionals’ own Hispanic heritage is an important factor in persuading clients that they can effectively reach the Latino audience. However, advertising executives are generally of a higher social class and different national background than their target audience, sustaining an illusion of a shared Pan-Latino culture. América Rodríguez (1999) also notes this division between the producers of Latino media content and their audiences: Univision’s Miami-Cuban management and on air personalities were a far cry from the majority Mexican

viewership of its first U.S. produced program, *Noticiero Univision*. Rather than drawing on existing links between media producers and viewers, the show had to create these by piecing together a shared, Pan-Latino identity.

While “audience” generally indicates a group of consumers beyond the purview of the actual institutional structure, it is important to understand how industry theories about the audience become part of institutional organization and ideology. I will discuss the audience in greater detail in Chapter Five, but a theorization of the Pan-Latino audience, in particular, is necessary in order to explain how Spanish-language media companies are structured. Arlene Dávila and América Rodríguez have both argued that the idea of a national, cohesive Latino audience is a fabrication of media institutions, Dávila by focusing on the advertising industry’s role in constructing a Pan-Latin image, and Rodríguez by focusing on Univision’s news programming. Both institutions worked to create a unified Latino image to convince national advertisers of the desirability of that specialty market. They argued that regardless of country of origin Latinos are predominantly young, socially conservative, family oriented, and speak Spanish. Because they are young, researchers argued, they are more susceptible to developing brand loyalties, and because they have large families, they buy greater quantities of staples like milk and cereal (Rodríguez 1999a:51). While advertisers were aware that there were a lot of Latinos in the United States, they were not convinced that they could target them with a unified, cross-country campaign. Regional Mexican radio represents a variant of this kind of commercial campaign: while the format does not try to target all Latinos, it does try to target a diverse group of Mexicans across the U.S. And as in the case of the

national “Latino” audience, national media and advertising companies are invested in making this audience seem uniform, while local programmers invariably realize that Mexicans are not identical from one city to another.

Neither Dávila nor Rodriguez describes how these principles of pan-ethnic identity apply in contemporary radio. Rodriguez explores radio historically, but her research on current Spanish-language media focuses on television news programs. Dávila is primarily concerned with visual forms of advertising and does not comment on the ways Latinos are addressed on radio. Gutiérrez and Schement’s important study on Spanish-language radio in the U.S. does combine institutional and ethnographic approaches, but is limited to the immediate controlling institutions—the corporations that own the stations, rather than broader economic trends—and is out of date, having been published in 1977. Thus, radio is a crucial site of exploration that has been overlooked. Investigating Regional Mexican radio and its relation to Mexican audiences stands to reveal not only how radio is structured as a cultural institution, but also how mediators behave in that structure, how Regional Mexican programmers draw on unique positions between multiple social fields to achieve a balance between competing notions of Mexican-American identity. Consequently, radio helps us understand both the nature of this blended identity as well as how mediators within media institutions can serve as an important site for creating complex commercial ethnicities in a broader sense.

SPANISH-LANGUAGE RADIO: NATIONAL PLAYERS

Spanish-language radio has long been organized at both national and local levels in the U.S., and indeed a number of stations in the study are directly owned by national companies, while those that are not diligently track national industry trends to remain competitive. A brief outline of the history of the major national players and the recent rise in consolidation serves to demonstrate how their increasing expansion over time has encouraged the development of the particular ways of viewing audiences and creating programming content for them that remain in force at these stations. The sway of national companies, both among their subsidiary stations and among regional networks that compete with them, resides primarily in the way that they generate formats, rather than the way that they determining their content. By establishing new and influential formats, a handful of large companies set nation-wide trends in programming. Furthermore, most of the talk programs that dominate the morning drive time slot, anywhere from 6 AM to 12 PM, are also created by national companies, and syndicated in many markets. Finally, the largest Spanish-language media companies also play an important role in codifying stereotypes about Latinos through audience research. As they sell advertising they circulate ideas about the audience generated through their interpretation of statistics, but these interpretations are largely guided by long-standing stereotypes—Latinos have big families, they are “traditional,” and the like. These stereotypes trickle down to lower levels of production in less tangible ways than format, but they are equally important as a national influence, one that local producers balance with market-specific considerations.

Univision has a nearly eighty-year history in the United States, and has become one of the three most important companies to shape Spanish-language media content, along with the Spanish Broadcasting System (SBS) and Liberman Broadcasting. The large numbers of stations that these companies own in the most important Spanish-language markets, like Los Angeles, New York, and Miami make them industry trendsetters. They do not, however, own a majority percentage of the Spanish-language radio stations in the U.S. Though they are not known as industry trendsetters, Clear Channel's Spanish-language division and Entravision Communications are both large holders of Spanish radio stations. Clear Channel has been very upfront with its Spanish-language strategy: they target small markets across the U.S., profiting from limited competition in these areas, following rather than setting new programming trends. Univision, SBS, and Liberman have also played a key historical role and have shaped the development of the industry for at least fifty years. The histories of all of these companies show a mixture of international collaboration and national focus, and they reveal the complex webs of business relationships that continue to shape the industry.

The first Spanish-language programs in the U.S. were produced by individual entrepreneurs in the 1920s who bought off-hours blocks of time on English-language stations. Within a decade, Mexican media mogul Emilio Azcárraga Viduarreta had already started work on an international Spanish-language industry spanning both Mexico and the U.S. Azcárraga began the media empire that would become Televisa with the purchase of a few radio stations in Mexico in the 1930s. As the sole Mexican agent for Victor/RCA Records and owner of most of the major theatres in Mexico City, Azcárraga

was at an advantage, since he already held exclusive recording contracts with a majority of Mexican stars at the time, and was able to tap their talents for his new enterprise. He voraciously expanded his media business, and began transmitting music from his Mexico City station XEW, “La Voz de América Latina” to a station in Los Angeles, by the end of the decade. The Los Angeles station, in turn, transmitted the Mexican programming to stations throughout the U.S. (Rodriguez 1999:361-63).

Characteristically hungry to expand his business, in the 1950s Azcárraga created Mexico’s first television station, and by the 1960s, expanded into the U.S., viewing the territory north of the border as merely another regional outpost of his media network. The U.S. affiliate he established, the Spanish International Network, later renamed Univision, remained under Televisa ownership until the mid-1980s. In 1986 the Federal Communications Commission found Televisa to be in violation of regulations against foreign ownership of U.S. media and forced the sale of the company. Hallmark bought it but sold it a mere six years later, to a holding company representing Televisa and the Venezuelan media giant Venevision. With this deal, Televisa regained a 25% share in Univision. Univision began producing its own nationally-distributed programming in the early 1980s, beginning with the news program *Noticiero Univision* (Ibid.:369). Prior to this time, Univision programming was entirely imported, particularly from Televisa. Consequently, Televisa is still the largest supplier of Spanish-language programming in the U.S. (Rodriguez, “Univision”). Per the *New York Times* profile of the company, as of the end of 2009, Televisa exported 65,449 programming hours to approximately fifty-

seven countries. Univision, in addition to being the largest Spanish-language television company in the U.S., is also one of the largest Spanish-language radio providers.

Over time, Univision has come to include television, radio, and print media affiliates, as well as music labels. The company consolidated its interests in radio with the 2002 purchase of the Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation (HBC), which had been the largest Spanish-language radio company in the U.S. prior to its sale. The company was formed by a 1997 merger between Tichenor Media System, founded by McHenry Taylor Tichenor in 1949, and Las Vegas-based Heftel Broadcasting, the largest owners of Spanish-language stations prior to the merger. The company changed its name to HBC in 1999 shortly following the merger. In 2002, HBC reached 60% of all Latinos, especially in top-25 Hispanic markets. Combined with the 90% reach of Univision's television stations, the combined companies had an unprecedented reach among U.S. Spanish-speakers, and presented tremendous cross-promotional possibilities (Castañeda 2003:11). The merged company could offer cross-platform advertising, and could promote its own programming and personalities from one medium to another. Finally, in 2006 Univision expanded its recording interests with the purchase of Mexican recording label Fonovisa, but subsequently sold all of its recording interests to Universal in 2008. Univision currently owns 57 stations across the U.S.

Spanish Broadcasting System (SBS) is also one of the largest Spanish-language media conglomerates and Regional Mexican station owners in the U.S., and along with Univision sets national standards for the field. Founder Pablo Raúl Alarcón started working in radio in his native Camagüey, Cuba in the 1950s. After moving to New York

City as a refugee in 1960, he worked his way from DJ to Program Director in Spanish-language stations in New York, until he was able to purchase his own station in 1983. SBS is currently headquartered in Miami and, under the leadership of Alarcón's son, Raúl Alarcón, Jr., owns and or operates twenty-one stations in New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco and Puerto Rico, as well as Mega TV in South Florida. Among its stations, SBS boasts the number-one rated Spanish-language station in the country, WSKQ-FM in New York City, as well as four of the top seven rated stations in a variety of formats: Tropical, Regional Mexican, Spanish Adult Contemporary, and "Hurban" (Hispanic-Urban) (<http://www.spanishbroadcasting.com/aboutus.html>, accessed 10/1/10).

Liberma Broadcasting is smaller than Univision or SBS but is important in setting industry standards not because of the number of stations it owns, but because of the nationally recognized success of the stations it does own. Liberman was founded by yet another father and son team in Burbank, California in 1987. It currently operates television stations under the moniker "Estrella TV," as well as radio stations in Los Angeles, San Bernadino, San Diego, Houston, Dallas, and Utah, for a total of five television and twenty-one radio stations. KBUE-FM in Los Angeles likely invented the Regional Mexican format as we know it today, by pioneering the combination banda and norteño in the mid-1990s (Simonett 2001:42-45). The station is also home to emerging personality "Don Cheto," whose morning show has recently achieved great success in syndication across the U.S. Liberman produces much of its television and radio

programming internally and emphasizes the importance of local radio and television programming.

These three companies are impressive in size, in the diversity of their interests, and in their reach across the U.S. However, as Liberman Broadcasting exemplifies, the number of stations is not always the most important factor in determining a company's power. Both influence and advertising profits are based on how many listeners a company can claim to reach every week. Companies' power and authority to dictate programming has more to do with audience numbers, culled in top Hispanic markets, than the actual numbers of stations. Clear Channel is one of the largest owners of Spanish-language stations in the U.S., but largely follows programming trends rather than creating them. It operates eight-hundred English and Spanish stations nationally, reaching an audience of 110 million listeners every week. In 2004 the company announced that it would begin converting twenty-five of its English formats to Spanish over the course of a twelve to eighteen month period, thereby re-claiming the stake in the Hispanic market the company lost when HBC was sold. In response to criticisms that there was not enough room in the market for Clear Channel's dramatic increase in stations, Spanish-language programming head, Alfredo Alonso, said the company would focus on small and midsize cities that lack Spanish-language programming, and on finding new niche formats (*New York Times*, July 31, 2002, "Spanish Broadcaster Sues Clear Channel"). Clear Channel currently operates thirty-five stations in Spanish in twenty-eight markets, with no more than two stations in each, representing a remarkable geographic reach. Another national company, Entravision Communications Corporation also owns and operates forty-eight

radio stations in fifty markets, along with fifty-three television stations. These two sets of companies represent different approaches to winning audience numbers. Univision, SBS and Lieberman were the first companies to experiment with and adopt the Regional Mexican format, and continue to follow changing music and audience trends to compete for large audience chunks in the nation's biggest Hispanic markets. Clear Channel and Entravision, by contrast, have not yet made significant programmatic innovations in Spanish-language radio, but have earned high listener numbers for their sheer coverage, as they expand into previously unexplored markets.

National Influence on Local Regional Mexican Programming

The size and financial power of large companies such as Univision, SBS and Lieberman give them significant sway in determining what kinds of media will be offered in Spanish and what individual genres, like Regional Mexican will look like. At this highest level of institutional organization, the national conglomerate, accountants, managers and MBA's make decisions about programming based on the bottom line. Format is the clearest such decision. It has proven to be an effective tool for managing the relationship between advertisers and consumers by delivering reliable audience segments. These Spanish-language radio power houses are motivated to keep single formats like Regional Mexican as consistent as possible across all markets to facilitate multi-market advertising agreements. In addition to format, however, national corporations also influence local Regional Mexican programming on a variety of fronts. On the most obvious level, they provide syndicated morning talk shows to stations across

the U.S., but they also influence programming at a much deeper ideological level. Because they are so powerful and because they have been so instrumental in creating the Spanish-language audience to which local stations now cater, the stereotypes developed by national audience research have come to pervade local programming decisions as well.

The origin of the Regional Mexican format can be traced to one or two large Spanish-language media companies. For radio companies, “format” indicates the mix of talk and music programming on a station and what kind of music it will play. More importantly, however, format is a tool through which stations identify and deliver specialized audience segments. While I will discuss musical programming aspects of the Regional Mexican format in detail in Chapter Four, it is important to understand how format functions organizationally, in order to understand the relationship between national and local levels of production. Radio stations make money by selling air time to advertisers. Advertisers are more likely to buy time when they know exactly what demographic of listeners they will reach; they will buy time on stations with audiences they feel are more likely to buy their product, and they will change their advertising tactics based on what they think a particular audience will respond to. So, for stations, constructing a format that will capture a large audience with a specific set of consumer traits is of the utmost importance.

The Regional Mexican format emerged in Los Angeles in the early 1990s, but it expanded nationally when Spanish-language media companies began a rapid consolidation following the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which removed limits on the

number of stations a company could own. In 1992, the Spanish Broadcasting Corporations debuted a format featuring mostly *technobanda* on Los Angeles station KLAX. Technobanda, an updated version of rural Mexican brass-band music with amplified vocals, became a rage among Mexican and Mexican-American youth in Los Angeles, and the stations ratings skyrocketed. In 1995, Liberman Broadcasting launched KBUE, also in Los Angeles. KBUE built on KLAX's success with banda, but added norteño, the accordion-based genre from northern Mexico, to the mix, in order to target older, and consequently more affluent listeners. KBUE was also tremendously successful and drew national attention (Simonett 2001:37-45). The rate at which other stations across the U.S. picked up this programming combination is unclear. However, today there are over three hundred Regional Mexican stations at least roughly modeled on this mix of banda and norteño.³

Regional Mexican was one of the first formats to gain national prominence in Spanish radio and is now the single most successful Spanish format in the U.S. The idea of a format to be replicated across the country marked a new level of national organization, and the rough guidelines of the Regional Mexican format act as a national control on the programming of individual stations. However, analysis of individual stations' programming strategies shows a high degree of programming variation exists

³ Univision's trademarked Regional Mexican station, "La Que Buena," interestingly, bears a striking similarity to KBUE's nickname "Que Buena," although I have not been able to prove any direct connection. While "KBuena" is also the nickname of a Televisa Radio station in Mexico City, syndicated across Mexico, programming similarities between the U.S. stations make it far more likely that Univision drew on the success of Liberman's Los Angeles station in creating its own Regional Mexican stations.

between stations in the same format based on efforts to adapt to local audiences. Especially in mid-sized stations the Regional Mexican format can be interpreted broadly. These stations adopt standardized format terminology to sell time to national advertisers but vary programming to capture more of an audience they know intimately. This balancing act between national labeling and real local musical preferences acts out a broader tension between “Pan-Latino” identity created by national media conglomerates and regional and community Mexican-American identities.

Talk programming has also been one of the most important features of Regional Mexican radio, with personalities like Los Angeles’s “Piolín” earning some of the highest ratings in the country. Since 2008, Univision morning host Eddie “Piolín” (The Tweety Bird) Sotelo has held the top slot in Los Angeles and other key markets during the morning drive, and is broadcast in nearly every market that Univision has a Regional Mexican station. Piolín gained national attention in 2006 when he aided in the organization for a May Day protest against new immigration legislation, but his programming consists largely of light-hearted morning banter and cheesy and often vulgar jokes. Univision also has begun promoting Houston morning show host Raul Brindís nationally, and he also appears on stations across Texas, either following Piolín’s slot or appearing on a different Univision station in the same market. “Don Cheto,” a young man who poses as an old one and exchanges cross-generational banter with a female co-host, is also syndicated out of Los Angeles. Because these programs consist largely of talk, they do not figure centrally into this dissertation, but they do play an important role in cementing the national identities circulated in Regional Mexican radio.

While program content is largely superficial, the fact that it is replicated in so many locations throughout the U.S. is significant. Many listeners and programmers complain about these programs, asking “What do I care about what’s going on in L.A. or New York?” Nevertheless, political conversations, such as occasional discussions about immigration news or law, and culturally informed discussions of contemporary problems like dating, dealing with family members, provide common ground for listeners across the country.

The most powerful effects of national companies’ operations may be the way that they institutionalize stereotypes about Latino media consumers. When the first audience studies of Latinos were commissioned by Univision, results proved what people “already knew”: they supported existing stereotypes about Latinos, but helped prove this group’s consumer power (Dávila 2000). Negus has also commented on the ways that stereotypes become reified as intuition within the music industry and come to influence content decisions (1999). A constant supply of positive, cohesive images about Latinos allows national companies to make convincing cases to advertisers, thus sustaining the industry. Because these ideas, that Latinos are younger, more family oriented, and more attached to “traditional” cultural values circulate not only as institutional information but as common stereotype, they become part of both national and local programming strategy.

In these ways, a handful of national Spanish-language media companies exert a strong influence on the industry, but own a surprisingly small percentage of the total number of stations. Trends like the creation of the Regional Mexican format and the dominance of morning talk programs were initiated by large companies with the means

and distribution to profit from economies of scale. However, Univision, SBS and Liberman own fifty-seven, twenty-one and fifteen stations, respectively, for a total of ninety-three stations, not even 10% of the approximately one-thousand stations currently operating in the U.S. Adding other conglomerates with perhaps less influence but large numbers, Clear Channel and Entravision do not even bring this total to two-hundred stations, or 20%. This is to say, that there are a lot of stations operating out of small local networks, or even individually. Medium and small sized companies compete with larger players by combining lessons from the national industry with increased sensitivity to local audiences. Thus, national-scale industry structure has created a situation in which a few large companies dictate the direction in which most Regional Mexican stations in the country will go. Their size and reach has made it easier for them to lock in national advertisers who want a broad reach among U.S. Latinos. However, in spite of this relative concentration of creative power, smaller companies, organized at the regional level, or even single-market operators still have influence over the final shape of radio programming. Because smaller players are still linked into a national system of playlist databases, audience research and widely circulated industry knowledge, they also have the capacity to feed their innovations in the format back into the arena of the conglomerates.

MEDIUM-SIZED PLAYERS: AUSTIN AND SAN ANTONIO

Regional companies, consisting of several “clusters” of stations in cities confined to a particular state or region, make up a large proportion of Spanish-language

programmers. Smaller central administration generally makes these companies more flexible, but some follow more centralized organizational models, where programming decisions come down from a regional office. The trajectory of mid-size radio companies in Austin and San Antonio suggests that companies with a more flexible, decentralized structure, where programmers can balance national and local ideas about programming, are more likely to succeed. Staying abreast of national trends keeps regional companies on par with their national competitors, but adding local knowledges that nationals frequently lack makes them competitive. Border Media Partners, a company based in Dallas, is one such regional company. With stations in Austin and San Antonio, the company shifted its own organizational structure and programming strategy from a centralized to a decentralized programming model. Emmis Communications, by contrast, is a national company with a highly decentralized structure. Nevertheless, when it launched first ever Spanish-language station in Austin in 2009, the company functioned much like Border Media, like a regional company. Emmis's decentralized structure allows programming directors relative freedom in selecting playlists, but national-level management demands research-based accountability—like Arbitron rankings and other formalized audience and financial reporting—more common in larger organizations. In both Austin and San Antonio, these mid-sized players compete head to head with Univision, the only national Spanish-language competitor in both markets, and often win higher rankings. Border Media Partners and Emmis Communications combine localized programming strategies with an awareness of national trends to remain competitive against larger companies. By looking at the decision-making processes that take place in

these medium-sized stations, it becomes clear that organizational structure, or the ways companies decide to distribute this power throughout the ranks, can have a great deal of influence on programming content.

Austin is an “emerging” market with a lot of recent activity in Spanish-language radio. At the time of the study, ten Spanish-language stations were active in Austin, but this number is subject to frequent change. During a two-year period from the fall of 2008 to the fall of 2010 five stations failed, and four new stations were launched. The market also experienced an interesting shift from multi-format Spanish-language programming to a dominance of Regional Mexican programming. Austin is the fifty-third largest Hispanic market in the U.S., making it, numbers-wise, a significantly less desirable market than San Antonio, which holds the #7 position. Counter-intuitively, San Antonio has about the same number of stations as Austin, with nine stations operating during the research term. As a more established market, stations come and go less frequently, and format changes are more rare. San Antonio has also experienced a similar increase in Regional Mexican stations, though, flipping two stations to the format in the past year.

On a basic level, most radio stations function in the same way. A number of stations generally operate out of a single building under the guidance of a General Manager. The General Manager oversees programming, sales, promotions and technical staff, and makes higher level decisions, for instance, about how to format stations. Sales staff sells air time to advertisers, but they also cultivate relationships with local businesses and are frequently responsible for “selling” the Hispanic audiences, convincing advertisers that their listeners are desirable consumer targets. Promotions staff

also play an especially important role in Spanish-language stations, driving vans painted with station logos all over town, registering listeners for giveaways, handing out bumper stickers, and organizing live remote broadcasts. Programming staff may be organized in a few ways; it may be that each individual station in a local network will have its own Programming Director, or one Program Director may oversee multiple stations. Programming departments also include on air personalities, and often DJs with management aspirations may become involved in music programming. Many Programming Directors double as DJs themselves. For many stations, outside programming consultants also play an important role, both in advising the General Manager on format decisions, and in advising the programming staff on play lists and other programming. However, even though stations are organized by the same basic principles, the power structures, and the processes of how decision making, each vary from station to station, according to the personalities of key individuals.

Border Media Partners

When Dallas businessman Tom Castro created Border Media Partners in 2002, he had a vision. Castro designed his business model around tightly formatted stations that would be offered in all of the major Texas markets. His plan included both English and Spanish-language stations, but the company's first stations were largely Spanish formats. Border Media rolled out "La Ley," a Regional Mexican format, and "Digital," featuring Spanish Pop in six markets across Texas—Austin, San Antonio, the Rio Grande Valley, Laredo, and Waco—over the next two to four years, establishing a powerful regional

network of over thirty stations. Castro relinquished leadership of Border Media in July of 2007 to Jeffrey T. Hinson, a Spanish-language radio veteran who previously held positions with Univision and the Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation (HBC). While the transition appeared friendly, with Castro remaining on as Vice Chairman of the Board, it marked a radical change in the company's strategy. Castro initially had planned to operate both English and Spanish-language stations, but Spanish stations now dominate the company's portfolio. Castro advocated a centralized strategy for programming those Spanish-language stations: he launched stations under the same names in multiple markets, and made playlist decisions from company headquarters. Under Hinson's leadership, Border Media relinquished centralized programming authority, shifting those responsibilities to local programming directors, and several markets switched Spanish formatted stations to English.

Tom Castro recruited Lance Hawkins, Border Media's current General Manager in San Antonio, from the Rio Grande Valley, where he had worked in mostly English language radio since he was a teenager. Hawkins sold a handful of stations he owned in the Valley to Castro and stayed on as General Manager. He won a promotion to Vice President of Sales because of his successes with the stations in the Valley, and moved to San Antonio for the new position, and when Hinson took Castro's place in 2007, Hawkins assumed the position of General Manager for the San Antonio station cluster. Hawkins currently manages four stations in English and three in Spanish. Of the cluster's four English stations two play adult contemporary on the FM dial, and two AM stations feature sports and news talk programming. On the three frequencies dedicated to

Spanish-language formats, the FM Regional Mexican station “La Ley” and an AM station “Norteño” have held the same format and the same name since the company purchased them. The third frequency, though, has been home to a variety of formats: they launched the station with the “Digital” Pop format, then tried a younger, more progressive variation on Regional Mexican called “El Compa,” and, most recently, began to simulcast Norteño on the AM and FM frequencies.

Hawkins’s shift from a centralized administrative position to a local managerial one at the transition from Tom Castro’s to Jeffrey Hinson’s leadership is telling. While Castro preferred a centralized structure, Hinson favored decentralization. The central administration shrunk, and so did their control of individual cluster’s on air content.

Hawkins summarized:

Every time you have a new person at the top, they have a different view on how they want to operate. Tom, when he first started the company really believed in programming from corporate down. We had a corporate consultant that was very instrumental, and very involved in music selection and so forth, whereas the local program director was not. When Jeff Hinson became the CEO of the company, Jeff had a very different view. He believed much more that markets operate autonomously, and that those decisions should be made on the local market level (Hawkins 3/1/10).

While Hawkins did not suggest that the failure of San Antonio’s version of the Spanish Pop format “Digital” in 2008 could be attributed directly to this centralized programming model, it seems likely that Castro’s top-down organizational structure played a role in the station’s demise. According to Hawkins, Digital had been performing

well in San Antonio until the company's closest competitor, Univision, launched its own pop station. Univision's station, broadcast over a stronger frequency, quickly topped Digital in the ratings. Competition was the most direct cause for Digital's failure, but Hawkins also admitted that the decision to try a pop format in the first place may not have been a good one. The idea to start a Spanish Pop station in San Antonio was based on what Hawkins described as a "hunch" that local audiences would listen, rather than market research. As part of Border Media's region-wide plan, format decision for most stations were based on Castro's initial "hunch" that certain standardized formats—Regional Mexican and Spanish Pop—would work in any city in Texas. For Hawkins and other Border Media staff, the shift to a more decentralized model, where central mandates did not dictate programming, was a welcome one. After working in both systems, Hawkins found localized programming to be more effective:

One of the problems in radio, be it Spanish or English, is that it's become homogenized, and the more local that radio can be, the better it will perform in a market, both ratings-wise and sales-wise. So I welcome having someone local, who lives eats and breathes in San Antonio to be the person who's primarily responsible for what those stations sound like (Ibid.)

Border Media Partners' stations in Austin underwent the same transition, and likewise responded favorably to a more open central management. Rather than attributing the shift to a question of management style, though, Austin General Manager Jerry Del Core argued that the centralized scheme simply was not effective:

When I first joined Border Media two and a half years ago the vision was to build out a brand and run that brand across

the 5 markets. The reality is the musical tastes in the markets are very different, and that did not work very well. [We began] to build it out individually, so now there's not a lot of sharing between the markets. I mean, you'll share general information, what songs are hot, what do you like, what's testing well, what kind of feedback, but that doesn't become a Bible for you to run the operation in your market.... So we might have five stations called "La Ley," one in each market, but each station has different personalities on it, plays different music, does different promotions. So each one carries the brand name, but it's all customized to the market (Del Core 12/11/09).

In spite of what Del Core characterized as a more hospitable corporate environment, Border Media's Austin Spanish-language stations did not continue to prosper. In 2009, Del Core made the decision to pull "Digital" and Regional Mexican "La Ley" and replace them with English talk stations, formats he felt were an untapped niche in Austin. Digital had been struggling in Austin as it had in San Antonio, so its demise was less of a shock than the cancellation of La Ley, which was the most profitable Spanish station in the market at the time. After the top earning Spanish stations folded the AM stations, "Juan" and a Spanish sports-talk format ESPN Deportes also folded; the income generated by these smaller stations was not sufficient to justify a bilingual office and sales staff. I spoke with Del Core shortly after the stations were pulled, and shortly before he, in fact, left the company. He reported that the decision to pull both stations hinged on the low performance of the pop format, Digital. Pop stations perform better in cities with more international Spanish speaking populations, or in cities with more assimilated Spanish speakers. Austin's predominantly Mexican population, most of

whom have only recently immigrated, did not embrace the pop format. Once the first station fell, the rest followed.

Border Media's resilience in San Antonio seems to be exceptional, since the kinds of management problems that plagued the company's Austin branch have led to the demise of the Waco station cluster as well. Border Media is undoubtedly in a transitional phase. While Castro's centralized model may not have been effective programmatically, it was the driving force behind the company's development. Under new leadership, it is not yet clear in which direction the company will go. A decentralized structure allowed the company the flexibility to respond to local demographics and musical tastes, even as they continue to follow national format guidelines and music trends in a general way. The success of this kind of company demonstrates that stations that are able to effectively balance these two commercial identities, national and local, use this talent as a competitive advantage.

Emmis Communications' "La Z"

Within one month of La Ley's demise in Austin, Emmis Communications, a newcomer to Spanish-language radio, decided to take advantage of the void. Emmis quickly searched out Spanish radio programming consultants for advice and gathered up the on air and administrative talent that had been let go by Border Media to launch Regional Mexican station "La Z." Emmis is, revenue-wise, one of the largest radio companies in the U.S. While they own only twenty-eight stations, a number that pales next to Clear Channels' eight-hundred, several of them are highly successful in large

markets. Among these, hip hop stations Power 106 in Los Angeles and Hot 97 in New York, and alternative rock station Q101 in Chicago contribute to the company's strong fiscal performance. "La Z" 107.1 became Emmis's first Spanish-language station in the country. According to Emmis's General Manager in Austin, the company considers the format something of a trial for the company, testing the feasibility of launching Spanish-language stations in other markets.⁴ In spite of its national scope, Emmis operates on a decentralized model, as compared to Univision, or even BMP's initial plan. The company does not syndicate stations in multiple markets, and does not even repeat station names in multiple markets. According to local-level management, Emmis relegates format and programming decisions to local networks. Emmis Austin General Manager Scott Gilmore summarized the corporate structure as follows:

We're a much more decentralized company than a Clear Channel or a Univision or Radio One or some of the other groups. [This is] partly because of the lack of numbers or the mass you would need to make that kind of corporate structure cost efficient, but also I think it's great because I think there's a general a commitment to being local broadcasters and serving the local market. So we have a lot more independence than some of the big companies do (Gilmore 12/16/10).

Emmis used this programmatic freedom to make La Z Austin's number one Regional Mexican station over the course of only six months. The company secured Liberman Broadcasting's "Don Cheto" Morning program from Los Angeles, gave Border

⁴ Emmis did in fact start another Spanish-language station shortly after La Z. Emmis's \$7 million annual local management agreement with Mexican media company Grupo Radio Centro to operate Los Angeles station KXOX-FM 93.9 relieves the company of any programming responsibility, but puts it in the game.

Media personalities “El Chiquilín” and “El Gallo” a new home in the afternoon, and began to vigorously promote the station through live remote broadcasts, charity drives, give-aways and other public events.

In making the transition from an English hip-hop station to a Spanish Regional Mexican station, Emmis General Manager Scott Gilmore found experience working with minority audiences carried over from one format to the next. Initially, they proceeded cautiously: “We looked at that in terms of really trying to do some homework in getting recommendations, talking to a lot of consultants and getting some people we were comfortable with to help guide us through any landmines that might be out there” (12/16/10). They added bilingual receptionist, producer and sales staff. In sales, Gilmore wanted to have people on hand who “know the culture and know the product,” to sell time most effectively. The station’s first advertisers were actually the same night clubs that had advertised on the hip hop station, all of which hosted Regional Mexican events as well. Other than the experience of working with many of the same advertisers, it is not immediately clear what kind of similarities Gilmore found between the two minority audiences. At a most basic level, considering Spanish speakers as just another minority audience probably de-exoticized them for Gilmore’s purposes. However, the easy match-up between racial groups and formats is one of the more disturbing stereotypes facilitated by the industry’s organization.

When Gilmore began making plans for launching Emmis Communications’ new Spanish-language station, he considered a number of formats before choosing Regional Mexican. The Regional Mexican format was chosen because of its proven profitability.

Gilmore had, in keeping abreast of his local market, known for a long time how profitable competitor Border Media Partner's (BMP's) La Ley had been. When the company decided to pull La Ley, his surprise was apparent. "When BMP pulled out of the Spanish formats, honestly, we were kind of flabbergasted because we knew the number of dollars that were going into Spanish-language radio" (Ibid.). While the true cause of the station's demise remains unclear, Gilmore investigated as best he could, and worked with consultants to see what kind of work would be involved in adding a Spanish-language station to his Emmis's Austin cluster. When, a month after La Ley went off the air, no new Spanish-language stations had emerged, Gilmore decided to give it a shot. Research, financial planning, and a thorough search for the right consultant—he ended up hiring José Santos, who had previously worked with Border Media—were important steps for Gilmore, who is ultimately accountable for the success of his business. By launching a Spanish format, he was taking his company into a foreign territory and had to make sure that he was making the right decision.

The speedy turnover of station names and formats suggests a high degree of flexibility on the part of these regional companies, they adapt to and anticipate perceived changes in their markets. However, the fact that each of these companies made shifts towards more Regional Mexican stations, with the exception of Border Media Austin who exited the Spanish-language market entirely, implies that national companies have created a sort of Regional Mexican hegemony—the format's success makes it the "logical" choice for any station plotting a format change. Nevertheless, as we can see in the intensive research and exploration, decentralized companies are in control of their

destinies, and behave as free agents, choosing formats and station identities based on their own assessments of the market.

LOCAL PLAYERS

Truly local companies, operating single stations or clusters in only one market are increasingly rare. While they are aware of national strategies for reaching Spanish speakers, they do not generally compete head to head with nationally owned stations, and are consequently less compelled to adopt these techniques. Many operate on significantly smaller budgets, seeking local rather than national advertising dollars, and focusing more on AM than FM stations. For Spanish-language radio, the higher degree of programming flexibility these stations demonstrate is almost a vestige of earlier times, before national companies became interested in the medium. I am not interested in making a case against the death of local business or the homogenization of radio programming here, even though changes in the business environment of media have certainly affected these. Instead, I use the case of one local network in Austin to demonstrate how a failure to balance national and local demands often leads to station failure. In the contemporary media context, disconnect from the ideological push of national conglomerates amounts to ineffectiveness, in terms of listeners reached and station perpetuity.

Encino Broadcasting owned four stations in Austin at the time of the study: “Puro norteño,” which is broadcast on both AM and FM dials as KOKE 1600 AM, and 102.7 FM; KELG 1440 AM, the Christian-programmed “Radio Vida”; and KTXZ 95.1 FM “Para la gente,” a Tejano station. José Jaime García, Jr. currently heads Encino

Broadcasting, but inherited the profession from his father, José Jaime García, Sr. García, Sr. began his radio career at KTXN 1370 AM in 1952, and in 1976 reportedly founded the first all-day Spanish-language station in Austin. Other family members still work in the stations. The family bought and sold and operated Spanish-language stations in Austin on and off until the present. García founded Dynamic Radio Broadcasting company in 1985, operating launching KELG, KKLB, KTXZ and KFON. In 1986 García Sr. passed away and his son took over the business. In 2004, García Jr. sold the company's frequencies to Border Media Partners earning \$19 million for KOKE, KTXZ, KELG and KXXS. In 2005, Univision converted KTXZ to the Spanish oldies format *Recuerdo*, taking the last tejano format station off the air. The García family was out of the radio business for three years until October of 2007, when García formed the company Encino Broadcasting to buy back three of his old stations from BMP. For \$5.5 million, a fraction of their 2004 sale price, García, Jr. bought KELG 1440AM, KTXZ and KOKE . KTXZ was initially re-launched as a Latin Alternative station, but in August of 2008, García responded to activism from local community group, the Austin Tejano Music Coalition and State Senator Gonzalo Barrientos, to put tejano back on the air in Austin, renaming the station "Para la Gente," or "for the people." As a small and local company, García identifies Encino's main market niche as providing low-cost advertising to local business.

First and foremost, radio's a business, it's not just a music-playing machine. What we did first was analyze it and say, "what does the marketplace need?" And what we thought they needed was a value-menu type thing, a low cost provider. Border Media and Univision were priced way up

here in terms of advertising, so we wanted way down towards the bottom. So that's what we did, we were trying to look for the broadest possible reach. And so, on the biggest station we had, which was the 1600, that's why we put it as our norteño format which we had a lot of experience with because we used to do KFON which was norteño at that time. And I think we were rather successful at it. (García, Jr. 2/15/10).

In spite of his confidence in this strategy, García, Jr.'s stations may not be doing so well. "Norteño" went off the FM dial during the first months of 2011. While it may be that he was able to sell the station at a profit, it is telling that, financially, was not worth keeping the station on the air. The small local advertisers that the company targeted are dwindling in number themselves, and the rates for spots were necessarily low. While Encino's tejano station "Para la Gente" is still on the air, its programmers have been struggling to attract a broader audience. Tejano's listeners are generally older Mexican-Americans, and the format has not shown growth among younger listeners. Many older Mexican-Americans who I interviewed for this study were also displeased with the station because of its narrow playlist of Tejano hits, and its incorporation of what they felt were Regional Mexican songs to appeal to this younger demographic. I will discuss the complexities of programming for the Tejano audience at length in Chapter Three, but the struggles of these two stations demonstrate that programming exclusively for a local audience, and relying exclusively on local advertising dollars, present serious hurdles to stations' success.

PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

Management-level explorations of the Regional Mexican format are often worlds away from the kinds of on-the-ground decision making that goes into creating playlists. Programmers in these same mid-sized companies conduct careful reviews of audience research studies and of national playlist databases, but mix these with a degree of experienced based intuition. These gut feelings are a type of decision making that management would often rather not know about, because it would be difficult to convince advertisers of their consistency in delivering their audience. However, this individual level flexibility among key programming personnel creates the space in which national and local ideas about Mexican-American identity can be combined.

In Spanish-language radio as in English radio, programming decisions have not been made in the DJ booth for a long time, since programmers are centrally concerned with delivering ratings, or logging the most listeners possible on their Arbitron rankings. Regional Mexican stations in both Austin and San Antonio draw on national play list databases to compile local on air content. However, they also strive for intimate understandings of their local audiences, stressing local tastes as they choose content from nationally compiled sources. Programming Directors lead the process of choosing on air content, and they may oversee only one station or a cluster of stations. Many Programming Directors also double as on air talent. With rare exception, decisions about which music to play are made well in advance of airplay, with weekly new songs, or “adds,” incorporated into an existing, ordered, playlist loaded on computer in the DJ

booth, along with interspersed station identifications, advertisements and public service announcements, and DJ banter—also generally pre-recorded. all on automated play.

At BMP San Antonio, General Manager Lance Hawkins relegates all Spanish-language programming responsibilities to Programming Director Alfonso Flores, in whom he has the utmost confidence. As Flores creates play lists for each of his three Regional Mexican stations, Norteño, La Ley, and El Compa (at the time of the study), he keeps the different characteristics of each target audience in mind. Norteño is similar to many AM or other low-budget Spanish stations across Texas, in offering highly local programming with a strong community service component. Because of the lower dollar amounts involved, these stations typically target local advertisers and sell time at lower prices, meaning that how they are formatted is less of a national concern. Flores's definition of La Ley, however, is quite different from its Regional Mexican counterparts in Texas and in the rest of the U.S. The station plays far more *grupera* and *cumbia*, targeting audiences who are not only from a northern Mexican states, but also second generation listeners who are bilingual, more assimilated, and who have a certain nostalgia for the music their parents listened to. La Ley does play national Regional Mexican hits as well, but only the most broadly appealing of these. El Compa plays the newer hits, with a harder sound, that might appeal more to younger audiences, and to San Antonio's new immigrant population.

To generate play lists for each of these stations every week, Flores draws on national play list databases:

There is a lot of new technology monitoring what the radio stations are playing across the country. Companies like BDS – Broadcast Data System, Media Base, or Monitor Latino. [Points to a chart on his computer screen] This is what the reality of music was in the U.S. for the last seven days. Every Monday, like today, we see what is going on in the country in regards to music... So for the programming department we need to make a decision what song is going to what station based on the sound of the music. In our case, the first thing is to consider to do a crossover – in this case Banda Recodo “Me Gusta Todo de ti” is a song we can play on the 3 stations, because it’s the #1 hit in the country. [Clicks on a chart entry, the listed song begins to play.] This system allows us to listen to the kind of sound of the song... So my work is listening to each of these songs and make the decision where to play, how many spins per day, all the science of the programming... (Flores 3/1/10).

Flores programs new music exclusively from these play list databases. Record labels and local musicians bring him CDs, but they rarely make air play. The stations carefully work in five new songs each week, that have been tested in other markets and succeeded, and “protects” them by surrounding them with tried and true hits.

Every week I get a lot of new music [gestures to a stack of CDs, sent by record labels]. [Record labels] prefer we play new music than old music, but we don’t have enough spaces to play new music every week. For a regular listener, a new song is a risk, if the song is not known you don’t know what reaction the person is going to have, so we need to protect the new song with two classic hits, if we keep the listener for those 2 or 3 minutes, then the next song is going to be a very popular song. So every week we have 5 opportunities for new music, we call it “Movimiento,” movement... (Ibid.)

“Movimiento” is the first stage of a song’s introduction to BMP San Antonio’s station play lists. If it is successful, it will be programmed more regularly, in the

“Novedades” stage, and perhaps later be promoted to the stations’ rosters of core hits.

At La Z in Austin, the programming process is nearly identical. José Gadea described how he programs the station, working also with Musical Director and fellow DJ Armando “El Chiquilín” Ulloa. The two meet weekly to go over changes to the week’s play list. They look at thirteen Spanish-language stations in Texas, the best in the state, on Mediabase, and consider what they are playing. Charts include the songs played on each station, and the number of times they were played. They also make a report that lists songs by number of plays across stations. Looking at both charts, they identify songs that other stations are playing with increasing frequency, songs they have yet to air.

While stations strive to stay abreast of these national or statewide trends and play the hits all the other stations are playing, there is also room for independent judgment. Gadea, for instance, intentionally excludes narcocorridos from his play lists when he can, for ethical reasons.

Cada programador toma la decisión de incluir o no incluir estas canciones en tu programación. Esa también tiene que ver con la ética que tu quieres aplicar... Entonces este tipo de música, desde me opinión es como un apología de la violencia. Es presentar el delito como algo que al final de cuentas te da satisfacción, vas a celebrar, te da dinero, y te da éxito. Entonces, yo creo que ese tipo de música no es positiva... Como en todos las profesiones también en nuestra profesión, tiene la ética. Tomando cuenta como esta la situación ahorita en las fronteras y las muertes que tienen, creo que no es positivo darle esta imagen a los jóvenes a través de las canciones. Es por eso que no he tratado de incluir las, a donde que sea posible. A veces no

puedo evitar lo porque la gente te pide, te exige que la toces (Gadea 4/29/10).

[Each programmer makes the decision to include or not include these songs in their programming. You have to think about the ethics you want to apply... This kind of music, in my opinion is an apology for violence. It presents wrong-doing as something that at the end of the day gives you satisfaction, makes you celebrate, it gives you money, success. So, I believe that this type of music isn't positive... Like in any profession, we also have our ethical code... When you take into account the situation at the borders right now, the deaths, I believe that its not positive to give this image to the youth through songs. Its because of this that I try not to include them, as much as possible. Sometimes you can't avoid it because the people ask for them, they beg you to play them.]

As a compromise, La Z does air some hits from this very popular genre, but restricts them to a single, evening drive time-slot, so that concerned parents, for example, can turn the radio off.

Programming staff tend to have mixed feelings about the role of research in programming. At both BMP San Antonio and at Emmis's La Z in Austin, Arbitron ratings and playlist monitoring are the primary tools used in selecting station formats and playlists. Scott Gilmore conducted extensive research before launching La Z, he consulted Arbitron ratings along with industry financial reports, and worked with consultants from across the U.S. before deciding to launch a Regional Mexican station. To his Programming Director, José Gadea, however, this decision was a little more intuitive than research based. He recognized the importance of research from the managerial perspective, but in the end, La Z was filling the shoes of a recently folded but very successful Regional Mexican station, BMP Austin's La Ley.

A veces, no es necesario invertir mucho tiempo en estudios cuando te das cuenta por ejemplo a La Ley, una estación regional mexicana operando bien con muy buenos ratings y buenos ingresos desaparece. Lo mas lógico para cualquier empresario es agarrar ese mercado. Sabes que había miles de personas que veían este radio, y ya no esta la radio. Pues, vamos a poner otra. Es como obvio, no. Y que tipo de música? Pues, lo mismo que estaban allá. Que locutores? Pues lo mismo (Ibid.).

[Sometimes, it is not necessary to invest a lot of time in studies when you take account, for example, that at La Ley, a Regional Mexican station that was operating well with very good ratings and good income disappears. The most logical thing for any business is to take over this market. You know that there were thousands of persons who listened to this station, and now it's going. So, let's make another. It's kind of obvious, isn't it? And what type of music? Well, the same they placed there. Which DJs? Well, the same.]

Local network Encino Broadcasting's José García, Jr. took this a step further. Operating a small station group, he relies far less on ratings in choosing his formats and programming. He works primarily with local advertisers and sells low-cost advertising: ratings matter, but price is his principle tool for attracting advertisers. The Tejano and Norteño stations he operates have some cross-over musical programming with Regional Mexican, more so in the case of Norteño than Tejano, but prefers to look for new hits in the local club scene, rather than on national charts.

There's a big difference between the way we do it and Univision, or what is now Emmis. They use a lot of research. So it's how high a certain song reaches in their test, we don't do any of that... We're looking for new fresh music from new artists. And what we're trying to do is find those artists and run with them. They have to meet a certain quality, and we're looking for that. The other ones [SLR

companies] are not, they're looking to break in new music, they're looking to break in hits as they meet a certain criteria. So we tend to lead, they tend follow (García, Jr. 2/15/10).

García selects songs for many of his stations himself, and he also takes DJ suggestions into consideration. Even in this more localized, less research-based model, though, the hits that make it on air are not from local bands, they are national and international hits that are especially popular locally.

I go to the clubs a lot, and sometimes the DJs over there get the music before we do because they're friends with somebody so they'll play it. What's going to catch, in my opinion, my attention is going to be to the response of people dancing. If they're dancing to it and they like it, it's going to get my attention. If it just sort of lies there and nobody's does anything, it's a bad thing (Ibid.)

It is important to take this statement with a grain of salt, since García's company is not nearly as lucrative as the larger companies he mentions. However, he is right in noting that new hits have to come from somewhere: at some point, someone has to take a risk. The combination of audience research and playlist databases enables safe choices, profitable choices, which follow on successes at other stations in other markets. His hostility towards research also points to a larger trend in radio programming that other radio personnel have been less free to state. On some level, radio is still about "gut feeling" and individual impressions of music and audiences. But in a contemporary radio industry context, it is preferable to phrase these gut feelings in terms of "research" as often as possible.

MARKET TO MARKET DIFFERENCES

The tension between notions of local versus national programming, and research versus gut instinct are important. Overwhelmingly, the radio professionals I spoke with told me that for a radio station to be successful, it must be local. It is not surprising that the smallest of the Spanish-language radio companies are the most fervent about the importance of being local. Jose García, who, with his family, owns the only Tejano station in Austin, predicts that, “the day of the consolidator is probably pretty much over... it’s a failed experiment” (García, Jr. 2/15/10). While this seems like an easy thing for a local guy to say, it appears that for BMP, the switch from a centralized to a market-based programming model indicates centralized programming may have, in fact been a “failed experiment.” As I detailed above, both Lance Hawkins in San Antonio and Jerry Del Core in Austin preferred the local model, and Del Core went as far as suggesting that Tom Castro’s centralized model was inherently flawed. Emmis Austin General Manager Scott Gilmore also looks at his company’s decentralized structure as an advantage. The reasons for local determination are in part financial, since the company lacks the number of stations to make a more centralized structure cost efficient. He sees this as a positive, though.

Judging from these comments from radio station management in Austin and San Antonio, it seems that local programming is a sort of media moral high-road as well as successful marketing tactic. This is obviously not the case for Univision, which does have the number of stations to make central programming cost efficient. My research leads me to believe, along with Emmis’s Scott Gilmore, that most players in this industry do not

have the number of stations in the number of markets to create an economy of scale that makes homogenized programming viable. However, smaller players can still turn a good profit by defining themselves locally. For the time being, then, it seems like there is a place for localized programming, and that it is a viable option for many media companies.

However, examining what “local” programming means to these radio executives may leave us with a different perspective on stations’ local-centric ideology. As is evident in most stations’ reliance on national playlist databases, being “local” does not mean programming local bands. Stations are not exactly invested in local music scenes in the way we might imagine local non-commercial radio stations to operate. In a city with a rich Mexican-American musical heritage like San Antonio, and to a lesser extent in the smaller Latin music scene in Austin, there are local bands that, stylistically, would seem to fit Regional Mexican formats. For the commercial stations in this study, though, programming local means knowing your audience – knowing which nationally-popular Regional Mexican hits they would most like. On one hand, media workers, and consequently advertisers, are forced to realize that not all Latinos, in fact not even all Mexicans are the same. However the actual amount of content that is different may be very small.

Emmis’s Scott Gilmore estimated that 20-25% of the musical content of a Mexican Regional station from one market to another might be different because of local tastes. That leaves 75-80% that is potentially identical. With over twenty-three years experience in Spanish-language radio, Alfonso Flores of BMP San Antonio noted that to

introduce a new song, you have to have play reliable hits both before and after to keep your listeners. He introduces five new songs per week, that doesn't leave a lot of room for new music.

You know, if we only have 5 spaces for new music, we don't have to take the risk, and that becomes hard for local bands. A lot of them, they produce the CD themselves. [Picks up a CD] These three artists are from San Antonio, let's say I play this song because it's a beautiful song, if they are not in the system of the industry, I will become an island, playing José Leon only in San Antonio, and it will not have any success. If they are not registered on this provider of information [on a national play list database], nobody will notice we are playing that artist. It could help, locally for dances and those things, but for the industry, it's something that they need to take the train of progress instead. Instead of taking a risk with a brand new artist, we prefer to give an opportunity for a song that is causing more impact on the national hit parade (Flores 3/1/10).

In its early years up until the 1990s, Spanish-language stations in Texas and across the country played a little bit of everything, from tejano, norteño, and mariachi to salsa. It is unlikely that Spanish-language radio will ever sound that diverse again. Privately owned stations still do this on occasion, and at a live remote broadcast for Austin's tejano station "Para la Gente," the DJs spun tejano, norteño, and cumbia along with country and hip hop. In spite of localized station-branding and radio professionals seemingly sincere belief in local programming, what actually goes on air is strongly influenced by nation-wide trends. Regional Mexican stations are in a sense "local," but only in that they choose music from a national pool with an eye on local tastes. Cumbias and romantic songs that play on La Ley in San Antonio do not hit the top 40 on the West

Coast. Norteño groups like Intocable and Duelo are very popular in Texas, but draw smaller audiences elsewhere. While national play lists databases and format radio models play an important part in Regional Mexican programming, stations also strive to incorporate detailed knowledge of their audiences into their content.

CONCLUSION

A close look at the structure of individual Spanish-language radio stations or companies and their programming strategies reveals a complex relationship between national and local ideas about audiences and how to best reach them. National players control the format model currently in use across the U.S., but in local markets, formats are tweaked to suit local audiences. Regional Mexican, the most successful Spanish-language format, has grown rapidly since the early 1990s when it was created. The more Regional Mexican stations that appear in each market, however, the more the format deviates from the national model. Ultimately, this demonstrates that Spanish-language radio's development has not been linear or unidirectional. Each market consists of different kinds of listeners of different ages, migration histories, and hailing from different regions in Mexico. The historical look at Tejano radio in the next chapter will show that industry structure and changing immigration patterns have been a determining force on radio. While a Tejano-run industry created some of the first variety stations in Spanish, continued immigration from shifted musical preferences to norteño, to suit immigrants from the north of Mexico, and then banda and other genres as immigrants from the Pacific coast in California began to have an impact on national trends. If before

the format era in Spanish-language radio stations played a little bit of everything, the proliferation of Regional Mexican stations in single markets is stimulating a return to greater programming diversity as stations accommodate the changing immigrant compositions of individual cities. Programming strategies today are different, decisions are not made by DJs, on the fly, in the broadcasting booth. But even as Programming Directors carefully monitor audience research and nation-wide play lists, they create a media product that is uniquely suited to their market.

Chapter 3: Tejano and the History of Spanish-Language Radio in Texas

PARA LA GENTE'S TRAFFIC JAM MIX, JUNE 2010

On a hot Texas afternoon in June, Austin's Tejano station, "Para La Gente" ("For the People") set up for a live remote broadcast on the back patio of the Nuevo León Mexican Restaurant. The sprawling building with its ample parking, bright pink stucco exterior, and Mexican décor looks like it belongs near a suburban mall, rather than here on the East Side among rundown tejano bars and newly remodeled hipster hangouts. Tellingly, the patio looks out over the new light rail station, built to connect this gentrifying Mexican neighborhood with the northern suburbs and downtown. A small crowd congregated around folding tables shaded by trees and at more permanent seating under the open patio attached to the building. Largely forty-five and up, spectators were dressed in shorts and t-shirts, many of the men wearing apparel supporting Texas sports teams, especially the University of Texas at Austin's Longhorns, and the NBA's San Antonio Spurs. DJ Joe "The Kid" Pérez acted as the emcee, floating around the crowd and taking breaks to rest on a temporary stage. Another DJ, Ángel "Big Boy" Pulido, played music from a portable booth, creating a smooth flow between tejano, cumbia, R&B, and county. The event was broadcast live on the station, billed as the "Traffic Jam Mix" show. Joe "The Kid," speaking in English interspersed with occasional words or phrases in Spanish, encouraged spectators to get raffle tickets from a woman seated nearby, and throughout the event they pulled tickets for prizes, ranging from CDs to

tickets for the local soccer team the Austin Aztex, as well as an upcoming concert featuring tejano artist Jay Pérez.

Pulido, who acts as music director for the station, created the “Traffic Jam Mix” show to attract new, younger audiences, by mixing up the standard tejano playlist. Tejanos, second-generation and later Mexican-Americans who grew up in the state of Texas, they say, have both American and Mexican tastes. They like country and popular R&B, but they also like to hear the music of their parents. Both DJs know that to keep tejano radio alive, they need to build its audience, especially by drawing younger listeners. Certainly, both DJs are young: however, the live audience at Nuevo León was not. Nevertheless, Pérez and Pulido keep trying, determined to preserve tejano radio by cultivating new audiences. Both DJs have day jobs—Pérez is a school teacher and Pulido works for the energy company—and both have been fired and hired multiple times, as tejano stations in Austin have gone under and been re-born. Pérez says when he is not doing radio, it just feels like something is missing: he wants to be out in the community, meeting the fans, and knowing people, Tejanos, are listening. The DJs’ efforts to get out in the public for events, to combine genres like country and hip hop with tejano and cumbia, and the difficulty in attracting younger audiences, are all symptomatic of contemporary Tejano radio more generally. Currently, they compete with in a rapidly diversifying mediascape for younger Spanish-speaking audiences, audiences that have largely abandoned them for Regional Mexican radio. Such competition between different Latino formats, though, itself reflects the longstanding diversity that exists in the “Mexican” radio audience. Indeed, Tejano radio stations like Para la Gente broke ground

for the formats that followed, and attention to the historical development of Mexican-American broadcasting in Texas provides clues as to the current problems and potential future developments faced by the later formats.

TEJANO AND EARLY SPANISH-LANGUAGE RADIO

Stations like Para la Gente are fighting an uphill battle to keep an older type of music and an older form of media vital. Since the early 1990s there has been an overall move away from Tejano music due to changing demographics: as new Mexican immigrants continue to arrive Tejanos become more of and more of a minority among Mexican-Americans. However, this shift is not so much a change in practice as it is in emphasis, insofar as Spanish-language radio in Texas has always involved Mexican and Texas-Mexican musics being mixed all together. Tejano radio mixed norteño, different tejano genres and non-Mexican Spanish genres like *balad* and *salsa*, just as Regional Mexican mixes different contemporary Mexican genres. Because these formats are related in this way, the early days of Tejano broadcasting are telling of contemporary developments in Regional Mexican radio. Changing immigration patterns and shifts in the music industry have split the contemporary scene in such a way that an older, more established Tejano class has its stations and a newer, poorer immigrant class with its Regional Mexican stations. Thus, exploring both how Tejano radio came to be and where it stands today is crucial in understanding the Regional Mexican format in Texas.

The term “Tejano” initially referred to Mexican nationals who stayed in Texas after the territory seceded from Mexico in 1836. Today it more commonly refers to

second generation Mexican-Americans, but it is also political, connoting a strong identification with both Mexican and American heritage, and generational, as Mexican-Americans born in the 1950s and 1960s are far more likely to identify themselves as Tejano than younger Texas-Mexicans. “Tejano” also refers to a set of musical genres created by Texas-Mexicans over the past century. The first, conjunto tejano, revolves around an ensemble of accordion and *bajo-sexto*, usually accompanied by drum set, bass and vocals. Conjuntos play European dance forms inherited from the Germans that brought the accordion to the region, along with corridos, and, later, ranchera and cumbia. The instrumentation and repertoire are quite similar to the North Mexican genre widely known as norteño music, but from the first decades of the twentieth century the two began to differentiate, with each acquiring its own set of distinguishing stylistic conventions and political connotations by the 1930s (Peña 1985). A second tejano genre, orquesta, emerged in the 1940s, and combined Mexican repertoire with the contemporary U.S. big band sound. Mixing Mexican, American, and Caribbean musical styles, it bespoke the growing Mexican-American middle class’s desire to assimilate, and represents the first true Mexican-American bi-cultural genre (Peña 1999a). By the 1970s Mexican-American musicians combined the orquesta sound with the ethos of the Chicano political movement to produce the “Onda Chicana,” whose artists combined orquesta big-band instrumentation with rock, soul, jazz and Mexican ranchera. Finally, in the 1980s major labels re-entered the Tejano market with artists like Tejano icon Selena, who were focused on more “universal,” synthesizer-heavy pop genres like balada and cumbia, in an effort to draw a broader Latino audience (Peña 1999b).

The history of Tejano music and broadcasting demonstrates how particular formats rise and fall in popularity, their presence influenced by changing industry conditions and changing immigration patterns. During its heyday, tejano music and radio was widely patronized because it responded to the social tensions facing Mexican-Americans, including intercultural tensions with a dominant Anglo class, intracultural conflict between working and middle class Mexican-Americans, and other personal identity conflicts as well. And Regional Mexican radio today addresses these same conflicts, although the “solutions” it provides may be different.

From its formative years following World War II to its decline in the 1990s, Tejano radio was inextricably intertwined with both the broader Tejano music industry, and with the development of new Tejano music genres. Manuel Peña argues that each subgenre of tejano music—responded in sequence to particular conflicts faced by Tejanos in their respective eras of popularity: first the corrido narrative ballad, then the accordion based conjunto, and finally the wind and string orquesta, each of which presented solutions to physical, economic, and cultural conflicts between Mexican and Anglo populations in Texas (1999b). At the same time, radio broadcasts too responded to changing socio-economic conditions facing Mexican-Americans in Texas, with Tejano and Spanish Variety radio stations adapting to audiences’ changing identities by combining tejano and Mexican genres. Understanding the conditions under which tejano musical genres were created, then, provides insights into its radio presence, as well as that of Regional Mexican radio, insofar as its methods of creating audience satisfaction address similar social stresses.

The shape of the Tejano music industry and its relation to radio were defined by large-scale structural issues that affected the recording industry as a whole. The Texas music industry was initially operated by national labels, which produced small batches of “ethnic” records for local sale. When materials shortages forced these labels to consolidate, however, they pulled out of ethnic markets like Texas, creating a space for local music production (Peña 1999b; San Miguel 1999). Independent labels recorded tejano music, basing their choice of artists and genres on their close ties with the community and personal tastes. These labels also created an environment in which Tejano radio stations and dancehall performance venues could flourish. Later, growing immigration influenced the music that industry actors chose to record, meaning that the tastes of northern Mexican migrants began to overshadow those of Texas-born Mexicans. In spite of the fluidity of the border region at the time, this divide was drawn in musical terms, with tejano and norteño increasingly competing head to head, the former catering to established Texas-Mexican audiences, and the latter to more recent immigrants (Ragland 1998). Finally, pressures to assimilate to an American white middle-class ideal during the 1940s and 1950s, and subsequent political movements that embraced Mexican-American Chicano identity, rooted musical tastes in U.S. popular culture (Peña 1985 and 1999a). While Tejano music scholar Manuel Peña has emphasized the direct connection between social conditions musical innovation, I argue that the musical industry played a crucial mediator role in this process by absorbing larger cultural shifts and then transforming them into widely accessible expressive culture.

Regional Mexican's rise was shaped by similar forces, and its popularity can be linked to a later generations' confrontation with changing immigration patterns, as well as social and economic pressures. Regional Mexican radio grew in popularity in the 1990s, following the re-entrance of major labels to the Texas and Spanish-language music market, as well as industry deregulation that facilitated rapid consolidation of these companies. Its popularity has also been stimulated by a non-stop flow of immigrants from Mexico who, over the past several decades, have increasingly come from rural and central Mexico, areas with very different musical traditions from the North. In fact, from an institutional or industry perspective, Regional Mexican radio is in many ways a beneficiary of the legacy left by earlier, groundbreaking Tejano stations, entering a slot that was left empty after the development of "new" tejano genres stopped in the 1990s. Indeed, although tejano genres are still patronized by a handful of dedicated audiences and venues, innovation is sorely lacking, and most Tejano musicians have begun to seek other markets. For example, the very popular norteño group Intocable, in regular rotation on Regional Mexican radio stations across the country, is in fact a Texas band. Their instrumentation is identical to a conjunto tejano, though their slower tempos and plaintive vocals with a pop aesthetic mark a departure from both conjunto and norteño traditions. Given their tejano instrumentation and Texas heritage, Intocable could perform and record under the tejano designation, but they have chosen not to. Such decisions, calculated to appeal to audiences such as those drawn by Regional Mexican radio, younger and continually replenished by new immigration streams, demonstrate the challenge faced by Tejano musicians and listeners. The most dedicated Tejano fans have

now all reached or passed middle age. While their children often appreciate tejano music, they have their own musical interests. Tejano has also become musically frozen, perhaps because it has failed to attract younger audiences, and the older listeners it does attract increasingly demand a very narrow core of hit songs and groups from decades past.

Nevertheless, the patterns of consumption associated with Tejano music have left deep legacies, and Regional Mexican radio's musical response to contemporary social conflicts between Mexican(-Americans) and Anglo U.S. society, is a part of this inheritance. In much the same way that musicians create new styles, radio stations combine different musical influences in ways that signal new kinds of listeners. However, whereas musicians fuse influences within newly composed songs, radio stations fuse influences by combining entire songs within broadcast space. Regional Mexican radio stations combine musical genres in response to the ever-shifting identities of their listeners, just as tejano musicians have combined musical elements based on their shifting identities. Radio's end product, a broadcast hour or day consisting of a mish-mash of different songs, styles, and talk is more ephemeral than the creation of a new musical style, which may be one reason why this particular form of musical hybridizing has not been studied. But radio's ephemeral nature may also make it more responsive and immediate to social change: it takes some time for a new genre to take shape and become popular, but radio programming is created in a moment. Because radio "never stops mixing what it borrows, in order to produce itself" (Hennion and Méadel 1986:285), programmers are the first response to social questions as they arise. For this reason, exploring past and present configurations of Texas-Mexican musical broadcasts sheds

light on changing patterns of Mexican-American identity, in a way that Peña has shown for earlier developments within the music itself.

HISTORICAL LITERATURE ON MEXICAN-AMERICAN MUSIC IN TEXAS

Mexican music is subordinated in studies of Latin music, which have often favored the music of the Caribbean, and literature on Mexican-American music in Texas is particularly thin. Most studies of Mexican-American music have emerged from the Chicano political and academic movement in California (Delgado 1971; Habell-Pallan 2005; Jáquez 2002 and 2003; Loza 1992 and 1993; Macías 2003; Reyes 2009). While these studies have inspired the work of the handful of scholars that do focus on Texas, the experiences of Mexican-Americans in California and in Texas are different enough to warrant separate attention. On the most basic level, California has been home to large urban Mexican-American populations who have been able to mobilize politically to a greater degree than Texas's more rural and more dispersed populations. As a result, research on Mexican-American music in California has tends to focus on the self-consciously oppositional music that stemmed from the Chicano movement, which lends itself more easily to the politically-minded scholarship that many Chicano studies researchers have been interested in producing. This political vein has also influenced the scholarship of the most prominent researchers of Texas Mexican-American music. As important as such studies have been, and as central as politics may be to such music, this is not the dimension within which music can be understood as socially significant. The most easily dismissed commercial and popular musics, such as those that have dominated

music-making among Texas-Mexicans, may also yield insight into the way that music industries and audiences are constructed. There are also geographic and demographic reasons for treating Texas apart from the existing literatures that focus on developments in California. The state has a much larger border region than California, and is more fluidly connected to northern Mexico. Finally, the two states have received very different immigrant populations from Mexico over the 20th century: California has drawn most of its Mexican residents from the Pacific Coast while Texas has historically had more immigrants from northern Mexico. While migration patterns have changed over the years, with increasing numbers of migrants arriving in both states from central and southern Mexico, initial developments have created a lasting impact on Mexican-American cultural practice in the two areas.

The most important contributions on Texas Mexican music are Américo Paredes's pioneering work on Texas oral history, and Manuel Peña's trilogy on tejano music, with a monograph each dedicated to conjunto, orquesta, and contemporary tejano. Paredes and Peña come from the same school of thought: Peña was trained in the Mexican-American studies department Paredes created at the University of Texas at Austin, and both share a Marxist view of the political and social structures surrounding tejano music. Both were politically invested in the impact of their work, and this led them to make exclusions that prioritize Tejano culture at the expense of more recent immigrant influences in the state. Paredes's work on corrido and on South Texas in general is most relevant to popular music studies in the ways it has informed Peña's work. In "*With his Pistol in his Hand*": *A Border Ballad and its Hero* (1958), Paredes focuses on the corrido as folklore and as a

vehicle for oral history, a function largely lost in the commercialized versions of the genre examined here. However, Paredes's focus on music as a site of representation and resolution of conflict between Mexican-Americans and a dominant Anglo society is central in Peña's discussions of the popular genres that followed. The source of this conflict is the U.S. acquisition of Texas and subsequent subordination of Mexican nationals, a conflict which continues to manifest as structural racism. Music works to resolve these tensions first by recognizing them, and second by providing an open space for expression.

Peña's (1985) work on conjunto offers an "interpretive" history of Tex-Mex conjunto through a Marxist framework. He argues that socio-economic changes around World War II led to the development of a bifurcated, class-distinguished Mexican-American musical culture in South Texas, characterizing the period as a "threshold" in which urbanization, social mobility, and cultural assimilation caused deepening intraethnic conflict. Conjunto became the music of the working-class, while orquesta came to represent the assimilationist middle class. Dubbing conjunto musicians Gramscian organic intellectuals, Peña argues that conjunto became a site for developing counter-hegemonic class consciousness. This was not accomplished entirely through music, though, and he reminds us that "music *as* music never addresses specific issues. Rather, its power lies in its capacity to create associations, although these can then be conceptualized and transformed into action" (Ibid.:149).

Peña's two monographs on orquesta (1999a) and tejano (1999b) extend this Marxist analysis into subsequent tejano genres. For Peña musical meaning in all tejano

genres ultimately boils down to class conflict and struggles between Anglos and Mexican-Americans: “fundamentally, ethnic and class conflict, as well as meditative processes such as acculturation and hybridization, are best conceived within the framework of a historical-materialist dialectic that governs the evolving, conflictive relationship between Anglos and Mexicans in their epic struggle to coexist in the Southwest” (1999a:16). The “Mexican-American Generation” that favored orquesta music was characterized by middle class ascendancy, and linked their fortunes to assimilation, American futures, and citizenship (Ibid.:25). As a result they experienced a double bind of biculturalism, and orquesta mediated the tension between a Mexican working-class background and U.S. mainstream aspirations, providing a musical response that mixed American and Mexican influences (Ibid.:27). The subsequent “Chicano Generation,” by contrast, led an intellectual ethnic revival that employed romantic nationalism to gloss over intraethnic class difference. For the purposes of political unity, optimistic versions of Mexican identity were used to overshadow real tensions between middle- and working-class Mexicans.

Regarding Tejano, his term for the commercialized version of Texas-Mexican music that arose in the 1980s, Peña argues that the music retained an organic use-value in spite of commercialization because of its small market and insider ownership (1999b). In the 1990s an expanded listenership for the genre marked its postmodernist moment, in which the music became a “full fledged market commodity driven by the alienating principle of exchange-value” (Ibid.:14). This transition was not complete: rather, conflict generated around the tension between “a persistent ‘residual’ culture still grounded on

music-as-organic-performance and a new network driven by the surging popularity of music-as-spectacle” (Ibid.). The locally-owned music industry that prospered for most of the twentieth century did in fact preserve meaning in tejano music to a greater degree than national-scale commercial production might have.

José Limón, another student of the University of Texas Center for Mexican-American Studies, takes Peña’s outline of how class divisions are represented in music a step further, arguing for the consideration of generation, class and gender to highly intertwined categories. Limón (1994) builds on Peña’s Marxist, class-and-ethnic-conflict paradigm, but adds postmodern notions of multiple positionality and multiple signification in late capitalism. Limón criticizes Paredes for his failure to recognize class disparity and conflict among South Texas Mexicans, and argues that the culture of more recent, working-class immigrant families, from which Limón himself comes, has become more representative of the culture of South Texas. In particular, Limón argues that polka *dancing* should replace corrido as quintessential Mexican-American cultural expression in Texas, citing Peña’s argument that dancing remains outside postmodern commercial culture more than music, thus retaining a more organic social meaning. Limón keeps in mind the multiple ways in which “quintessential” Mexican-American culture in South Texas may be experienced. Women, twice a minority, derive different meanings from cultural expression than men.

While these scholars have addressed a lack in Texas-specific studies of Mexican-American identity, they largely disregard the role norteño music has played north of the border. The side-by-side development of norteño and tejano shows a closer relationship

between Mexican and Tejano identities than these scholars have recognized. Cathy Ragland's research on the historical relationship between tejano and norteño provides an important perspective on the reciprocal development—both musically and in terms of audience—of the two genres (1998; 2009). She shows that because of the development of the indigenous tejano music industry following World War II, Texas was the most important recording destination for norteño musicians for decades. This industry connection, along with the continued migration of the genre's listeners, led to an intimate, if at times competitive, relationship between the genres. In a telling vignette, Ragland describes listening to the border radio station XFEB passing from Falfurrias, Texas, through the border town of McAllen, to Monterrey, Mexico, as the station held a call-in vote pitting a central Mexican musician against a representative of local, border music. After savoring the latter's victory, Ragland proposes that such events are “a daily occurrence, an excuse to pay homage to one of the region's most heartfelt and impassioned interpreters of the Texas-Mexican border music tradition and a means by which Tejanos and Mexicanos alike can reconnect with a tradition that is truly their own and, at that moment, transcends any cultural or political boundary” (Ibid.:2). Ragland's insight here, that this rivalry is not merely one between a long line of competing genres but also between different ways of identifying as Mexican, shows how tensions over identity and belonging have long become part and parcel of musical activity as well . Here and elsewhere, tejano and norteño have been locked in a similarly charged rivalry for decades, a rivalry that has been exacerbated by the rise of Regional Mexican styles, which represent further options for identification.

My understanding of Regional Mexican radio rests upon an account of its place within such processes of class opposition and identity change like that which has motivated all of these scholars, and as such it requires a sense of the history that lies behind. Peña's idea that tejano music is in its very essence a response to intercultural and interclass conflict is salient today, both in the emergence of new genres and in how we interpret radio programming. Conflict may be too strong a term for the multiple minor and serious points of disjuncture Regional Mexican radio listeners experience in their daily lives. However, the decline of tejano's popularity, and the rise of newer popular styles like contemporary banda, duranguense, and a slower, smoother norteño are a response to a confrontation between Mexican listeners and a U.S. media industry that seeks to commodify their musical tastes. The way that programmers, many of whom are Mexican-American themselves and operating with only loose national guidance, put on-air programming together responds to the daily struggles experienced by their listeners. Radio does not create meaning in the same way that the more cohesive community Peña describes does, but it does serve as a contemporary context in which connections between intentionally apolitical music and social meanings can be made. Limón's awareness of the different, positional identities within Texas Mexican communities is also relevant in understanding radio audiences. Regional Mexican audiences are a diverse group who interpret music and programming from individual as well as ethnic or group perspectives. I investigate the Regional Mexican audience further in Chapter Five, but it is useful to bear in mind here how scholars of Mexican-American music in Texas have progressively viewed its listenership as more complex.

AN OVERVIEW OF TEJANO AND NORTEÑO MUSICAL GENRES

In order to understand the way that the tejano music industry developed, it is important first to become familiar with some of the key tejano genres and the historical circumstances that created them. The structure of the industry, especially the surge in Tejano ownership in the decades after the World War II, created a space in which new styles flourished, each responding to the particular social, political, economic and cultural conflicts faced by Mexican-Americans of particular eras. In the first era, “corridos of intercultural conflict” responded to the physical war between Mexican and Anglo settlers of the Texas territory, well before the tejano music industry developed. Before it found a home in the industry, the later conjunto style that emerged after World War II addressed the struggles of the Mexican-American working class, left behind by their assimilating middle-class counterparts. Orquesta came next, addressing the growing pressure that this new Mexican-American middle classed faced to assimilate. And though Peña does not focus on norteño, the style continued to play a key role alongside all of these developing tejano genres. Indeed, while the importance of the emergence of a strong Tejano musical culture and industry cannot be overemphasized, it is important to recognize the broader musical context in which Texas Mexicans lived, and to recognize the tejano industry’s impact on norteño. Tejano radio was diverse, playing tejano, norteño and other Mexican genres, as well as Caribbean or “tropical” music. By combining genres in their daily playlists, Spanish-language programmers in Texas addressed changing social conditions. Their mix of Mexican and tejano recognized the continuing streams of Mexican immigrants as well as the varied musical tastes of their listeners. Consequently,

radio programming also acted, and continues to act, as a response to changing social conflicts.

Tejano music existed long before Tejanos established their own music industry. The “corrido of intercultural conflict” that Américo Paredes identified as the first Mexican-American form was based on the Mexican narrative ballad’s structure, and dealt with the socio-political issues created by the Mexican and Anglo conflict over the Texas territory. Conjunto, the duo of accordion and bajo sexto (a twelve-stringed double coursed guitar), was an independent cultural expression that had grown beyond its hybrid, German and Mexican roots. Though both existed before the industry’s emergence, the fertile environment created by tejano recording and radio gave both a space to grow, and provided a space for more genres to emerge, even as it drive transformation in these and other musics. The corrido continued to be an important song form, but it was transformed into shorter, more recording-friendly *canción corrido*, and it also found a home in the conjunto ensemble. Conjunto itself saw a number of stylistic changes, including slowed tempos, expanded instrumentation, and the introduction of other new song types, all of which crystallized in the 1960s, setting a standard for the contemporary conjunto sound. Finally, the new orquesta ensemble came to represent upwardly-mobile middle class assimilation, by fusing Mexican and U.S. popular music. The period following World War II up until the re-entry of the national labels in the late 1980s, in other words, was prolific for tejano musicians, retrospectively viewed as a golden era, even if its innovations have, decades later, come to be experienced as stifling parameters to further musical development.

Conjunto music, today held up as an enduring symbol of tejano identity along with its most important instrument, the accordion, had its origins in the culture of the workingclass. Mexican agricultural workers on both sides of the border picked up the accordion and genres like polka and schottische from German and Polish migrants to Texas at the turn of the twentieth century. By the 1930s, conjunto developed into a unique style, adding the bajo sexto to the accordion, distinguishing it from both European and northern Mexican accordion music. This instrumental duo, playing polkas and other European genres (including waltzes, redovas, schottisches and mazurkas), remained dominant through the 1930s and 1940s. A series of additions to the genre in the 1940s and 50s led to a new stylistic consolidation in the 1960s, creating a sound that remains associated with conjunto tejano today. These included the addition of vocals, credited to Valerio Longoria in 1948, a date that would have coincided roughly with Discos Ideals's first recordings of female vocal duets over conjunto accompaniment as well. The first efforts to incorporate drums in conjunto were made in the 1950s, but drums were not fully integrated until a decade later. Performers also began to expand the traditional repertoire to include ranchera and *bolero* at this time. Tony de la Rosa is credited with amplifying the bajo sexto and adding electric bass, also in the 1950s, around the same time that the invention of the *tacuachito* dance style, a slower, gliding alternative to European-style polka dancing, drove a preference for slower tempos. Finally, Conjunto Bernal and accordionist Steve Jordan experimented with highly virtuosic playing styles and greater musical complexity. Since these innovations, conjunto audiences have largely

resisted further innovation, preferring the more “traditional” style of the 1960s (Peña 1999b:106-08).

Over the course of these musical developments, conjunto created solidarity and space for cultural expression among the working classes, even as low-class associations kept conjunto music out of “respectable” venues, like radio until the 1950s. By contrast *orquesta tejano*, according to Manuel Peña, was invented in response to the “problem” of assimilation and growing socio-economic status tejanos faced after the war. Tejanos were tied to their Mexican heritage but wanted to experience the benefits of entrance into a white middle-class “mainstream” (1999a). Beto Villa presented a possible musical resolution to this dilemma, when he made what was likely the first *orquesta* recording for Ideal in 1947. Villa started his music career in high school in Falfurrias, Texas, with a big band inspired group called The Sonny Boys in the 1930s (San Miguel 1999:33). While his intervening musical activity is unknown, in 1947 he approached Ideal’s Marroquín with the idea of recording an *orquesta*, modeled after an American big band, performing Mexican rather than strictly American music. Marroquín accepted, on the condition that Villa add accordion to the group for the recording. Villa had enough success with the resulting Mexican-American big band fusion that by the 1950s he dropped accordion, increased his band size from eight to eleven musicians, and added the saxophone. Another *orquesta* musician, Corpus Christi’s Isidro López, first recorded with Ideal in 1954. López experimented with adding lyrics to the polkas and waltzes played by his group, and continued to expand *orquesta* repertoire throughout the 1950s, including boleros and other Caribbean genres like *mambo*, *rumba*, and *danzón* (Ibid.:36). San

Miguel suggests that the combination of American, Mexican, and even Caribbean styles already present in contemporary big band music appealed to the bi-cultural identities of orquesta audiences, creating a class-appropriate alternative to the working-class conjuntos. He also suggests that while groups in California became more heavily influenced by American music, orquestas tejanas stayed closer to their Mexican and Tejano roots by either singing exclusively in Spanish, or by emphasizing ranchera and polka in their increasingly diverse repertoire.

Orquestas tejanas of the 1970s incorporated a more expansive repertoire of U.S. popular music, and gained an occasionally political orientation that earned them the name “La Onda Chicana,” the Chicano Wave. La Onda artists like Little Joe and Sunny Ozuna fused jazz and funk more seamlessly with both Mexican *jaitón*, or middle-class orquesta music, and working-class ranchera. While La Onda Chicana takes its name from the Chicano political movement of the late 1960s, the music was rarely overtly political. Of the most well know musicians to come out of the movement (Little Joe and Sunny Ozuna) Little Joe was the only one to become politically active himself. Ozuna viewed the musical style of La Onda as just another phase of his personal musical development. The combination of styles, however, made an important statement about the Mexican-Americans of the 1970s. Born after WWII, this new generation did not feel the need to interrogate the “foreign-ness” of American culture as much as their parents had. Growing up with rock and roll and other American popular music, Onda Chicana musicians found it only natural to incorporate these sounds. They also were less concerned with the class divisions that forged a rift between orquesta and ranchera. Peña compares the musical

synthesis achieved by Little Joe, in particular, to the inter-sentential code-switching embraced in Chicano literature; while Chicano authors and poets combined Spanish and English within sentences, Little Joe and other Onda Chicana musicians seamlessly alternated between polka and jazz within single musical phrases (1999b:168).

Finally, Tejano was not the only Mexican-identified music circulating in Texas during the early twentieth century. From their inception in the years immediately following WWII, tejano labels recorded norteño artists as well. When major labels consolidated Spanish-language recording in Mexico City, musicians from northern Mexico faced a decision between heading south to record, or crossing the border to record in Texas. Even in Mexican industrial centers like Monterrey, recording technologies were not available until several decades later (Ragland 1998:4). Los Alegres de Terán, Los Hermanos Torres-García (later Los Pavos Reales), Los Hermanos Prado, El Palomo y el Gorión, Los Huracanes de Terán, Los Tremendos Gavilanes, Los Norteños de Nuevo Laredo, and Los Relámpagos del Norte were among the artists that crossed the border to record in the 1940s through the 1960s.

Initially, such norteño groups adapted their styles to suit tejano musical tastes, but by the late 1950s, a number of structural advantages along with continued immigration from Mexico made this unnecessary. Mexican customs laws in place until the North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) passed in 1994 prohibited U.S. musicians from bringing instruments into Mexico, effectively barring tours there. U.S. laws, by comparison, were more lax, and allowed Mexican musicians to tour more freely on both sides of the border (Peña 1999b:104). Norteño musicians also toured across a broader

territory once in the U.S., following the burgeoning immigrant community as it explored work opportunities in cities outside of Texas in the 1940s and 1950s (Ragland 1998:28). The groups followed migrant labor routes into both California and the Mid-West. While some tejano musicians did eventually explore these routes, they were much less inclined to do so. Tony de la Rosa, Ruben Vela, and Valerio Longoria were the first tejano musicians to tour extensively outside of Texas. According to Ragland, earlier artists like Narciso Martínez and Santiago Jiménez never played outside of a two-hundred mile radius from their homes (Ibid.). By the time tejano musicians started touring, many of their listeners were more acculturated, and the audiences populating newly-established communities outside of Texas were more recent immigrants with stronger connections to *norteño* than tejano.

In the 1960s and 1970s two *norteño* groups, first Los Relámpagos del Norte and accordionist Ramón Ayala's break-away group Los Bravos del Norte, then Los Tigres del Norte, came to dominate Mexican-American music in the U.S. Both groups drew on continued immigration streams from Mexico, targeting a largely rural, working-class audience. Tejano accordionist Paulino Bernal, who Peña credits with crystallizing the final stylistic elements of the conjunto tejano, reportedly discovered Los Relámpagos—made up of accordionist Ayala and bajo sexto player Cornelio Reyna—in Laredo, in 1965, and arranged for the group to record. Los Relámpagos were strongly influenced by the latest innovations in conjunto tejano, and Ayala borrowed heavily from Bernal's virtuosic accordion style. Los Relámpagos soon became the dominant Mexican-American musical group in the U.S., surpassing tejano groups like Bernal's while remaining

popular south of the border, as well. Ayala and Reyna split in the early 1970s, but both musicians' music remains tremendously popular among Mexican and Mexican-American audiences. Ayala's current group, Los Bravos del Norte, remains a standby for Regional Mexican radio stations. Also in the 1970s, Los Tigres del Norte emerged, gaining a reputation as *the* group of Mexican and Mexican-American rural working-class. Los Tigres' sound drew on the high-pitched nasal vocal aesthetics of the earlier norteño group Los Alegres de Terán as well as the tradition of the corrido narrative ballad. The group overshadowed both Ramón Ayala and tejano competitors in the 1970s, and it remains one of the iconic groups of Regional Mexican radio.

For Tejanos who feel their expressive culture is slipping away, the conflict between (conjunto) tejano and norteño is a key dividing line between older generations of Mexican-Americans and more recent immigrants today. Tejanos listen to norteño and have for decades, but discussions about how tejano is distinct become a way to assert cultural difference. The musical differences between these two genres are a topic of hot, and unresolved, debate. Some argue that the accordion style is key—in tejano, accordionists will often play ornamental passages underneath lyrics, whereas in norteño accordionists primarily ornament only between vocal lines. The drum set also seems to have an elevated role in tejano while it falls into the background in tejano. But it is often the less tangible differences such as the expressive style of performers and in the way listeners respond to the music that are most important in transforming this musical debate into a discussion of Tejano identity.

Corrido, conjunto, orquesta, Onda Chicana, and norteño played important roles in the development of Tejano radio. They are locked in an interdependent relationship with the music industry, in which the industry created the environment for the growth of the music, and the music enabled radio and a live performance culture. Indeed, though these genres were themselves responses to the social conditions that faced Mexican-Americans in Texas, it was in part radio programmers who added meaning and who continue to do so, by combining them in particular ways in their broadcasts.

THE TEJANO MUSIC INDUSTRY: RADIO, LABELS, AND DANCEHALLS

Tejano radio flourished from the late 1940s to the 1980s as part of an indigenous tejano music industry. This industry provided institutional conditions that enabled the invention of new music genres, but it was itself created by a series of broader structural changes in the national music industry. As noted above, major labels were the first to record Mexican music in Texas, but World War II supply shortages forced them out of smaller, ethnic markets. When tejano veterans returned home from the war with new middle-class status and a little money to spare, tejano labels moved into the market, and began to make the records these consumers wanted to buy. Radio, recording labels, and dance hall concert venues grew up as three equally important arms of this industry. Manuel Peña suggests that the localized nature of the industry allowed music and musical meaning to develop organically, in a way that was intimately tied to the Mexican-American community in Texas (1999b:189). Tejano musicians were only one part of this industry, though. Norteño musicians came from northern Mexico to record in Texas

studios and play at Texas dance halls. While Tejano-owned, then this industry was fostering Mexican-American music more broadly, supporting the development of norteño music and, eventually, Regional Mexican radio alongside Tejano radio and recordings.

Early on, regional representatives of major labels were more interested in selling phonographs than recordings, a business strategy that led directly to the early development of Mexican-American recordings, insofar as companies found it expedient to make small batches of recordings that would help persuade different local communities to purchase the machines (Spottswood 1990). Selling two or three hundred records would be counted as a success, so recording lesser-known or regional artists was not considered a risk, as it would be today. Much like contemporary independent labels, decisions about what to record were largely made by local representatives with no interference from the national-level organization. In Texas, RCA Victor subsidiary Bluebird, Vocalion, Okey, and Decca all recorded conjunto artists like Narciso Martínez and Gaytan y Cantú and singer and guitarist Lydia Mendoza, “La Alondra de la Frontera” or the Lark of the Borderlands (San Miguel 1999). In lieu of formal distribution networks, migrant workers carried these recordings north from San Antonio, a habitual stopping point for many Mexican migrants. While these recordings frequently traveled northward along migrant labor routes, they rarely made their way south of the border (Ragland 1998:9). This trend would continue as the industry changed hands and developed: while Mexican artists often became popular in the north, the reverse was rarely true. Spanish-language radio programs developing in the 1920s and 1930s were short, most of them airing during

blocks of off-hours time purchased on English stations, and they were dominated by live music and talk rather than recordings.

As a consequence, during this phase the national recording industry and highly localized Spanish-language radio programmers had little to do with one another. Pedro J. González, one of the most iconic programmers of the 1930s, provides a good example of how DJ personality and individualized programming—facilitated by a decentralized industry organization—were the most important traits of the era. González owned and hosted a program called “Los Madrugadores,” or “The Early Risers,” in the early hours of the morning in Burbank, California, near Los Angeles. He launched the program in 1927 on English-language KELW. González catered to manual laborers with news, talk, and live music programming. A musician himself, he put together a group to perform for the program, also called “Los Madrugadores,” which consisted of a vocal duo that sang rancheras and corridos in well-blended thirds over the accompaniment of ten-string guitars.

González’s status as a community organizer and respected leader made the program popular, but also drew unwanted attention from the local Anglo community, which eventually cost him both his radio program and his U.S. residency. Foreign language radio became an object of suspicion as isolationist sentiments grew after World War I, and, as an important figure in Spanish-language radio, González was personally targeted. In 1934, González was arrested and subsequently convicted on falsified rape charges: the victim later recanted her story. The musical group that González organized for his program recorded a corrido recounting the events of his persecution:

Figure 3.1: Corrido de Pedro J. González, Los Madrugadores, 1933-36

Señores, oigan la historia que refiere este corrido De un cantador muy famoso de muchos muy bien querido Aprenda bien estos versos por no se queden en olvido	Gentlemen, listen to the story that this corrido tells About a famous and well-loved singer Learn well these verses so they won't be forgotten
Es Pedro J. González de quien vamos a cantar El anunciador de radio que se hizo mas popular Con sus bonitas canciones, pudo a todos conquistar	It is Pedro J. González of whom we will sing The radio announcer that became very famous With his famous songs, he could win everyone over
El pueblo con simpatía lo harían sentir supano Por escuchar sus programas se levantaban temprano A oír a Pedro González, con su guitarra en la mano	The people with friendliness would make him feel [?] They woke up early to listen to his programs To listen to Pedro González with his guitar in hand
El 510 (AM) formaron todos sus Madrugadores Y por miles se contaron todos sus admiradores De todas partes venían, a oír a sus cantadores	510 AM became all of his Madrugadores And his admirers were in the thousands They came from all over to hear his singers
Las mujeres lo cantaban a diario en sus oficinas Mandando dedicatorias a hermanas, tías, y sobrinas La mayor parte a sus novios, y otras hasta a sus vecinas	Women sang his songs in their offices every day Dedicating them to sisters, aunts, and nieces, Mostly to their boyfriends, but some even to their neighbors
Muchas guapas jovencitas con otro interés llegaban Y sin comprender que a Pedro un perjuicio le buscaba Pues con sus bellas caritas a causanto [?] lo tentaban	Many young women with other intentions also came And without understanding that Pedro had a fault Because with their pretty faces, they tempted him
Así pasaba los días vacilando y vacilando Y mas popular se hacia cuando lo oían cantando Las pollas no resistían, y mas se andaban rondando	And the days passed as he hesitated and hesitated And he became more and more popular as people heard him sing The "chicks" couldn't resist, and many were around (or courting)
Hizo la suerte traidora un día su estrella empañar Cuando una chica de escuela Pedro empezó a acompañar Nunca pudo imaginarse lo que esto le iba a costar	One day fate made her star tarnish (as in his reputation) When one day Pedro began accompanying a school girl He could never have guessed what this would cost him
Contar es lo que acordaba del dicho sabio y usado El que por muchacho duerme se levanta muy cansado Amigos no olviden esto, con la chiquillas cuidado!	We'll tell you an wise and old saying He who sleeps too much wakes up tired Friends, don't forget this, be careful with women!
Este fue sólo el comienzo y otros cargos le agregaron De diferentes muchachas que con Pedro se pasearon	This was only the beginning and other charges were added From different girls who strolled with Pedro Those famous walks ruined him

Y esos paseos famosos, a la ruina lo llevaron

Y como todos lo saben, siempre suele suceder
Muchos del árbol caído su leño quieren hacer

Y los enemigos salen cuando hay modo de morder

En los juicios que formaron para juzgar a González
Los jurados eran viejas para colmo de sus males
Y aquel pobre mexicano le hacen sus cuentas
cabales

La directora de la escuela era parte de la acusación
Le mensajeaban a Pedro muchos años de prisión
Si hombres lo hubieran juzgado, alcanzaría su
perdón

El juez muy ceremonioso pronuncia al fin su
sentencia
Y a San Quentín va González a cumplirle uno a
cincuenta
Si le va bien lo esperamos como a mediados del
(se)-tenta

Adiós estación de radio, adiós mis escuchadores
Allí de recuerdos se quedan solo los Madrugadores
Que al fin para divertirnos todos somos cantadores

Ya con esta me despido aquí al pie de verdes
nogales
Aquí se acaba el corrido de Pedro J. González.
Que no lo echen en olvido, que ya vendré a
saludarles.

And as many people know, and as often happens,
Many people want to get their firewood from a
fallen tree
And enemies appear when there is a way to bite

In the trials that formed to judge González
The jury were all women to top it off
And made that poor Mexican pay his just debt

The school principal formed part of the prosecution
They sentenced Pedro to many years in prison
If men had judged him, he would have been
forgiven

The judge ceremoniously read his final ruling
And to San Quentin goes González to do one to fifty

If things go well for him we expect him back in the
mid 70's

Goodbye radio station, goodbye listeners,
You'll have to remember me only the
Madrugadores
At the end of the day, to entertain ourselves, we are
all singers.

And with that I say goodbye at the foot of green
nogales tree
This is where the corrido of Pedro J. González ends
Don't forget me, 'cause I'll come back one day to
greet you.

The corrido was an important vehicle for Mexican-American social history in the first half of the twentieth century: here we see that it was also an important form for Spanish-language radio. The Arhoolie collection on which The Corrido of Pedro J. González appears contains primarily corridos and rancheras, Mexican song genres that became a vehicle for the discussion of Mexican-American problems and emotions as

well. This corrido adheres to the typical poetic structure of the genre and to standard themes, like the deceitful temptress who leads González into the Anglo conspirators' trap. González's story is also what Américo Paredes termed a "corrido of intercultural conflict" because its central conflict is tied to the tension between a Mexican-American community leader, businessmen, and media owner and unidentified Anglo conspirators.

The text of the song also reveals that the radio program, and the magnetic personality that González relayed there, was his primary source of fame, and made him an important member of the community. The women who came to his office petitioned him to use the power of his radio program to resolve their problems, by bringing lovers' disputes and neighborly discussions to a public forum. His status as a gatekeeper added to his personal status, but it also made him the target of a "bad" woman. The corrido finishes with González in San Quentin prison in California. In 1940, however, his accuser recanted her story, and González was deported to Mexico. He spent the rest of his life broadcasting and speaking out against social injustice from Tijuana until his death at the age of ninety-nine in 1995 (Obituary, *New York Times*, March 24, 1995). This level of celebrity and activism speaks to the importance of the individual rather than the music industry during the early days of Spanish-language radio that extended well into the era of the Tejano music industry.

This kind of personality block programming, in which DJ-entrepreneurs supplied their own content for off-hours programs on English stations, dominated in Texas as well as California until the 1950s. Materials shortages during World War II, particularly a shortage of the petroleum required to press shellac records, put a halt to national labels'

recording activities in Texas and other regional markets. Majors revised their strategies to target broader, and more Anglo, audiences and did not re-enter the market for Mexican-American music after the war. U.S. major labels did continue to record music in Spanish, but shifted production to Mexico City, favoring a more “authentic” Mexican sound that could be sold on both sides of the border (Peña 1985:53-58). Further investigation of recordings from the era would be necessary to fully describe how this authenticity was realized, but it is safe to assume that the mariachi and ranchera being performed in Mexican cinema, theatre, and radio at the time dominated. During the post-war years, recordings began to replace live performance on radio, and music from Mexico came to dominate radio play. Stations favored also favored this “authentic” Mexican music, announced by DJs with proper Mexican accents rather than Tejano-style Spanish (DeMars 2005; Tafoya 8/4/10).

Demand remained for indigenous Texas music, however, and Tejano owned labels began to appear to meet this demand. Discos Ideal, created in 1947 by business partners Armando Marroquín and Paco Betancourt, became the first Mexican-American-owned label. Betancourt was first a theater, then a record store owner. Marroquín operated a jukebox business and found that no tejano records were available to meet the demands of his customers in local cantinas. Marroquín’s first recordings featured his wife, Carmen Hernández and her sister Laura, singing over conjuntos tejanos and later orquestas, as the very successful group “Carmen y Laura” . Discos Ideal was instrumental in solidifying the dominance of these two ensembles—the conjunto and the orquesta—as well as the trend of female vocal duets, singing in thirds, replicated throughout the post-

war period (San Miguel 1999). Other labels came after: Falcon and Corona Records were established in the late 1940s, followed by Arco out of Alice, Texas (Ibid.), Zarape, Joey in San Antonio, Del Valle, and Freddy. The Rio Grande Valley was the initial center of recording activity, but by the 1970s, the most successful recording companies operated out of San Antonio and Corpus Christi (Ragland 1998).

From the late 1940s through the 1960s Spanish-language radio gradually transitioned from off-hours block programming to all-day Spanish stations, also owned by Tejanos, and part of the larger industry structure that included labels, radio and music venues. The first all-day stations developed in the late 1940s: KCOR in San Antonio, launched in 1946, is credited as the first, but block programs in Spanish continued to prosper even as all-day stations popped up across Texas and the U.S. Likewise, many radio programmers began by buying blocks of time on English stations before owning their own. Marcelo Tafoya, an Austin programmer-turned-station owner is one figure who followed this pattern.

Tafoya began as a block Spanish programmer in Austin, Texas in the 1960s, and by the 1990s, owned stations across the state. Tafoya had been studying to be a priest at Notre Dame, and he went to Mexico to work with an orphanage, briefly. When he came back to Austin as a young man, he heard about a country and western station opening up in Georgetown, just north of Austin. He volunteered to help wire the new station—he learned the basics of electrical wiring before entering the seminary—and in exchange, the owner offered him a thirty-minute show on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for a set sum. Tafoya had planned to split the cost of the program with other members of the

group he had traveled to Mexico with, as he hoped to use the show as a platform for his religious work. Support from his friends never materialized, but Tafoya kept the program anyway, and soon found that thirty minutes three days a week was not enough time. He convinced the station owner to give him an hour of on air time, Monday through Friday, for the same price, then picked up three new block programs in Austin. Initially, Tafoya viewed radio as a way to reach a broader audience than he could as a priest.

I said, I have a choice here: I could go back to Notre Dame and continue working where I dropped off... or I could stay on radio and talk to people. I had a choice. If I become a priest after seven years, how many people would I talk to at one time? The maximum is maybe 2,000, at a big church. But in radio, I can talk to 10,000 every second. So I said, well, I'll stay in radio (8/4/10).

Tafoya recalled that during the 1960s, only a handful of stations operated entirely in Spanish in Texas: KCOR in San Antonio, KVET in Arlington, KAMA in El Paso, KLFB in Lubbock, and another in Corpus Christi (Ibid.). In Austin as in other markets, listeners would flip from station to station throughout the day to listen to Spanish programs. Even as a programmer, Tafoya jumped from station to station. He would start out at KEZZ Austin in the morning, hop to his mid-day program in Georgetown, then return to KEZZ for his late afternoon show. He also hosted a show on the University of Texas's public radio station, KUT, and a television show.

Radio stations gradually transitioned from playing mostly Mexican to mostly tejano music during the decades following World War II, though there is some debate over when exactly these tejano recordings began to appear on Spanish-language radio. Manuel Dávila, who began as a block programmer in San Antonio in the 1940s and

opened his own station KEDA in 1966, is credited as one of the first to play tejano on the air, first on his block program, then on KEDA. Tony DeMars cites several sources that recall Dávila's innovation, and his sources are clear on the connection between radio and the emerging tejano genre:

While it is a matter of hot debate whether Tejano music actually originated at KEDA, it is sure that this form of music would not exist were it not for radio stations like KEDA as well as deejays like the Dávilas who paid attention to local artists (Hall et al., n.d., quoted in DeMars 2005:80)

The media's uptake of working-class Texas-Mexican music was a milestone, pulling the developing genres out of the disreputable *cantinas* in which they were performed, placing them also in the more respectable public space of radio.

Marcelo Tafoya also played mostly Mexican music on his programs when he began in the 1960s: he recalled that played the recordings available in the studio, which were all Mexican. By 1970, however, Tafoya recalled that he and a handful of other Texas DJs began to introduce "La Onda Tejana," the music of the orquestas tejanas. Tafoya's transition to playing Tejano is, by his recollection, a decade later than Dávila's, and speaks to the extent to which Dávila was involved in consolidating the public presence of an older style of music. Dávila's KEDA in San Antonio was influential in developing the earlier, accordion and bajo sexto-based conjunto style. Tafoya, on the other hand, introduced Tejano to his listeners through the orquesta sound, a more hybrid, Americanized, or perhaps cosmopolitan genre. Together, the recollections of the two DJs

demonstrate that by the 1970s, Spanish-language radio in Texas began to mix all of the Mexican-American genres they found relevant on their stations.

Well I had to play what was there, Mexican music from Mexico. So that was the major labels that would bring music to us. Then of course other labels started, San Antonio, then I started one with a friend of mine, and then Dallas started another tejano record company. They became pretty popular, we started building a lot of artists that way that became very well known. Sunny Ozuna got the number one song in the nation and got to be on American Bandstand. (Ibid.)

In addition to owning radio stations and promoting tejano music on air, Tafoya had a brief interlude as a record label owner. In fact, labels and radio stations were not only interdependent in the sense that labels supplied stations with music, while stations in turn promoted their records and artists: often, the same personnel filled multiple roles.

Dancehalls and radio stations were just as intertwined as stations and labels, and DJs often doubled as dance organizers. Dance halls began to open in the 1950s, creating a circuit of venues for tejano and norteño groups to tour through out Texas and adjoining states. As venues where listeners could see artists in person, they were important for the promotion of both labels and radio. In addition to shuttling back and forth between radio stations and selling his own advertising, Marcelo Tafoya began promoting concerts in the 1970s. Another Austin DJ of the era, Victor Octavio “Tabo” Balderas, used dance promotions to launch his radio career. At the age of nineteen, he approached one of the leading stars of conjunto, Tony De La Rosa, at a dance in Corpus Christi. He told De La Rosa that he was interested in organizing dances in his home town of Falfurrias, and

asked him if he might come and play. To Balderas's surprise, De La Rosa agreed. If Balderas could organize a large enough crowd, De La Rosa would come. A few years later, Balderas organized a dance, De La Rosa came, and from then on Balderas had no trouble booking big tejano acts for local dances. By that time, Balderas began working on a local Spanish-language radio station, filling in when a regular DJ got sick. The second act he booked was Los Aguilares, from San Antonio. He called up one of the members of the group and introduced himself as a dance promoter and a radio DJ. "Well, who plays for you?" they asked. Building on the renown of the first and only band he had promoted, Balderas responded, "Among them, Tony De La Rosa." Los Aguilares, agreed to play. With events with two of the most important acts of the day under his belt, Balderas had no trouble convincing other groups to come play for his dances (Balderas 7/29/10).

Like Tafoya, Balderas began as a block programmer, selling ads to pay for his own program. He moved from Falfurrias to Austin in 1972 where he continued his work in radio. Like many programmers, Balderas did not support himself with his radio work, but had a day job. Trained as a barber, in Austin, he became the state authority for licensing hairdressers. He hosted a program on the all-day Spanish station KMXX in the afternoons until the early 1980s, when Clear Channel bought the station, and he moved to KMMM.

As a programmer during the 1980s, Balderas's programming integrated multiple tejano genres, following the trail blazed by DJs a decade earlier. All of the Spanish stations at the time were formatted as "*radio variedades*," variety radio, and revolved around DJ personality. An example of Balderas's programming from the early 1980s

shows this rotation of genres, as well as the importance of his personal on-air style (See Appendix A, Figure 1). His on-air style is reminiscent of the amiable rambling of a good friend or family member having a casual conversation, creating a more personal connection with the listener. Balderas makes dedications to individual listeners, entire families, and Austin's East Side, a predominantly Mexican-American neighborhood. He fades in and out as he reaches back away from the mic to choose the next record, creating playlists on the spot. Like Pedro González decades earlier, the less organized structure of the radio industry allowed personality, rather than cookie-cutter structured programming to dominate. Balderas remarked on his informal, on-the-spot playlist selection during his between-song banter during one of his programs on KMXX in the early 1980s:

Que caro estoy pegando por quererte a luz, sale mama... A brindando más, más música. Estamos brindando música fuerte a través de Radio Alegría de Tabo Balderas. Brindando para ustedes su apreciable familia que siempre ha sido tan amable a través de tantos años, pues aquí hay cuatro años echando gritos y echando habladas y [singing] na-na-na-na. Pues no sabemos muchas veces ni lo que voy a programar pero como quiera. Parece que dicen que sale a toda muy bien. A mí no me crees dijo, aaaahhh, yo no fui fue-te-te. Pégale, pégale, dicen!

[How much it's costing me to love you out in the open. Giving you more, more music. We're giving you the greatest music on Radio Alegría with Tabo Balderas. Giving to you and your appreciable family who have always been so kind throughout the years, well, here are four years, with hollers, talk, and [songs]. Well, often we don't know what I'm going to play, but still, people say that it turns out really well. You don't believe me, it wasn't me. Hit it, hit it, they say!]

Austin DJ Tabo Balderas’s programming from the 1980s demonstrates how radio programmers combined musical genres like norteño and tejano and particular ways of addressing the audience to speak to the social circumstances of the day. The DJ’s personality comes through strongly in this example. Rambling amiably and singing, he engages listeners with a very personal style. The fifteen songs on the sample are split in even thirds between conjunto tejano, orquesta and a combination of Mexican genres including grupera and norteño. While Balderas recalled having a general formula for programming prescribed by the station—one tejano, one Mexican and one international song—he had a near total control in making musical selections. He counted many conjunto musicians as his personal friends and prominently featured their music, and personal vignettes about the artists. Many of the conjunto tracks are purely instrumental, representing the pre-vocal, pre-1950s tradition, much more heavily influenced by German styles. Even the “big names” of conjunto traveled in a relatively small circuit, however, so Balderas counted stars like Tony de la Rosa among his personal acquaintances as well, and describes a night out on the town with him during his program. The set also includes Steve Jordan, whose more experimental, jazz-influenced style lost him many of his more “traditionalist” fans. The breadth of types of conjunto represented here, then, reveals an audience much more versed in the style and accepting of its variants, than the evidence of today’s Tejano broadcasters would suggest. Also, the concluding station ID in this recording, over salsa, would be unheard-of in tightly formatted contemporary Regional Mexican radio.

Both musical selections and on-air banter respond to the needs of an assimilating but segregated Mexican-American audience. While DJs on contemporary Regional Mexican emphasize immigrant identity by asking callers where they are from (in Mexico) and dedicating songs to audience members from specific states, Balderas's dedications reflect an identity more strongly firmly planted in the U.S. His dedications go out to individuals and families, never a place of origin. The one exception is his dedication to his listeners in East Austin, a strongly Mexican-American neighborhood. Steve Jordan's "Soy de Tejas" reinforces the programs' Mexican-American orientation most strongly, "Soy de Tejas, es mi orgullo ser chicano" ("I'm from Texas, and I'm proud to be Chicano"). During the 1970s and into the 1980s, Mexican-American, Tejano, or Chicano politicized identities took precedence over immigrant identities, especially in the state of Texas, where Tejanos were at the helm of the music industry.

The tejano industry experienced a set of radical changes in the 1980s and the 1990s. After over forty years absence in the tejano music industry, major labels decided in the mid-1980s that tejano consumers were a "sleeping giant" (Peña 1999b:189) and bought up tejano independent labels along with their rosters of artists. While Peña describes majors' sudden re-entry as a sudden move with unknown causes, it is likely that national Spanish-language media conglomerates' push for Latino audience research, initiated in the early 1980s, had much to do with national reconsideration of Spanish-language markets. Majors encouraged tejano artists' cross-over dreams, and the groups responded with more synthesized music, largely dropping the accordion, and relying heavily on internationalized Latin American genres like cumbia and balada. National

backing made some artists' sales soar, particularly Selena, the "Queen of Tejano," and Grupo Mazz, who each generated unheard-of profits for artists from a regional genre. For many fans, however, Selena's premature death in 1995 marked the end of tejano's golden era. In the 1990s Tejano radio took a similar hit. Regional Mexican stations, some owned by large multi-media corporations, began gaining national attention, some surpassing English stations in ratings in their markets. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 inaugurated an era of unprecedented consolidation, and many Spanish-language stations were taken over or newly launched by national conglomerates. As a "regional" genre, the Tejano format is at a disadvantage in nationally-oriented companies and has struggled to keep its foothold. Tejano fans have also begun to lament the loss of tejano venues as fewer and fewer are able to stay afloat. Just as a collaborative, indigenous tejano music industry led to the success of radio, labels, and dancehalls, the decline of all three has happened in tandem.

CONTEMPORARY TEJANO

Tejano radio today remains largely frozen in this "peak" era of the 1990s, both in terms of musical selections and its aging listener demographic. The continual flow of new Mexican immigrants into the U.S. has shifted the national industry's focus from Tejano to Mexican musical styles, and the production of new tejano recordings has decreased. Tejano stations have also decreased the variety of older recordings that they play, focusing on tighter playlists characteristic of the contemporary format radio environment in which only the most reliable hits get played. Because playlists have become frozen the

format has also failed to attract new listeners, and the dedicated listeners they do have are older and less willing to publicly support the stations by attending concerts and events. Tejano radio's profitability was initially rooted in advertising dollars from local venues, and if older audiences do not go out advertisers see no need to buy time. Tejano radio also resists the clear music/audience categorizations that drive national advertising sales. While the music on Tejano radio is in Spanish, the announcers primarily speak in English. And because Tejano consumers speak English, they are less bound to Spanish-language media, having free choice of the far greater variety of English language options. Advertisers unable to understand this Tejano's more obviously bi-cultural identities invest in these stations less because they are not sure who, exactly, will be hearing their ad. Tejano survives because it still addresses salient social issues for some listeners, but the format is fraught with tension and, consequently, in peril.

One of the most serious problems contemporary tejano faces is an ever-narrowing definition of the genre. Radio listeners cling fiercely to ideas of traditionalism associated with tejano's classic era, even though these were established in the not-so-distant past. From the 1970s through the 1990s, Peña argues, "many of the stylistic elements of the classic era—now considered "the tradition"—were worked and reworked into a less and less dynamic style (1999b:105). Conjunto fans argued that the experimental techniques of virtuosic accordionists Paulino Bernal and Steve Jordan, "lacked the ranchero flavor—*la alegría*, as people would say—that was so essential in defining the limits of the style, and soon it was abandoned" (Ibid.:106). In interviews with both Paulino Bernal, accordionist for Conjunto Bernal, and with Steve Jordan, Peña finds that artists felt these audience

demands to simplify their music. Jordan remarked that “No le cambian, bro... el mismo sonsonete—nta, nta, nta” (“They don’t change, bro, the same sing-song—nta, nta, nta, referring to the standardized polka accompaniment of the bass and drums”) (Ibid.). Artists did adapt, though, either in the interests of “staying with the people” or at the impetus of record labels demanding a “sure thing” (Ibid.:108). Contemporary Tejano radio stations, similarly, face the challenge of keeping an older audience with this narrower definition of tejano music, while at the same time trying to attract new audiences. These two have not coincided well, however, since the audiences seem to be fundamentally opposed. Victor Balderas, now retired from his DJ job in Austin, also suggested that the principle problem with contemporary Spanish-language radio is its lack of diversity. Regional Mexican stations focus on a core of ten or twenty hits, and Tejano has followed suit, trading the diversity of its musical heritage for a handful of tried and true hits (7/29/10). This may be one of the reasons Tejano’s popularity has waned: the format does not readily accept new artists or newer styles, whether or not the artists themselves are tejano. Tejano music has become linked inextricably with a past era, even as its potential audience has moved on.

San Antonio’s “Tejano and Proud,” owned by Univision demonstrates the shrinking playlists Tejano stations increasingly favor and a slicker, more commercial programming style than earlier Tejano radio (exemplified by the KMXX example from the 1980s). A vast majority of the music played in a sample programming hour (See Appendix A, Figure 2) was recorded before 1995, the year of Selena’s death and the symbolic end of the tejano era. In spite of the clear temporal limits, however, this “core”

programming mixes tejano genres like conjunto, orquesta, and the commercialized Tejano of the late 1980s and early 1990s, revealing confusion over the *musical* definition of the genre. In addition to this “core” programming, the station also includes some recent pop-cumbia and a handful of classics and Regional Mexican cross-over hits.

About 75% of the artist in the ninety minutes represented here would be classified as generically as tejano. Mazz, whose keyboard-heavy polkas and cumbias are emblematic of the era, is the most frequently played artist, with three songs in the sample. Cumbias from Pete Astudillo, Fama, Elsa García, and Shelly Lares, as well as polkas from Ram Herrerea and Jay Pérez fall into this category as well. These artists largely peaked in popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and with a few variations, rely on synthesized cumbias and polkas. Even though Selena is viewed as the quintessential Tejano musically, her cumbias and other songs have more of a pop sound than the previous set of artists. Selena’s “El Chico del Apartamiento 512” from *Amor Prohibido*, announced as “El Chico del Apartamiento Five-Twelve” half in Spanish, half in English, acts as a pivot point for more recent cumbia artists, many of which may not be strictly categorized as Tejano. Her brother A.B. Quintanilla and his two groups, the Kumbia Kings, and later the Kumbia AllStarz, add auto-tuned vocals, electronic loops and strong pop hooks. Another set of artists lean toward the norteño and conjunto tejano traditions: Los Palominos, Hometown Boys and Michael Salgado, and La Mafia’s “Toma Mi Amor.” The last of these is a bit of an anomaly because La Mafia is more associated with the synthesized sound of 1980s and 1990s tejano than the polka included here. However, the song acts as a double reference to the core of tejano music: the song is in a traditional

tejano style—polka—and is performed by one of the most important groups in tejano’s peak years.

Only four artists played in this segment are played both on Regional Mexican and Tejano radio. Vicente Fernández’s long career and iconic stature largely transcend format for Mexican-American radio. The other three groups play norteño. Ramón Ayala, with a career as long as Fernández’s is again, classically a boundary-crossing artist; listeners both in Mexico and Texas grew up listening to his music. Pesado, from Monterrey sounds much like Intocable, a Regional Mexican staple. Both groups play a slowed down norteño built around pop-style hooks. Just as Selena is a pivot point for cumbia artists, Ayala seems to be an artist common on Regional Mexican and Tejano stations who bridges norteño and tejano. While this provides a justification for Pesado’s inclusion, Intocable presents more of a challenge to the tejano genre label. The group is from Texas, is played on a Tejano station, and carries on a musical heritage developed in both Texas and the North of Mexico. Why have tejano fans not embraced Intocable as they have their contemporary, Michael Salgado? Intocable, unlike Salgado, is on a national label, and enjoys broader distribution on Regional Mexican stations. This may serve as evidence that the designations “Regional Mexican” and “Tejano” have become too opposed for listeners to cross. The strength and size of the tejano population in San Antonio puts the two formats in direct competition. Tejano & Proud plays some more broadly-appealing music, while Regional Mexican stations like Border Media’s La Ley include some songs to cater to second generation and tejano audiences. Interestingly, for Regional Mexican radio flexibility has become an asset because, while the music may change, listenership

remains strong. For Tejano radio, however, confusion over what the format should include has also resulted in confusion about the audience that undermines profitability.

Austin's smaller Tejano population has made programmers more aware of the challenges a traditionalist, older audience and shrinking playlist present, and some have made concerted efforts to recruit younger audiences. Encino Broadcasting Corporation's "Para La Gente" has attempted to solve this problem by combining tejano and country. They recognize their audience as bi-cultural and cater to both sides by playing newer country hits and tejano classics. Encino Broadcasting is the most recent incarnation of the García family's long-standing investment in Spanish-language radio in Austin. José Jaime García, Sr. began working in Spanish-language radio in the 1960s, and in the late 1970s, reportedly, launched the first all-day Spanish station in Austin. His son currently heads the family business, and José García, Jr.'s mother and siblings are also on staff. García Jr. sold off his cluster of stations to a new Spanish-language competitor in 2004 and bought it back for a fraction of the price in 2007. Austin's only Tejano station was among the stations García Jr. sold, so for most of the 2000's, the city went without a Tejano station. In 2008 state senator Gonzálo Barrientos supported a campaign for the reinstatement of tejano music on Austin's airwaves, through the community action group the Tejano Music Coalition. The Coalition's work was successful, and less than a year after García Jr. bought his stations back, he re-formatted one of them as a tejano station. In spite of the Coalition's initial interest in tejano music, though, once the station was on the air, they had little interest in what it played. García and his music directors and DJ tried a number of different combinations to build and retain its audience. Initially, DJs

incorporated more *norteño*, but they faced complaints that they sounded like just another Regional Mexican station. They began incorporating more country in the fall of 2010, but it remains to be seen how successful this tactic will be.

Thus, in San Antonio, both Tejano and Regional Mexican stations are responding to the social make-up of their target audience, a group that includes far more older and second generation Mexican-Americans. In Austin, since the number of older Mexican-Americans who would listen to Tejano is significantly lower, the format struggles to survive by trying to attract younger audiences with newer *norteño* and some country music in English. In the past, Austin has been able to support at least one Tejano station because the industry was organized differently; stations were not competing with national conglomerates, but were rooted in local Tejano owned networks and small business advertisers. Now that these larger companies operate Spanish-language stations in Austin, niche markets like Tejano are cast out. A recent surge in immigration in Austin also has led to higher numbers of younger, central Mexican residents, a group targeted by Regional Mexican, not Tejano radio. While Tejano still addresses some of the social problems facing Mexican-Americans in San Antonio—namely, how to maintain a sense of Tejano heritage across generations—Regional Mexican radio does a better job at answering the kinds of identity questions posed to Austin's more recent immigrant population.

The continual fluctuation of music industry structure, popular musical tastes and the composition of audiences that has created so many obstacles to Tejano radio's current success are not unique problems to that format. Regional Mexican radio too faces the

constant challenge of containing uncertainty in these areas. The continued flow of immigration presents an exceptionally high degree of uncertainty for Spanish-language radio; its listener demographics are more prone to drastic change than English language formats as immigration patterns change over time. Because matching music to targeted listener identities is so crucial to any formats' success, these demographic shifts complicate programming. Particularly because Regional Mexican and Tejano radio mix a relatively broad range of genres, they have more to contend with as they balance population shifts and musical tastes. Consequently, it is not unlikely Regional Mexican radio will eventually come to face the kinds of problems facing Tejano radio today. Only time will tell if the things that make Regional Mexican radio different from Tejano—its centralized structure, national advertising interests, and different genre set—will prove more resilient.

CONCLUSION

A broad history of Spanish-language radio in Texas shows that Mexican music and Mexican-American music have existed in a symbiotic relationship throughout the twentieth century. Industry ownership has been important in determining which elements of incredibly complex Latino identities in Texas would be emphasized: when decentralized major labels and independent tejano labels controlled the Texas music industry, music and radio was largely dubbed tejano, even though it mixed both tejano and Mexican music. Now that majors have reentered the Texas recording industry and national media companies control Spanish-language radio, emphasis on Mexican

elements of Mexican-American music and culture have proven more profitable. This is not to say that tejano and Mexican music from Mexico are not distinct: their differences are significant both musically and socially. However, their listenership has often overlapped, historically, and, on occasion continues to overlap today. Competition between the two has also, importantly, been driven by changes in the non-stop stream of migration from Mexico to the United States. In the middle of the twentieth century, tejanos were not only the gatekeepers of the Mexican-American music industry, but a legitimate demographic majority. It did not take long, however, for these figures to change, and more and more recent immigrants became the majority. In sum, it is important to understand tejano radio as part of Regional Mexican radio's history. Certainly, Regional Mexican radio would not have been possible without the groundwork laid by Tejano radio, and the two formats still have a degree of artist and genre overlap. More importantly, though, the social conditions that shaped Tejano over time—the role of industry organization and control, and changing immigration patterns—are critical in determining the future course of Regional Mexican radio.

Chapter 4: Format and Programming

CONSULTING FOR REGIONAL MEXICAN RADIO, SANTOS LATINO MEDIA

California-based programming consultant José Santos got a call from a small radio station owner in West Palm Beach, after he noticed that a lot of Spanish speakers in the city seemed to be Mexican. This was a surprise in Florida, where Caribbean immigrants have traditionally dominated Latino communities. Santos checked U. S. census data, though, and it confirmed that large numbers Mexicans were in fact living in West Palm Beach. Eager to tap a market they didn't know very well, the station paid for him to make a four-day trip, during which he could assess things in person. He took a notepad to local restaurants and markets, and started talking to people, asking how long they lived in West Palm Beach, where they lived before, where they lived before that, and so on. As it turned out, Florida was a second stop for Mexicans who had migrated first to more traditional gateways, like Texas and California. Many had moved from California especially, drawn by Florida's more robust job market. After Santos's exploratory research, his clients decided to establish a Regional Mexican station, based on an alternating rotation of music from the tierra caliente, banda, and norteño genres.

The Mexican-American community of the United States is expanding in all directions, both geographically and culturally, and wherever they go Regional Mexican radio follows close behind. From radio management's point of view, the flexibility of the Regional Mexican format, the fact that the mixture of styles can respond to the particular

composition of local audiences, makes it an adaptable choice for any market, and its proven success nationwide makes station owners more likely to try it out. On the other hand, the sheer growth and regional expansion Mexican-American population itself drives the expansion of the format. Indeed, given the way that the format is designed to adapt to the changing experiences of Mexican-Americans, it came as little surprise to Santos when the station began to perform quite well within this new, unexpected market for Mexican-identified popular culture (Santos 2/5/10).

FORMATTING AND PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES IN REGIONAL MEXICAN RADIO

Format is the primary mechanism through which Regional Mexican radio stations build audiences, targeting particular audience segments by playing particular kinds of music. In order to sell air time to advertisers, station personnel portray format as a clear mechanism for reaching a carefully defined set of consumers. The actual musical parameters of a given format, though, are quite murky, and in local contexts they depend upon the complex histories and social interactions that link listeners to particular musical genres. As a relatively new format, the musical make-up of Regional Mexican radio is still shifting, as are connections that tie particular listeners to its component genres. Consultants like José Santos have been instrumental in launching new stations across the country, but at each one, they have helped to re-define what exactly the Regional Mexican format is. Even in established stations, weekly decisions about what songs to add to and drop from playlists bear upon the nationwide definition of the format. While stations keep an eye on what is “hitting” nationally, they also keep close track of

changes in their local audience demographics and tastes, and adjust accordingly. Programmers' playlist variations for their local market are in turn entered back into the national playlist databases that monitor the format as a whole, and in the way they influence programmers in other markets.

What all Regional Mexican stations share is that their format combines genres representing different types of Mexican-American identities, to create a composite portrait of local listenership. And when radio professionals recruit to advertisers, they discuss not only format but also component music genres in absolute terms, as fixed and bounded musical objects unproblematically tied to equally fixed social identities, which can therefore be pitched as good tools for reaching the audiences that share those identities. If such statements largely disregard historical change, however, within the industry, genre discourse shifts between music-centric and contextual definitions, calling attention to way that genre definitions remain in flux. Academic discussions of genre have recognized these inconsistencies and have defined genre as a sort of "ideal type" to which real musical composition rarely, if ever adheres (Adorno 1984) or as a contractual relationship between the producer and consumer (Dubrow 1982). Likewise, in Regional Mexican radio, "true" definitions of component genres like *norteño*, *banda*, and *ranchera* are far less important than the discourses that surround them. Each genre is loosely linked with regional, generational, and gendered positions that hail particular audiences on air, but these connections are being constantly re-negotiated. In this way, genre also becomes an important site for negotiating the way audiences are drawn in to and represented by Regional Mexican radio.

Regional Mexican audiences are constantly changing, and the meanings behind individual musical genres, as well as the way they are combined within the format, each reflect new waves of immigration from Mexico and changing self-identification among listeners. As described in Chapter Three, continued migration from the north of Mexico to Texas caused a gradual shift in radio play, from *tejano* to *norteño*, from the 1970s to the present. While elements of *conjunto tejano* and *norteño* are the same—they use the same instrumentation, accordion, *bajo sexto*, drums and bass, and they draw on the same song types, primarily *corridos*, *polkas*, *cumbias* and *waltzes*—distinctions between *Tejanos* and more recent immigrants from Mexico have caused members of these groups to emphasize stylistic elements that might differentiate the genres, like the high-pitched nasal singing style associated with *norteño*, and differences in accordion techniques. Likewise, a spike in immigration from rural Mexico beginning in the 1990s stimulated the growth of *banda*, a popular style based on rural wind-band traditions. More recently, the emergence of *duranguense*, a synthesizer-heavy variation of *banda* associated with the state of Durango and its migrant community in Chicago, and *tierra caliente*, a more pop-friendly take on *duranguense* associated with central Mexico, can be tied to shifts in Mexican-American demographics.

The genres that emerge or rise in popularity are roughly tied to the regional affiliations of changing Mexican populations in the United States. However, the relationship between genre and identity is slightly more complicated than this. While regional identifications are used to attract more recent immigrant audiences from the relevant areas within Mexico, Regional Mexican stations still strive to reach second-

generation listeners and Mexicans who have been in the U.S. for decades. The degree to which stations pursue these audiences depends on where they are located: in cities like San Antonio an established, heavily second-generation Mexican-American population demands attention, whereas in a city with a larger population of recent immigrants, like Austin, this is less necessary. Further, in longer-standing Spanish-language markets, genre becomes closely tied to generation. Tejano is more popular in San Antonio because many of the city's residents were young adults during the genre's peak years. *Grupera*, a Mexican popular genre from the 1980s that focused on pop ballads and cumbias with plaintive vocals and synthesized backgrounds, is popular in San Antonio for the same reason. Nostalgia, then, plays an important role in the way that programmers design formats to capture second-generation Mexican-American listeners. While this group's musical tastes likely include more American music, they also show a preference for the music their parents listened to, the music they grew up with.

Nostalgia is also closely tied to an over-riding discourse of traditionalism that pervades the presentation of even newer genres and artists. Stations keep older artists in frequent rotation, such as the iconic ranchera singer Vicente Fernández, whose mariachi costume, bushy black moustache contrasting with graying hair, and penetrating stare has been a cornerstone of Mexican popular culture since the 1970s. But they also frame the appeal of more recent artists in terms of their deep historical dimensions. In spite of the relatively recent appearance of banda as a widely distributed commercial popular music, for instance, groups are publicly tied to much longer lineages: Banda el Recodo's official biography claims the group was assembled in the 1930s, and La Arrollodora Banda

Limón El Original traces its origins from the 1960s. It is true that both groups were operating as regional bandas in those earlier eras, but their styles and personnel have changed significantly over the intervening decades, and it is less certain that their current format can be adequately described as “traditional.” Long histories, however, grant them an aura of traditionalism and allow them to trade on that cachet for audiences who respond to the rhetorical value of tradition. And newer groups in all genres frequently adopt attire reminiscent of a rural past. Few listeners or producers would argue that Regional Mexican radio is authentically traditional, but these outward nods to a perceived collective Mexican(-American) identity recall Handler and Linnekin’s definition of tradition as an “ongoing interpretation of the past” (1984:274), in which tokens of the past are understood not as actual survivals from a prior era, but rather as contemporary signifiers that allow present-day consumers to enact a desire for the values and aura of the past that those signifiers represent. Regional Mexican radio, in other words, helps to reinvents tradition for its listeners, strengthening the roots of the identities promoted by the format in its self-conscious enactment of a musical past-ness.

Gender is also a crucial vector of identity through which radio stations seek to secure their audiences. From its creation in the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, Regional Mexican radio audiences attracted slightly more male than female listeners, according to Arbitron audience research data. In the last half of the 2000’s, however, the format began to attract a slight majority of women listeners for the first time. This shift roughly coincided with the appearance of Regional Mexican artists with a more feminized “pop” sensibility. Programmers have welcomed this increase in female listeners for commercial

reasons, but this shift has resulted in an occasional tension in on air programming. While talk programming is not the focus of this dissertation, it is important to note that the nationally distributed morning talk show hosts that are relayed on most Regional Mexican stations across the country are notoriously sexist (Casillas 2008). The recent surge in broadcasting masculinized *corridos prohibidos*, including the infamous narcocorridos, may also be perceived as a backlash to the increase in female listeners. It is difficult to trace the origins of this tension, but, it seems two issues are at play. From a financial perspective, male listeners are valued more as consumers by radio advertisers (Gadea 4/29/10). But the ideals of *machismo* that are so linked to the stylized notions of Mexican(-American) traditionalism described above may also be at play. If Regional Mexican radio is intended to be traditional, and tradition values displays of hyper-masculinity, it may be difficult for programmers to find a way to focus on female listeners without betraying their overarching goal.

Regional Mexican radio uses these regional, generational, and gendered genre associations to target very specific audiences. One station's success over another is most often attributed to how well they balance these genres, and, consequently, the multiple, overlapping identities of their listenership. Stations strive to stay a step ahead, getting to know their audience in order to predict which mixture of genres most suits their evolving makeup. Programming segments from stations in Austin and San Antonio, Texas serve to illustrate how stations use musical genre to characterize their audiences, and to differentiate themselves from other stations. The unique mixture of music played on each station shows how their respective programmers perceive audiences to be changing, both

demographically and on the more fluid level of identity. For individual stations, this combination of genres does not represent a conflict between different audience segments: rather it acts as an effort to tie listeners together under one format banner, and to make that combination seem like a natural expression of a single, if diverse Mexican-American. In San Antonio, regional media company Border Media Partners features older, generationally defined genres like *grupera*, as well as classic *norteño*. In Austin, one station, Emmis Communication's La Z, balances *banda* and *norteño* in equal parts, while competing stations from Univision and a Mexican relay station play more "progressive" *banda* hits, with *norteño* only occasionally interspersed.

The emergence of new genres over the 2000's, notably *duranguense* and *tierra caliente*, also provides an interesting case study of how genre change occurs, and highlights the tensions surrounding their incorporation into existing genre schemes. While each genre carries certain regional associations—they are named after Durango state and the Tierra Caliente region, respectively—they are more closely linked with a younger audience and with more recently immigrants. Even as *duranguense* has become an important fixture in Regional Mexican radio over the past five to six years, some programmers are reluctant to recognize the styles as an autonomous genre (Gadea 4/29/10). This is an instance in which programmers' ideas about genre may not match with listeners'. Unwillingness to call a new style a genre in effect devalues the devalues this music and its fan base, suggesting both are ephemeral. In Regional Mexican radio, clear genre definitions are rare, but the discourses that surround them reveal the connections between programmers and audiences and musical sound and experience.

Likewise, the definition of the format itself is often hazy, but insofar as it responds to the changing demographic make up of the cities in which these stations operate, it draws listeners and workers alike into a mediated dialogue recognizing the broader identity position that they share.

THEORIZING FORMAT

Format has been the central paradigm for organizing radio audiences for over half a century, but academia has given little attention to how format shapes the deepest connections between listeners and different kinds of music, as well as between different musical genres themselves. Existing studies of format are largely historical: scholars have abandoned the question of format in contemporary radio because it appears to be resolved, most stations having transformed programming irregularity into streamlined connections between audiences and music. Spanish-language radio presents an interesting case study for exploring the continuing relevance of format, because as relatively recent adopters of the format technology, Spanish-language stations are still fine-tuning the connections between sound and social system, through the process of trial and error. And as the strongest performing, most profitable format, Regional Mexican is the most high-stakes arena for working out this conundrum.

Genre studies provide the best resource for deepening our understanding of format. Genre research has tied the meaning of musical categories to contractual relationships between audiences and producers, contained but not completely defined by industry structures. Particularly because Regional Mexican radio combines more diverse

genres in a single format than any other radio format, and because, as Hennion and Méadel suggest, it never stops mixing to re-invent itself, it demonstrates the ways that musical sound becomes linked to individual listeners' layered Mexican and American identities.

Historical scholarship on the introduction of the American format system in the 1950s provides a good point of comparison for the kinds of changes currently taking place in the Regional Mexican format. Rothenbuhler and McCourt (2002), for instance, trace the birth of the format system after the demise of the network era (1920s – late 1940s). In 1947, loosened Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations on station interference opened up large numbers of new low-power frequencies for purchase at lower cost. New stations drove down the price of advertising, eating away at network stations' profits. After less than a decade of experimentation, by the mid-1950s, radio companies had created and perfected a system for standardized playlists, the Top 40 format, which allowed them to stabilize the relation between a limited number of musical works and the largest possible audience share.⁵ The period in which these procedures were hammered out provides parallels for the kinds of experimentation that began roughly a decade ago in Spanish-language radio. The FCC launched a similar overhaul in the radio industry in 1996, when it abolished caps on the number of stations individual companies could own. The rapid expansion of Spanish-language radio stations was facilitated by this legislation, and national companies with scores of new stations turned

⁵ Barnes (1988), Routt et al (1978) and Simpson (2005) have also written about the Top 40 format as the centerpiece of the broader format system, both in historical and contemporary contexts.

to the format model, which helped them decide what to program, and how to sell advertising on those stations. The Regional Mexican format had been tried with great success at two stations in Los Angeles only a few years earlier, and it provided a convenient model for expansion. Like stations in the late forties and early fifties, though, Regional Mexican stations across the country are still in a process of testing this relatively new format, and different markets have offered very different solutions.⁶

There is no scholarship, to my knowledge, that discusses how formats are constructed from a musical perspective. As format is at least in part a way of grouping different kinds of music into categories with musical and social meaning, genre theory provides a useful template. A format like Regional Mexican is, as I have mentioned, made up of multiple component genres, so genre theory also helps understand how those individual pieces develop their own meanings, which in turn inflect the associations of the format as a whole. Musicological interest in genre has a lengthy history, ultimately traceable to Aristotle's discussions of theatre genres, but current thought on the topic can most fruitfully be traced to a critique launched by literary studies in the 1960s (Samson 2008), when scholars began to understand genre as social practice rather than as a set of established categories. Heather Dubrow argued that genre is a "contract" between authors and their readers which may, to literary effect, be intentionally broken. This idea of genre as a set of expectations that will inevitably be broken as part and parcel of generic

⁶ It has been brought to my attention that a similar process took place in the initial days of African American radio, in which a period of expansion and experimentation was followed by more standardized playlists and formats (Travis Jackson, p.c.). This trend also ties into historian Susan Douglas's (1999) assessment of radio as a medium that undergoes periods of experimentation-driven expansion followed by commercially-driven contraction. For African American radio and Spanish-language radio, the expansion has marked experimentation, and crystallization of format marks commercial consolidation.

development translates well into music, where interest is often created through a process of setting up, breaking with, and eventually resituating or satisfying listeners' expectations, meaning relationships between composers and listeners are based on socially and historically contingent conventions and expectations (Hanks 1987). Adorno, too, argued for flexible genre definitions, viewing genres as an expression of the tension between the Universal and the Particular, where genre serves as a Universal, although actual composition in its highest form always deviates from the model. Following these perspectives, genre may be usefully viewed as a vehicle for creating audience expectations, bearing in mind that these expectations will be habitually tested. When a listener tunes into a Regional Mexican station, s/he can anticipate to some degree what kind of song will come next: this is a basic way that programmers keep audiences, by managing and catering to their expectations about what kind of music will be played. However, stations also have the power to test the limits of such expectations, as they do when they play new songs, artists and genres. Newness creates interest by breaking with listener understandings of the format, but also creates the potential for reinventing the parameters of the format itself. When each new genre also carries a new set of identity markers, this expansion of musical variety can also have important implications for the imputed identity of the format as a whole.

Genres are tools for discourse between audiences and the industry, but are also, on a practical level, mechanisms for commodifying music, or for packaging it in such a way that it has a direct connection with the consumer marketplace. Simon Frith (1996) argues that the industry largely follows genre labels initiated by consumers, but strives to

create a “fantasy listener” that perfectly epitomizes a certain type of music’s buyer. This fantasy listener becomes a “type” or an ideal consumer category that links music genre with buyers. Even as companies work to solidify categories thus constructed, they are ultimately bound to following new consumption patterns as they arise. Likewise, Keith Negus notes consumer’s fickle buying patterns, and argues that the industry imposes genres on musicians to create lasting connections between musical genre and consumer groups. While Negus focuses more on musicians place in this genre dialogue, both recognize that the commodification of genres takes place in dialogue with consumers. The industry cannot simply dictate taste, as much as they might like to. In radio, programmers negotiate musical meaning between industry and consume interests in much the same way. Frequent playlist revisions, and market to market as well as station to station variations demonstrate industry concessions to local listening patterns; programmers follow local tastes even as they struggle to impose the Regional Mexican format category. Radio’s value, then, lies partly in its ability to monitor and help the larger industry follow local trends.

Both Frith (1996) and Negus (1999) also discuss genre as an important form of musical discourse. Frith argues that the inconsistent points of difference drawn between genres reveal axes of socially-negotiated value judgment; that genre terminology developed thus creates an “implied comparison” among new and old music. Functionally speaking, genre becomes vocabulary for discussing music and debating its worth, relationally. Negus calls this function of genre ideological “shorthand” for musicians who come to perform these categories, enabling them to argue over their visions of a genre’s

proper shape. This vocabulary usage of genre is particularly important in Regional Mexican radio, genres do in fact become abbreviated signs for larger musical and social ideas. Listeners and stations' preferences for particular genres are inherently tied up with the broader social meanings of those genres. When educated second-generation Mexican-Americans criticize pop-norteño groups like Duelo and Intocable for their sentimental lyrics and poor musicianship, they are also communicating disapproval for the commercialization of Mexican-American musics. If female listeners claim not to like the "hard" sound of narcocorridos, they may also be responding to the masculine overtones that work to bar them from the genre.

In *Genre in Popular Music* (2007) Fabian Holt stresses the importance of authenticity discourse to genre, noting that audiences help to define genres by ascribing or denying "authenticity" to the artists who seek to take their place within them, and to their music. Holt's idea is an interesting one for Regional Mexican music, but it operates according to different notions of authenticity. Holt's definition revolves around an Anglophone "rockist" version of the concept, in which a prototypical "singer-songwriter" communicates, in relatively unmediated fashion, personal expressions in musical form. Even in the case of "covers," performers are praised for their creative and individual interpretations of others' music. Mexican and Mexican-American musics, by contrast, typically embrace the performance of traditionalism, and faithful interpretations of classics by new artists are common. For this reason, my analysis of Regional Mexican radio expands the range of Holt's study, by calling attention to alternate criteria of

authenticity that may be wielded by audiences in order to enforce genre norms—namely, a sense of traditionalism and musical fidelity.

While gender studies are not typically included in discussions of genre or format, they provide a particularly valuable framework for the ways that some musical categories are valued more than others. Sue Thornham has drawn on Celia Lury’s analysis of the “high culture/low culture” division to argue that feminization of certain media genres, like the soap opera, has less to do with some inherently gendered appeal of their content than with constructed gender dichotomies that assign women’s cultural domains less value (Thornham 2007). Similarly, the most commercial forms of popular music have often been gendered feminine, and “pop,” a subset of the *popular* music played on the radio, is overwhelmingly devalued in genre discourse. While all of the music on Regional Mexican radio is commercial, some styles feature simplified arrangements and sentimental romantic lyrics more characteristic of English language pop.⁷ Producers feel that these genres attract more female listeners and employ this dichotomy between female/pop and male/traditional or “hard” music in their programming, emphasizing the use of genre in symbolizing particular identities.

While contemporary pop music is outside of the purview of José Limón’s (1994) discussion of South Texas folklore, his theorization of hyper-masculine cultural expression in the region is valuable in understanding the other side of this masculine/feminine divide and how it has become a part of Regional Mexican radio.

⁷ See discussion of musical examples for Duelo’s “Soy Como No Soy” and Trono de México’s “Te Recordaré,” Ex. 1 and Ex. 3 below.

Limón finds sexually charged joking at all-male barbecues, the back-and-forth volley of insults to others' masculinity in order to reinforce one's own, to enact a symbolic resistance to the de-masculinizing class and ethnic inequalities in which these men live. Morning shows on Regional Mexican radio are also overwhelmingly masculine spaces that deal with the reality of female spectatorship—not a possibility in Limón's male rituals—by making female callers the butt of humor they themselves are rarely credited with understanding (Casillas 2008). As women become the unknowing objects of often racy jokes, male listeners reaffirm masculinity weakened by the experience of immigration and often demeaning service sector work. Thus, the nature of working class, immigrant, and minority life experiences create a need for an enactment of authority, which is met by the space of Regional Mexican radio.

In spite of this gendered divide, Regional Mexican radio unifies both male and female listeners under the banner of Mexican-American identity. But on this more general level too, gender theory is useful in understanding how the Regional Mexican format is devalued by the general public—both because the music is viewed as simple, and because its listeners are largely working class members of an ethnic minority. In her work with the American prime-time soap opera *Dallas*, Ien Ang (1985) argued that in spite of the ideologically conservative content of the program's "fantasies," it is the pleasure of collective sharing of these fantasies that is liberatory for female viewers. Ang demonstrates that gendered genres do resonate with the intended audiences, but often in unpredictable ways. Regional Mexican programming shows how the same principles of audience devaluation can apply to groups facing racial and class discrimination. But even

as genres acquire oppressive connotations, audiences appropriate these categories, using them to their own benefit, often with counterhegemonic implications.

Regional Mexican radio is in a state of flux, where the format's meaning is continually revised by the inclusion of different genres, each with their own regional, generational and gender connotations. As programmers select unique combinations of genres for their stations, they make statements about who they believe their listeners to be. This unique usage of genre not only helps interpret what kinds of identities Regional Mexican radio manipulates, but also demonstrates the multiple fronts on which genre acts as a language of identity in commercial media.

REGIONAL MEXICAN GENRES

Regional Mexican radio typically features several genres, including banda, norteño and ranchera, as well as derivative genres like duranguense and tierra caliente, and classic genres like grupera. For programmers, each of these genres has certain generational and regional associations, so the particular mix a station creates in its playlists is designed to reflect the backgrounds of their audience. Each genre also represents a series of overlapping aesthetic and social ideals. In Regional Mexican radio, the notion of tradition is especially important. Immigrant listeners respond to nostalgic representations of home often embodied in older musical genres, like ranchera. Stylistic and repertoire differences within certain genres have also become gender markers. Masculine-identified corridos prohibidos, which prominently feature violent lyrics and a musical style reminiscent of older norteño, strike a sharp musical contrast with the

slower, melodic, and feminized “norteño progresivo.” The social associations carried by each genre and style are built gradually over time and through historical experience and are subject to change. Regional Mexican radio stations, however, view genre connotations as fixed links between specific music and listener identity, regardless of historical change. Thus, understanding what these genres are and what kinds of associations they carry is crucial for understanding the economic motivations and consequent social meanings behind programming. From a business perspective, genres’ presumed ability to draw a specific kind of listener yields reliable financial gain. As long as programmers can figure out what the regional, generational, and gender composition of their target audience is, they will be able to play the music that will attract these listeners. But as they combine these genres together, they create a bigger picture of and help to create the composite identities actually borne by their listeners. Mexican identity becomes understood as a composite of regional parts that vary from city to city within the U.S., but listeners also come to identify with new genres that they may not have listened to outside of Regional Mexican radio.

Figure 4.1: Regional Mexican Genres, A Brief Overview

Genre	Instrumentation	Origin
Ranchera*	Mariachi	Mexican Revolution, Nationalized Genre
Norteño	Accordion/Bajo Sexto	1930s, Northern Mexico and Border Region
"Hard"	Same	Contemporary, Male Associated
"Progressive"	Same	Contemporary, Female/Pop Connotations
Banda	Wind Band	Var. Regional Trad's, Commercialized 1990s
Duranguense	Synthesized Wind Band	2000s, Chicago and Durango, Mexico
Tierra Caliente	Synthesized Wind Band	Contemporary, Associated with Central Mx.

**Ranchera carries a one-to-one association with mariachi in Regional Mexican radio, but has a broader popular definition.*

Based on a consensus from academic sources, programmer and listener discourse, and official industry reporting such as Billboard charts, the key genres in Regional Mexican radio seem to center around several commonly accepted stylistic nuclei, each with its own set of musical characteristics. For unfamiliar listeners, the genres featured on Regional Mexican radio are most easily identified by ensemble, but there is also a great deal of cross-pollination, as well as new stylistic innovations within set genres. Three core genres, each with a distinctive instrumentation, make up the bulk of radio play: banda is played by wind bands, norteño by accordion-led ensembles, and ranchera predominantly by string and trumpet based mariachis. In spite of its stronger association with norteño, the accordion has become a general symbol of Mexican rural identity, and it may be incorporated into banda or mariachi recordings as well. Likewise, banda's tuba has been incorporated as a bass instrument in norteño. These ensembles also share a set of song types, and it is common for a single, classic, or new hit song to be in rotation in two different generic versions. Bandas and norteño groups both play indigenized versions of German polka, norteño groups and mariachis may play canciones rancheras, mariachis and bandas may play stylized versions of regional *sones*, and all of the groups may play the corrido narrative ballad. Grupera, duranguense, and tierra caliente are heard slightly less frequently on Regional Mexican stations, but they share song types and histories with banda, norteño and ranchera. Grupera repertory revolves around cumbia, a tropical genre also played by norteño groups. Duranguense is, most basically, a more heavily synthesized version of banda associated with the state of Durango, and tierra caliente, the newest of these genres, is a smoother, more melodic, more pop-sounding version of

duranguense. Each genre's unique history creates the regional and generational preferences that radio stations use to attract specific audience segments.

Ranchera and Rural Mexican Identity

The genre ranchera is most closely associated with the mariachi ensemble, and when radio programmers refer to ranchera as part of their programming they generally mean canción ranchera sung in front of a mariachi. Both the emergence of the canción ranchera and the contemporary mariachi ensemble can be traced to the budding media industry in Mexico City in the late 1920s. After the Mexican Revolution, politicians searching for a cohesive national cultural identity came to favor musical groups from the state of Jalisco who were moving into the capital city. The groups, who were first called “mariachis” by the French patrons who hired them to play at weddings, had existed informally throughout the 19th century. Like other musical groups across Mexico, the mariachis jaliscoesnes played their own regional variation of the hybridized genre called *son*. It was not until the 1920s, when mariachis were picked up by Mexican media mogul Emilio Azcarrága, who had just launched his national (and international) radio station XEW, that the groups began to incorporate trumpet to replace harp, and swap out one of the ensembles six-stringed guitars for the smaller vihuela. At the same time, movie composers took up a song genre that glorified rural life and values, even as it was decidedly influenced by the urban popular music of the time. In the 1930s this for-film genre, which became known as canción ranchera, began to favor a technique of singing

from the throat, and a performance style adopted a dramatic cinematic bravura that became defining features of the genre as it moved from film to other venues. Movies also began to feature cowboys, or *charros*, as the primary interpreters of the genre (Moreno Rivas 1979:187). In the 1950s ranchera's greatest composer, José Alfredo Jiménez, further honed the genre: simple but beautiful melodies, and a shift in emphasis to the genre's more nostalgic and forlorn themes, became a new standard for the genre. Jiménez spoke to the middle and lower classes in his lyrics, and one of his key interpreters, Dolores Hidalgo, became known as the "nueva voz del emigrante rural," the new voice of the rural migrant (Ibid.:193). The image of rurality embodied by cowboy performers, as well as Jiménez's incorporation of nostalgia and his overt homage to the rural working classes remain important components of Regional Mexican radio's traditionalist aesthetic.

As commercialized canción style of ranchera and corrido began to influence the music of the rural migrants they had romanticized, it also became a symbol of national identity among this group. Ranchera played on radio in the United States today still serves this nationalist function, and because its vision of Mexican nationalism is based on images of rural experience, its resonance is amplified among immigrants, who have increasingly come from rural Mexico over the past two decades. While a handful of performers make up the bulk of ranchera play on radio stations, Vicente Fernández is by far the most played interpreter of the genre. Fernández not only symbolizes Mexican identity, but links Mexican migrants with their pasts. Given Fernández's long career,

which spans over thirty years, many listeners actually heard the singer on the radio when they were growing up, and he, and the genre, serve as an important links with tradition.

Norteño and its Sub-Styles

Norteño is a genre with close ties to música tejana. Both emerged from contact between Germans and Mexicans who worked side-by-side as agricultural labor in the extended border region around the turn of the 20th century. As Tejano and Mexican immigrant identities have diverged however, norteño has come to dominate commercial radio play. In the 1930s, norteño became the preferred vehicle for the pre-existing corrido narrative ballad. Corridos, accompanied by string instruments, sung to simple melodies in waltz time, and set in the ancient poetic form of the *romance* (four octosyllabic lines in an abcb rhyme scheme), had long documented the exploits of heroes and outlaws (Ragland 2009:7). In the 1940s, norteño groups began to develop the canción corrido, adding a refrain and shortening the lengthy corrido form for commercial recording, since 45 rpm records would only accommodate three minutes of performance. Groups like Los Alegres de Terán performed this genre on both sides of the border, broadening norteño's listening base, and groups of the 1940s also incorporated lyrics that dealt with the real experiences of migration, loss, and separation, that border Mexicans experienced: Los Alegres had, in fact, been migrant workers themselves.

In the 1950s an offshoot of norteño from Monterrey, marked by the inclusion of the saxophone, became popular and remains an important subgenre today. For some radio programmers in the 1960s, the saxophone became the defining feature of norteño, the

main marker distinguishing it from tejano (Balderas 7/29/10). Groups who still played with only accordion, bajo sexto, bass, and drums could be lumped in with conjuntos tejanos, who played with the same ensemble. However, the success of accordionist Ramon Ayala in the 1960s, and later of Los Tigres del Norte in the 1970s, each of whom were firmly tied to the Mexican rather than the Tejano experience, crystallized norteño as a genre firmly rooted in Mexican immigrant identities, unlike tejano, which remained rooted in Mexican-American identities. Los Tigres made two important innovations in norteño; they reintroduced the high-pitched nasal vocal style of Los Alegres had developed decades earlier (Peña 1999b), and embraced the traditional corrido song form over the canción corrido (Ragland 2009). Reviving a rural associated vocal technique and writing corridos that reflected specifically on immigrant and border experiences, Los Tigres became the voice of Mexican migrants.

“Hard” Norteño and “Norteño Progressivo” as Case Studies in Gendered Genre

Contemporary developments in norteño illustrate the gender divisions that are taking place within Regional Mexican radio. Some artists preserve older stylistic conventions of the genre, upholding it as a “male” space, while others have adapted to contemporary pop aesthetics and have consequently been gendered “feminine.” The cantinas where norteño was originally played were strictly male spaces, and older songs reference this male domain, in their dealings with treacherous women, revenge, and hard drinking. Musical characteristics connoting toughness, like a tight nasal vocal tone, and the use of the heroic corrido form, which frequently became the vehicle for norteño’s

narratives, have also become signifiers of its masculinity. Consequently, in contemporary Regional Mexican radio, programmers use this style of norteño to target male listeners.

Other norteño artists, however, have adopted a more “mainstream” pop sound that some musicians and listeners refer to as “norteño progresivo” (“progressive norteño”). In this subgenre tempos are slower, melodies are more fluid, and singing styles are softer, more crooning. Programmers note that this variety of norteño attracts more female listeners (Flores 3/1/10), but these specific musical qualities, lumped under the catch-all of a “Pop” sound, have been feminized in broader musical discourse as well. Both variations of norteño are used as cues for gender and are programmed accordingly, with one style selected more heavily if a station wishes to target women over men, or vice versa. Alternately, they may be programmed according to gendered constructions of the radio day. Based on a combination of audience research and stereotype, Spanish-language stations target men with morning and evening drive time programming, presumably because they are commuting to and from work, and target women during the middle of the day, when they are home alone with the kids or female family members, cleaning and cooking and listening to the radio.

To add to the confusion created by these different kinds of norteño, the best-known performers of norteño progresivo are in fact Tejano. Regional Mexican and norteño have become much more successful sales categories, largely because they target a young and growing Mexican consumer group. Tejano listeners are older, and the genre label has proven to be less profitable in the contemporary marketplace. Thus, it is not unlikely that these Tejano artists have become norteño acts because of the greater profit

Figure 4.2: Excerpt, “Soy Como No Soy,” Duelo

mm = 84

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system shows the voice and accordion parts for the first four measures. The voice part is in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "Que me gus-tas qu'ha-ce tiem-po Viv-es en mis pens-a -". The accordion part is in a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment. The second system shows the voice and accordion parts for the next four measures, starting with a measure rest (5). The lyrics are: "mien-tos Que me mue-ro por bes-ar-te Que te am-o mas que'a nad-ie". The voice part continues with a treble clef, and the accordion part continues with a bass clef.

and opportunity available within that genre. The group Intocable from Zapata, Texas exemplifies the norteño progresivo sub-genre, and they are enormously popular on Regional Mexican radio in Texas. Duelo is another popular “progresivo” group from Texas that has become nationally popular with a slower, more melodic norteño sound. Duelo is fronted by the bajo sexto player, unlike most norteño and tejano groups, which star the accordionist of the group, and in fact the accordion fades into the background, in many of their songs. At the time of this study, Duelo’s “Soy como no soy” was receiving frequent radio play on Regional Mexican stations. The song features an accordion intro—a relatively simple rendition of the main melody—but leaves the instrument in the background throughout most of the song. The chorus (see Figure 4.2), for example, focuses on lyrics, with the accordion blending into a soothing wall of sound backing up the vocals, in contrast to most norteño or tejano songs, where accordionists see constant

action, providing fills during vocal breaks. The tempo of “Soy como no soy” is also slow, which is characteristic of the progresivo subgenre, and the lyrics, harmonized in thirds as in much norteño and tejano, are sung in a calm, naturally expressive timbre. The “Pop” conventions, as represented in the slower smoother sound, and lyrics about romantic love, serve as a sharp contrast to the tight nasal vocals, quick tempo, staccato instrumental interludes, and violent lyrics that dominate “hard” norteño.

Voz de Mando’s “Comandos del MP” was one of the most popular “corridos prohibidos” to figure into Regional Mexican playlists during the span of the study and provides a good example of how the hard norteño sound is gendered as masculine. While the accordion and bajo used in its accompaniment place this corrido-waltz within the norteño genre, the addition of a tuba also links the song sonically with music the banda genre. The lyrics are by and far the most “masculine” attribute of this song: the gang violence depicted is understood by listeners as the exclusive territory of men, and listening to the song places listeners well within the sphere of male endeavor. The musical sound of “Comandos del MP” is reminiscent of older styles of norteño (see Figure 4.3). In contrast the layered texture of Duelo’s “Soy como no soy,” “Comandos del MP” relies on a strict alternation between vocal and instrumental lines. Accordion and vocals alternate in even succession, and the tuba, like the ornamented bass popularized by Los Tigres del Norte, accompanies the accordion interludes. Older norteño was in fact a more male domain, and this texture reminds listeners of how the genre sounded before Regional Mexican radio created a space where women could listen to this music. The connotative masculinity of the song’s style and its blatant celebration of violence is as

much a move for men to reclaim the formerly male space of radio as it is a response to the tragic escalation of drug violence in Mexico.

Figure 4.3a: Lyrics, “Comandos del MP,” Voz de Mando

Quinientos balazos	Five hundred shots
Armas automáticas	Automatic weapons
Pecheras portaban	They wore (bullet proof) vests
De cuerno las ráfagas	Bursts from an AK
Los altos calibres tumbaban civiles, también por igual	The high caliber gunned down civilians as well
Antiblandaje	Bullet proof
Expansivas las balas	Fragmenting bullets
Dos o tres bazookas	Two or three bazookas
Y lanzagranadas	And grenade launchers
Obregón, Sonora, deberas pensaba, que andaba en Irak	Obregón, Sonora, I really thought I was in Iraq
Vestidos de negro	Dressed in black
Encapuchados	Hooded
Muy bien entrenados	Very well trained
Pues fueron soldados	For they were once soldiers
La mafia les paga, y ellos disparan, no pueden fallar	The mafia pays them, and they shoot, they won't miss (they can't fail)
Muchachos de arranque	From the beginning boys
Saben del peligro	are aware of the danger
Ya están bien curtidos	They are already well-seasoned
Se hicieron a tiros	They earned their way shooting
Al que se atraviesa, tumban la cabeza, si es que bien le va	To the one that crosses them, he loses his head, if he is lucky
Y a los del gobierno	And government people
No quieren toparlos	Don't want to run into them
Si escuchan disparos	If they hear gunshots
Corren pa otro lado	They run the other way
Por lo que les pagan, no piensan por nada, la vida arriesgar	For their pay, there's no way they would risk their lives
Rugen motores	Engines roar
Ya van los comandos	And there go the Commandos
La ciudad peinando	Combing the city
Y levantando	And picking it up
Negocio resuelto, patrón satisfecho, hay que festejar	Business finished, the boss is happy, time to celebrate

Figure 4.3b Excerpt, “Commandos del MP,” Voz de Mando

mm = 288

Voice
Quin-ien-tos bal-a-zos Ar-mas aut-o-ma-ti-cas

Accordion

C Tuba

Vb.
Pech-er-as por-ta-a-ban De cuer-no las ra-fa-gas Los

Acc.

C Tu.

Vb.
al-tos cal-i-bres tum-ba-ban ci-vi-les tam-bien por i-gual

Acc.

C Tu.

Banda: Inventing Tradition

Banda, the third of Regional Mexican radio's core genres, presents a striking paradox between innovation and tradition on Regional Mexican radio. On one hand, banda is one of the newer genres in Mexican popular music and is associated with younger, more recent immigrants from central Mexico. Banda was rarely heard on radio or television in Mexico or in the U.S. before the early 1990s, and only emerged as a popular rather than a rural folkloric genre during that decade. However, rural bandas have a long tradition in Mexico. Consequently, many of the most popular contemporary commercial bandas, like Banda Recodo or La Original Banda el Limón trace their histories back decades. According to Helena Simonett, contemporary commercial banda was born in the Fonorama recording studio in Guadalajara, Jalisco, where, in the 1980s, general manager and producer Manuel Contreras was experimenting with combinations of different Mexican styles to create a new popular genre. Contreras found a combination of banda sinaloense (from the state of Sinaloa) and grupera to be the most appealing of these, and created the group Vaquero Musical, featuring a line up of electric guitar and bass, keyboard, percussion, sax, three trumpets, and voice (2001:29-30). Simonett suggests that groups combining banda instrumentation with electric guitar and other amplified instruments were likely performing in Guadalajara at the time, but that this configuration was not solidified until Fonorama began their recording efforts. It took years for the genre to take off. Radio stations in Los Angeles took a risk by playing the genre on air for the first time in the early 1990s, but they began to attract national attention when their ratings rose sharply. By the mid-1990s, Los Angeles Spanish-

language station KLAX was at the top of the general market, because of its success with banda. The popularity of the genre in Los Angeles in the 1990s corresponded with the popularity among a young, newly Mexican-and-proud audience a of the quebradita dance craze, an almost acrobatic dance style performed by bouncing couples performing dramatic flips and lifts. Due to this recent history, while banda ostensibly originates from the rural wind band traditions across Mexico, it has become closely linked with the young, West Coast audiences that drove its initial success as a commercial genre.

Simonett's book covers the early phase of banda, and terms this early 1990s phenomenon as "technobanda" rather than simply banda, the name more commonly used today. No research exists on what exactly happened to banda after it hit in Los Angeles and began to spread across the United States. It seems that the genre has sought a much more "traditional" aesthetic, dropping the prefix "techno-" as well as instrumentation like electric guitar, borrowed from grupera performance. The most popular contemporary groups rely on full trumpet, tuba, and clarinet sections in their arrangements rather than synthesized sounds, and tour with groups upward of fifteen musicians. Finally, since the 2000s, banda has, like hard norteño, become a vehicle for narcocorridos (corridos about drug trafficking), and a broader genre of fast tempo, masculine corridos prohibidos (prohibited corridos).

Emerging Genres: Duranguense and Tierra Caliente

While banda's increased use of acoustic wind instruments marked a symbolic return to the rural roots of the genre, a number of synthesized genres also remain popular

on Regional Mexican radio. As previously mentioned, both duranguense and tierra caliente are highly synthesized versions of banda, and both emerged into mainstream popularity as banda itself retrenched into acoustic tradition. Duranguense initially became popular in Chicago, where a large Mexican-American community hails from the state of Durango, in the mid 2000's. Duranguense performers replaced all horns with keyboards, developing a sparse trademark sound, where instrumental interludes alternate with singing, over accompaniment of synthesized tuba alone on the up-beats. Snare riffs punctuate spaces and transitional moments. The genre became popular not only in Chicago, but in Durango and, within a few years, across the U.S. and Mexico. Duranguense has become associated with young audiences both because Durango has only recently become a top sending state for immigrants, so most of them are still young, and because the genre has developed a strong dance and style subculture favored by younger club-going listeners.

Tierra caliente is a very new phenomenon, which a handful of bands began performing in the U.S. in the late 2000's. It shares many sonic qualities with duranguense, but it favors fuller accompanying sound under both instrumental and vocal sections, places less emphasis on the characteristic snare riffs, and incorporates ballad-like melodies and vocals (See Ex. 3, Trono de México's "Te Recordaré"). The genre is popular especially with listeners from Central Mexico and Estado de México, the state surrounding Mexico City. As young immigrants increasingly arrive from Central Mexico, the genre has become linked with this most population shift. While a number of CD compilations of the genre have been released, tierra caliente does not seem to be as

Figure 4.4 Excerpt, “Te Recordaré,” Trono de México

mm = 138

Voice

Ne - se - ci - to oír tu voz pa - ra po - der vi - vir

Keyboard Synthesizer

C Tuba

Vo.

En es - te mun - do va - ci - o que ex - tre - me - se mi

Synth.

C Tu.

Vo.

al - ma - a

Synth.

C Tu.

cohesive of a genre as even duranguense yet. Rather, programmers recognize it as the newest up and coming trend. As an up-and-comer, its stylistic parameters have not been fully realized, and sonically, it does overlap with duranguense. Time will tell if the genre becomes a nation wide hit or a passing trend.

The question of what qualifies as a new genre is an important one. One programmer told me that newer styles like tierra caliente and duranguense are not yet genres in their own right because they lack the tradition, the long history of genres like ranchera, norteño and banda (Gadea, 4/29/10). The large percentage of on air time to these genres, however, may force a change in this perspective. While duranguense is new, like banda, it too can trace a longer history when its commercial viability depends on it. The Chicago based Horóscopos de Durango trace their history back to the 1970s, for example. But the real value of these genres seems to be their newness. They are intimately connected with the youngest and most recent immigrants from Mexico and consequently present an opportunity for programmers to tap into these listeners.

Ranchera, norteño, banda, duranguense and tierra caliente sound very distinct from one another: even unfamiliar listeners can immediately recognize the differences between a group composed of string instruments, versus winds and horns, versus accordion that epitomize ranchera, banda, and norteño, respectively. However, what they share is equally important. The relationships between these genres, based on intersecting histories and shared song types and repertoire, help to link them as a musical field, especially for the purposes of Regional Mexican radio. Blurry lines are precisely what makes genre discourse, rather than genre definition, so valuable here. Ranchera

represents tropes of rurality in Mexican national identity to U.S. Mexicans who may want to reconnect with that past. As *norteño* bifurcates stylistically into “hard” and “progressive” subvariants, Regional Mexican programmers draw on the different styles to target listeners by gender. When *bandas* strive to extend their own histories further into the past, the importance of tradition becomes evident as well. Even as these genres’ meanings are in flux individually, their strategic combination on Regional Mexican stations represents another level of identity construction. Programmers mix genres together in ways that represent both localized and national commercial identities.

PROGRAMMING ANALYSIS

In Chapter Two, I argued that the rise and fall of different formats and stations is one way to chart demographic and identity shifts among localized Spanish-speaking communities. Before stations decide to scrap a format entirely, or to sell their frequency, however, they test different strategies with programming content. The following analysis of programming hours in stations in Austin and San Antonio illustrates different programming strategies based on the links between genres and audiences. In Austin, four stations—Univision’s *La Que Buena* and *La Jefa*, Emmis Communication’s *La Z*, and a relay station from Guadalajara, Mexico called *Fiesta Mexicana*—compete for the Regional Mexican audience. Univision’s stations program far more *banda* and *duranguense*, the more “national” genres, while *La Z* plays more *norteño*, catering to the Texas, largely northern Mexican audience. While Regional Mexican stations are frequently criticized for their increasingly limited play lists, an analysis of one week of

airplay on La Z shows that this is far from the case: stations do promote a few hits heavily, but their overall playlists represent the wide breadth of genres that comprise Regional Mexican radio. In San Antonio, Regional Mexican stations operated by the Texas company Border Media Partners cater to second-generation and Tejano audiences far more than Austin stations. Border Media launched a station devoted to the new generation of banda from the West Coast in the spring of 2010, but by winter of that same year the station had already failed. The company's La Ley reaches the broadest audience, mixing grupera and ranchera targeted at second-generation audiences with newer norteño, and to a lesser extent, banda hits. La Ley's sister station, Norteño, targets an older but less acculturated audience with ranchera and norteño classics. Taken together, the programming differences on these stations show how programmers target audiences based on the symbolism of particular genres. The variety of strategies stations take, however, demonstrates overall that Regional Mexican radio is still something of a free-for-all: in spite of consolidated corporate control, stations maintain the flexibility to try whatever it takes to capture the largest audience segment.

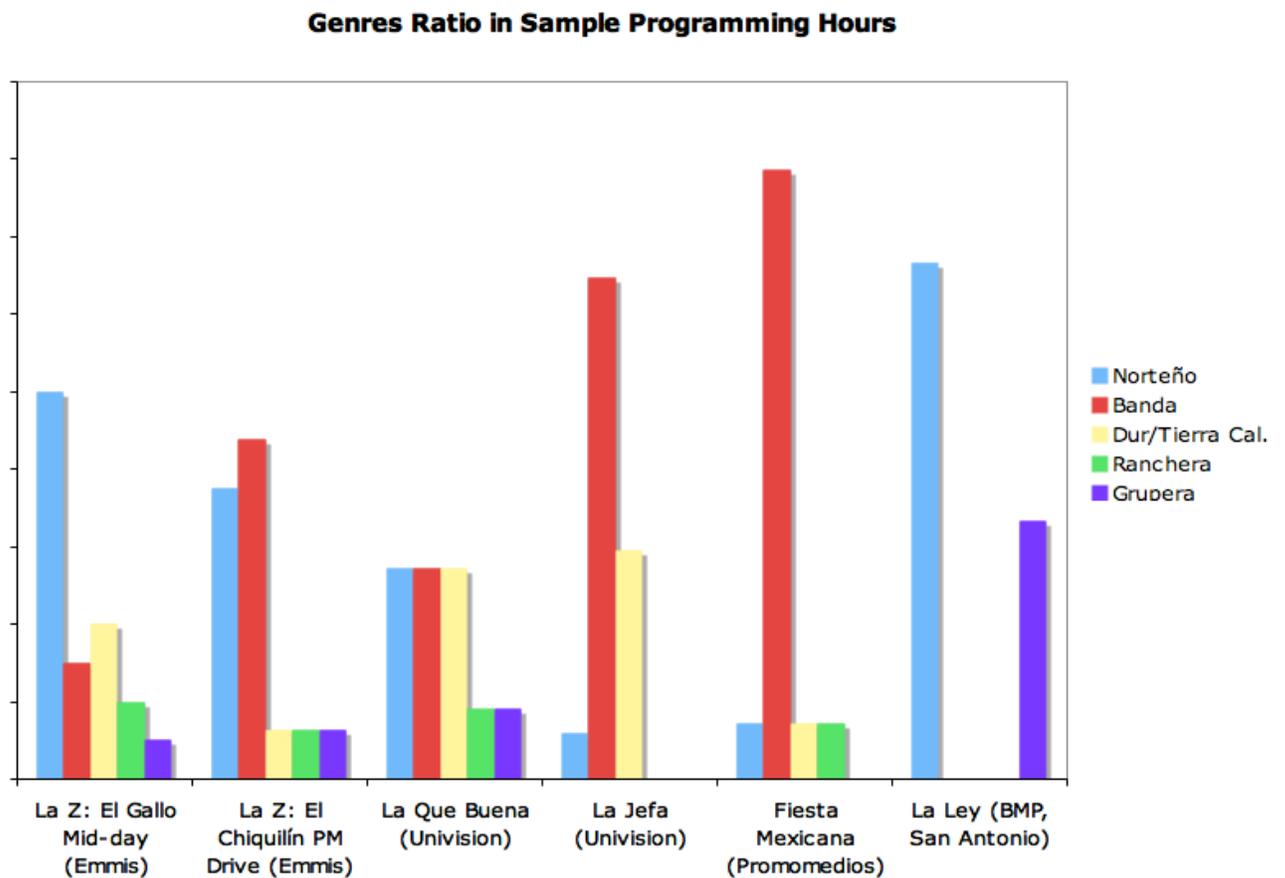
For all of the Regional Mexican stations represented here, the programming day begins with a syndicated morning show beginning anywhere from six to nine AM, and finishing at noon. In Austin, *Pirolín por la Mañana* on Univision's *La Que Buena*, Don Cheto on Emmis's *La Z*, and *El Chulo* on *Fiesta Mexicana*, are all relayed from Los Angeles, and Raul Brindís from Houston airs on Univision's *La Jefa*. The shows feature little music, and will not be discussed at length here for that reason. They have received significant attention in the press because of their popularity, but have not frequently been

the subject of academic study. Piolín's program was for years rated the number one program in the nation, and Piolín himself has become a prominent promoter of immigrant rights and other social issues. Radio hosts like Piolín were instrumental in organizing the protests held in May of 2006 in response to new national immigration legislation, and have remained active in a wide variety of community issues. While politics and activism can become subjects of conversation on talk programs, more often hosts spend the mornings making vulgar and sexist jokes, simultaneously nurturing and harassing the callers around whom their programs revolve. Dolores Casillas (2008) argues that jokes which lure in female callers, to becoming punch lines to sexist set-ups, constitute a response to male listeners' need to reinforce masculinity in the "feminized" service industry and marginalized life as a linguistic and racial outsider in the U.S. Casillas suggestion that female callers are completely unaware of their treatment is debatable. A more informative line of inquiry might ask why, given this poor treatment, women continue to phone in to these programs. Much as women reinterpret the soap operas in to meet their own ends (Ang 1989; Brown 1994), women clearly draw some reward from participating into the strictly gendered environment created by Regional Mexican radio.

After nearly half a day of morning programs, stations revert to music programming interspersed with some talk. The "mid-day" block that follows syndicated morning shows usually attracts fewer listeners, and is often filled with more music than talk. The "evening drive," from about three to seven o'clock features more talk on most stations, to keep listeners entertained on their commute home from work, but it is also music-focused. Evening programming on many Regional Mexican stations features live

remotes at local clubs. Dance music played in the evenings can stray from typical Regional Mexican fare, but it also serves to incorporate service industry workers stuck in restaurant kitchens into the nightlife experienced by their more fortunate peers. While each time slot has its own demands, the playlists compiled during each part of the day make important statements about who Regional Mexican station programmers think their audiences are.

Figure 4.5: Genre Composition of Sample Programming in Austin and San Antonio



Austin: La Z

Research with La Z in Austin provided the closest look at how a new Regional Mexican station created a genre-defined musical identity. La Z emphasizes norteño more than any of the stations discussed above: norteño makes up about half of all programming, with other genres divided over the remaining half. The station went on air in December of 2009, during the first months of my research, and was housed in an English language media company that had never before forayed into the world of Spanish-language media. In spite of its newness, the station had experience on its side. La Z's two key personalities and programmers, José "El Gallo" Gadea and Armando "El Chiquilín" Ulloa, transferred knowledge from their experiences at the recently defunct La Ley, and input also came from José Santos, who had consulted for La Ley. El Chiquilín also acts as a local personality DJ, interspersing more talk between musical selections. Sample hours recorded for both DJs on December 6, 2010 and December 8, 2010 (see Appendix B, Figures 1 and 2), respectively illustrate the differences between the two programmers as well as a cohesive station identity hinged on a slight prioritization of norteño and an even spread of banda, grupera and duranguense. Gallo's sample hour features a total of twenty tracks: ten norteño, three banda, four duranguense/tierra caliente, two ranchera, and one grupera. Chiquilín's segment includes six norteño tracks, seven banda, and one each of ranchera, grupera, and duranguense.

The mid-day segment includes little talk, but Chiquilín is heard frequently in the later afternoon. At 4:00 PM, evening drive listeners will have started tuning in, and talk provides more entertainment, luring listeners in and discouraging them from changing the

station. In this sample, as most days, Chiquilín poses a silly or provocative, often vaguely sexual question to the audience and presents callers opinions' on air. On the day of the sample, Chiquilín's topic of conversation debated the meaning of masculinity, albeit in a light and entertaining way:

107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. Oye, el día de hoy es el día oficial del metrosexual, eh. Así como lo escuchan, el día de hoy, si conoces a un metrosexual, todos aquellos individuos que se sacan las cejas, que se hacen bikini wax, que se hacen manicure, pedicure y por supuesto cuidados de piel, y que además de que son fanáticos de como se visten, el día de hoy, tienes que felicitarlos, por que el día de hoy es el día nacional de los metrosexuales. Así que, si conoces uno, saludalo, felicítalo, no sé, comprale algo para depilar las cejas, algo. [recorded laughter]. Oye, quiero hacerle una pregunta a todas las mujeres. Oye, mujeres, ¿les gusta o no les gusta que un hombre sea un metrosexual? ¿Qué se depile las cejas, qué se haga manicure, pedicure, toda la cosa, eh? ###-#### No más quiero ver que dicen las mujeres, ###-####, ¿Les gusta, no les gusta? (App. B, Fig. 1)

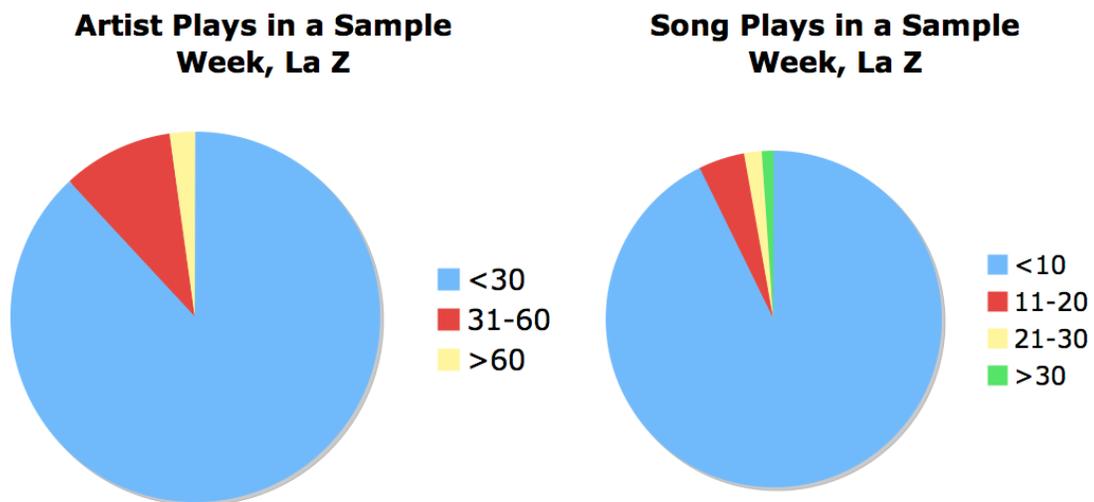
[107.1 La Z, Only the hits! Hey, today is the official day of the metrosexual. You heard right, today, if you know a metrosexual, all those individuals who pluck their eyebrows, get a bikini wax, get manicures, pedicures, and of course get skin treatments, and on top of that, are obsessed about the way they dress, today, you have to congratulate them, because today is the national day for metrosexuals. So if you know one, congratulate him, I don't know, buy him something to wax his eyebrows, something. Hey, I want to ask all women a question. Hey ladies, do you or don't you like a guy that is metrosexual? Who waxes his eyebrows, gets manicures, pedicures, the whole deal, huh? I just want to see what women say, ###-####, do you like it or not?]

To Chiquilín’s apparent but jovial surprise, the majority of his female responders did in fact like “metrosexual” men. The fact that the DJ is inviting women callers here may indicate that the traditionally gendered male evening drive is expanding to include women, or it may be that women are invited to participate for male amusement. While the Djs manner of addressing callers is gendered—Chiquilín substitutes an affectionate “mi reina” (my queen) for the male “mi compa” (my friend/brother)—the levels of respect attributed to both men and women are comparable. Chiquilín also passes control to a live-remote DJ, “La Chilanga,” who is taking collections for a holiday toy drive in a retail parking lot. She encourages listeners to stop by on their way home from work and donate a toy, and assures them they will be warmly received by La Z’s staff.

In the early months of La Z’s website, the station used entire playlists as web content, a practice the station has since discontinued. Complete playlists provided an interesting window into the stations programming. While one of listeners most frequent complaints about Regional Mexican stations is their lack of programming diversity, one week of on air play revealed a striking variety in number of artists and tracks played. The station averaged about three hundred songs per day, slightly fewer on weekdays when the morning talk show “Don Cheto” airs, and slightly more on the weekends when there is no dedicated talk programming. In one week in June, the station played over four-hundred songs and one-hundred and forty artists. Out of this large number a small core of songs and artists did receive much more frequent play: thirty-five top songs were played ten or more times in the week, and a core of fewer than ten songs were played five times or more each day. The most remarkable statistic is that 155 songs were played only once

over the course of the week, and over 320 songs were played not more than five times over the course of a week. Thus, the vast majority of songs played on La Z are not played more than one time per day. This indicates that these songs are either new, requests, or programmer gambles (old or new), but they do not follow the homogenizing, narrow play list model many listeners and critics perceive.

Figure 4.6: Sample Week Song and Artist Play Counts, La Z



In spite of this apparent programming variety, the repeated play of the core artists and hits could easily make programming sound more repetitive than it actually is. Over thirty artists were played only once during the week, and a core of under ten artists were played more than fifty times in the week, so more than ten times a day. This last figure makes it clear why listeners might feel they are hearing the same thing over and over; hearing fewer than ten artists ten times each per day could easily come appear to be oversaturation.

Figure 4.7: La Z, Austin, Ten Most-Played Artists, June 14-20, 2010

Rank	Artist	# Songs	# Plays	Genre
1	Banda El Recodo	10	88	Banda
2	Intocable	19	83	Norteño-Prog.
3	Vicente Fernández	18	76	Ranchera
4	Los Tigres del Norte	20	65	Norteño
5	El Trono de México	6	57	Tierra Caliente
6	El Chapo de Sinaloa	8	56	Banda
7	Duelo	10	54	Norteño Prog.
8	Ramon Ayala	17	54	Norteño
9	Grupo Bryndis	6	43	Grupera
10	La Original Banda Limon	2	43	Banda

The genre distribution of the top ten groups played in the sample week on La Z parallel that in the sample programming hours discussed above. Three artists are bandas, four are norteño, but two play in the pop-oriented newer style while two are classic artists who have been popular for over thirty years. Ranchera and grupera are represented by one classic performer in each of the genres. Interestingly, duranguense does not appear in the top ten artists, but its newer cousin, tierra caliente does, with the group El Trono de México, from Estado de México, ranking at number five. The high play count for this group is likely an effort to cater to the recent surge of immigrants to Austin from this state. Duranguense has been popular in central Mexico, but its modification has become more representative of the central region for people who have migrated from there.

Austin: La Que Buena

As the second ranked Spanish-language station in Austin and Univision's most successful there, La Que Buena balances banda, duranguense and norteño, representing a bid to capture younger audiences. The increased play of duranguense and banda as

compared to La Z likely stems from more centralized programming within the company. Univision has dozens of Regional Mexican stations across the U.S., and while less popular in Texas, banda and duranguense are popular nationally. La Que Buena, Austin's slogan, repeated between every few songs is, "Menos platica, mucho mas música. 104.3 La Que Buena, nadie toca mas" ("Less chit-chat, much more music, 104.3 La Que Buena, no one plays more"). The slogan marks a shift in the station's programming strategy from a talk-based format to a music-based one. For the first two years of its existence, La Que Buena programmed nearly a full day of talk, with Piolín transmitting from Los Angeles until noon and Raul Brindís, a lesser known morning program host from Houston, until three in the afternoon. While Piolín remains, in the fall of 2010 Univision switched Brindís to La Que Buena's sister station, La Jefa, creating more space for "mucho mas música." This programming change, along with the slogan, is significant, in that Univision's nationwide strategy had been dependent on syndicated personality DJs; the shift suggests that, in Austin at least, syndicated talk is not the draw the company thought it was. In the transcribed programming segment (see Appendix B, Figure 3), there is not much DJ chatter, Ana Elisa, the mid-day host speaks only three times, and then only to facilitate ticket giveaways. She speaks rapidly, and does not devote time to call-ins or engaging with the audience. This should not be read entirely as a feature of Univision programming, though. All stations program less talk during the mid-day segment, and more talk during morning and evening drive slots.

While La Que Buena lives up to its assertion of less talk, however, the "more music" aspect of the slogan is superceded by the stations' long advertising segments. In

one hour of programming, the station runs two ad segments of ten ads each, while over the hour, only eleven songs are played, a number at least 50% lower than competing stations during the same slot. For the most part, ad segments promote national companies, AT&T, McDonalds, Subway, Wal-Mart, and Direct TV, along with internal promotions for the Piolín morning show, Univision's local television affiliate, a Univision iPhone application and the La Que Buena website. While nationally-owned stations like La Que Buena often have high advertising rates, they are able to accommodate national advertising campaigns in ways that regional and local companies are not. This proliferation of advertising likely has to do with the sheer volume of ads Univision is able to procure.

Of the eleven songs that are played in a sample segment, three are banda, three are norteño, three are duranguense or tierra caliente; the station also plays one song each in the genres of grupera and ranchera. This remarkably even split shows that for La Que Buena, banda, norteña and duranguense/tierra caliente are the three core genres. If norteño has a more regional affiliation for Texas, banda and duranguense/tierra caliente are national hit genres. The inclusion of Duelo among the norteño set is significant; the group plays a norteño progresivo sound similar to that of Intocable, but have yet to gain the same success. Duelo, however is extremely popular in Texas, and draws large crowds when they perform there. The grupera and ranchera songs pay homage to older styles and listeners' sense of nostalgia, but do not prioritize them.

The nearly perfect distribution of genres played over the course of an hour is representative of La Que Buena's middle-of-the-road strategy. Nothing is over or

underemphasized, the genres are in balance. Ranchera and grupera tracks are included as an homage to tradition and nostalgia. The fact that duranguense/tierra caliente makes up an equal part in the stations genre triumvirate is interesting however; competing station program directors have not uniformly recognized style as an independent genre or as such a significant part of Regional Mexican programming. Duranguense and tierra caliente are more attractive to younger and more recent immigrant audiences from Central Mexico, a new population in Austin as well as across the country. La Que Buena may be responding to Austin or national trends with this choice.

Austin: La Jefa

La Que Buena's sister station La Jefa played more music in the sample hour (see Appendix B, Figure 4), and focused on far more on banda and duranguense/tierra caliente, targeting even more younger audiences, and more recent migrants to Austin who increasingly hail from central, rather than northern Mexico. Of seventeen selections, eleven were banda, five duranguense or tierra caliente and only one norteño. The station also announced songs with far greater frequency than any other station; a recorded song identification followed nearly every song whereas on La Que Buena recorded song identifications were a rarity, and on other stations DJs are the only occasional indicator of song titles and bands. Greater song identification could have two implications here, one, that because the station features newer hits, listeners might have a more difficult time identifying the artist, on other stations most of the songs are already familiar. Alternately, Univision is a media conglomerate with its own music label, the song identifications may

provide an opportunity for the company to promote its own breaking artists. In fact, eight of the artists played (ten songs) in the sample hour are on Disa, a label 50% owned by Univision, and three are on Univision's own subsidiary label, Fonovisa. A number of the songs featured in the sample, from La Jefa, fall in the category of "hard" corridos, or narcocorridos, discussed above, which are currently gaining popularity in Regional Mexican Radio across the country. Hits in this genre like "Comandos del MP" by Voz de Mando, indicate La Jefa's desire to attract young, male listeners.

As compared to La Que Buena, La Jefa ran far fewer advertisements in the sample hour. La Jefa has not been as popular, and consequently not as profitable, as La Que Buena since it was switched from a Spanish pop format in the fall of 2009, and has gone through a number of programming changes before arriving at this current, youth and masculine-targeted format. In the most recent Arbitron figures, La Jefa ranks eighteenth in the overall market, compared to La Que Buena's thirteenth ranking. Initially, La Jefa did not have a morning show. The station's programming day featured segments dedicated to individual genres, a morning cumbia slot, an oldies lunch hour, and a tierra caliente program on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Current programming marks a more concentrated format; time will tell if it will be more successful in the Austin market.

Austin: Fiesta Mexicana

Fiesta Mexicana is Austin's newest Regional Mexican station, and like La Jefa, it focuses on banda. With programming from Guadalajara, Mexico, the station targets on audiences who identify more strongly as Mexican, such as more recent immigrants. The

station features a morning show broadcast from Los Angeles, California, but the show's host, "El Chulo" was a local DJ on an Austin station, now folded, before he moved to California. The station appeared on Austin airwaves in the summer of 2010 as a relay station from Guadalajara; all programming, including music, DJ banter, news and advertisements was transmitted in entirety. Gradually, the station incorporated the El Chulo morning show, then local ads and recorded station identification announcements. The sample includes no DJ talk, only pre-recorded station identifications. The music, news segments and an evening talk program are still relayed from Guadalajara. The fact that the station is properly Mexican is not something that it hides, rather it advertises that it is transmitted directly from Guadalajara. Its assumption, then is that Mexicans, regardless of what side of the border they are on, like listening to Mexican radio. Unlike U.S.-based stations that target immigrant audiences, Fiesta Mexican assumes U.S. Mexicans are still Mexican enough to identify with this stations offerings.

Of fourteen songs played over the course of a sample hour on Fiesta Mexicana (see Appendix B, Figure 5), eleven were banda; the remaining three were all different genres, tierra caliente, norteño and one ranchera. While some of the artists are popular on all the stations researched here, others, like Lobito de Sinaloa, and Sinaloa 21 are less common. The inclusion of a different set of banda artists than currently appear on U.S. Regional Mexican stations suggests that even as they draw less heavily on genre rotation in their format model, the Mexican station has greater freedom to experiment within the banda genre. As one programmer put it, in Austin about 30% of the population speaks Spanish, but in Mexico 100% of the population does. U.S. programmers need to go after

all of that 30%, and take very few risks in creating play lists. Mexican stations do not have to worry about attracting all Spanish speakers in a given area, a small segment still puts their listening figures on par with U.S. Spanish-language stations.

San Antonio: La Ley

Even a quick analysis of San Antonio's programming shows how differently San Antonio and Austin perceive their listeners. While Austin's Mexican-American population has grown only recently and includes more young, recent immigrants from Central Mexico, San Antonio's Mexican-American population is well established, having arrived the city from the north of Mexico before the mid-twentieth century. These long-time Mexican residents have often adopted Chicano and American identities in addition to Mexican ones. San Antonio's collection of radio formats immediately shows a preference for norteño and tejano that northern Mexicans and multi-generational Mexican-Americans tend to favor. While Austin's Tejano station is struggling, multiple Tejano stations thrive in San Antonio, including one owned nationally by Univision. In San Antonio, Univision's Regional Mexican station Estéreo Latino programs *Pióln por la Mañana* until mid-day, with music programming following. San Antonio's *La Ley*, owned by Border Media Partners programs local personality DJs in morning and evening drive time slots, and music dominates programming. Especially in the case of locally programmed *La Ley*, San Antonio Regional Mexican programming includes far more norteño, grupero and cumbia than its Austin counterpart. These genre choices target an audience who migrated from Mexico to San Antonio over twenty years ago, when

immigration flows primarily stemmed from northern Mexico. They also target second-generation listeners who are nostalgic for the music they heard their parents play when they were growing up. Of fifteen songs played in a sample hour on La Ley (see Appendix B, Figure 6), ten were norteño and five were grupera and/or cumbia; not one banda, duranguense, tierra caliente or ranchera track was aired. La Ley does play these other genres, if in less frequency, but grupera and norteño make up the core of the station's programming.

While only one sample from San Antonio is represented here, and a single programming hour is may not be representative of any of these stations long-term trajectories, they do offer insight into how format is constructed using coded musical genres in order to achieve a composite Mexican-American identity for a given locale, in a given time frame. A comparison between an hour of programming on any single station today, and an hour on that same station a year from now would invariably yield a different audience portrait. This is Regional Mexican radio's principle strength, its ability to adapt. The sample programming discussed here does, however, demonstrate the process through which this flexibility is achieved, and how radio's mixing and mediating of existing cultural materials creates commercialized identities.

CONCLUSION

Genre is Regional Mexican radio stations' principal tool for identifying the audiences they hope to attract. The skill of programming, for these stations, revolves around identifying who, exactly, the local audience is and which genres will most appeal

to them. Audiences are understood in terms of age, gender, state of origin within Mexico, and length of stay in the U.S. Banda, norteña, and ranchera make up a core ideal for Regional Mexican programming, but stations are incorporating newer genres like duranguense, tierra caliente and narcocorridos. These new genres address new audience segments, all of them target younger listeners, but they also recognize the regions of Mexico from which these listeners come. Tierra caliente in particular responds to the most recent trend of immigration from central Mexico. In addition to appealing to younger audiences who may have more recently arrived from Mexico, narcocorridos appeal to male audiences who were previously Regional Mexican radio's key listenership. As the format has adopted more "pop" variants of its core genres, with slower tempos and romantic lyrics, to target female listeners, the hyper-masculinity portrayed in narcocorridos may be an attempt to win back male listeners. As new audience groups and new genres are identified they are linked together to create a formulaic approach to the radio industry. Genre shifts are tied to population shifts, and both accrue social meaning through their relationship with one another created in the space of commercial radio. More broadly, Regional Mexican radio's manipulation of musical genres and their attached identities demonstrates how genre functions as a tool for social meaning in popular music. Genres are not fixed and independent categories. Instead, the meaning and musical parameters of genres, as well as their juxtaposition with other genres is a tool that the music and media industry's use to follow and retain their audiences.

Chapter 5: Audiences

The programming strategies discussed in previous chapters show how station personnel choose music to attract specific audience segments, in effect, creating their own an image of the audience that matches their own understanding of broader demographic developments and shifts in taste. Precisely because media companies actively and self-consciously construct groups in this way, academic reception studies have critiqued older notions of “audiences” as spontaneous social groups with clear boundaries and common interests. Instead, they argue that we should examine both the ways that audiences are constructed in and through discourse, and the ways that individual media consumers do or do not fit the dominant paradigm of a particular audience. *Most* Regional Mexican listeners share *some* demographic characteristics, a fact that may encourage static, oversimplified understandings of the listenership as a determinate social group. Even when a group of consumers shares ethnicity, or class status, though, we cannot assume they innately believe themselves to share the kinds of experiences and dispositions that would allow an analyst to consider them as a homogeneous “audience.” Instead, they are more properly viewed as a notional social group constructed around a media experience that, itself, is fashioned by the industry which seeks to capture their loyalty.

As part of their mission to construct a devoted and profitable listenership, radio stations work to make listeners feel they are part of an on air community. Regional Mexican radio is particularly devoted to such activities, and stations draw heavily on in-

person events and live remote broadcasts to make individual listeners aware of the traits they share as consumers. Through face to face interactions between listeners and station personnel, Regional Mexican stations encourage to listeners to experience firsthand their inclusion within this commercial entity, in a way that is rarely possible in the daily course of mass media consumption.

The nature of the audience remains somewhat elusive and contested, however, even within the industry itself. Radio stations and research companies exist in a symbiotic relationship depending on one another for continued profitability, but they are also in constant conflict over how information about audiences is collected, and about the usefulness of the results obtained. Like any media channel Regional Mexican radio constructs an image of its audience using multiple means of measurement, including official audience research, conducted principally by Arbitron, the nation's largest research agency serving radio. These statistics are crucial from the perspective of advertisers, since they "prove" that the audience—that is, a potential target demographic—exists. The methodologies used by research companies, however, have a dramatic impact on the results: Latino audiences, for example, were largely unappreciated until Univision, then called the Spanish International Network (SIN), commissioned the first studies of this group in the 1980s. The fact that so much variation can occur in these studies, that entire demographic groups can remain invisible, reveals the inherent elusiveness of the "radio audience," and illustrates the reason that actual programming decisions tend to be influenced by personal contact with listeners. Programmers' more intrinsic knowledge about their listeners, or, to state things in a less

flattering light, their “hunches,” remain just as important in day-to-day station activities. Decades-long careers in the industry make these hunches generally well-informed, and they often contradict the more “scientific” knowledge promoted through formal research. Formal audience research, then, is important for higher level decision making at radio stations, but programmers often, subordinate audience research to their own experience in the business. The creation of the Regional Mexican audience, then, represents a mixture of audience research and anecdotal knowledge, which programmers combine to create a portrait of their ideal group of listeners.

Most of the current academic discourse about radio and other media treats “audience” first and foremost in this way, as a provisional and contested industry construct. For instance individuals who listen to Spanish-language radio have few if any intrinsic shared qualities: they are a fragmented set of listeners with different tastes and listening habits, and the “Hispanic” audience, like any other, would not exist if it were not identified and characterized as such by the industry. Ang’s work on reception studies and television audiences is perhaps the most important critique of the industry-driven definition of audience (1985; 1991) and it suggests profitable lines of inquiry by which the Regional Mexican audience may be understood. Ang argues that audience members’ interpretations of media hinge on differences in their own backgrounds, and in the way they consume—with full or partial attention, and drawing different social uses out of different kinds of content. She is sharply critical of the “institutional” understanding of the television audience, which reduces real experiences of media consumption into a quantifiable but skewed truth, and suggests an ethnographic alternative, one that

approaches the experiences of real audiences in their unique social worlds, which cannot be represented by the idea of a “typical” viewer but should be depicted in their infinite variation. Such ethnographic attention to media consumption would no doubt provide enlightenment about the quality of individual media experiences, but it is worth asking what kind of end results this kind of research yields: if it seems clear, *prima facie*, that individuals typically understand themselves as unique, infinitely varied individuals, it also seems clear that individuals sometimes imagine themselves as parts of broader social entities, including media audiences. Questions of how the media creates particular audience categories remain significant, then, and demand to be investigated from the production side as well as through reception ethnography.

Fortunately, Ang’s approach can be applied to help us understand how media consumers resist or come to inhabit the audience categories that are created for them, once the substance of her critique is adjusted for the important differences that exist between radio and television. Television programmers, working overwhelmingly from central national offices, are removed from their viewers and pre-record entertainment for a largely national audience. Even public television is produced centrally, and with the exception of the smallest public access and community stations, television producers rarely have the opportunity to meet their viewers. Radio stations have smaller local audiences, making face to face connections between personnel and listeners a legitimate possibility. Radio programmers are frequently disc jockeys themselves, and despite the increasing automation of radio programming, they represent a personal link between listeners and producers.

Particularly in the case of Regional Mexican radio, programmer-DJs appear at a constant stream of radio station events and live remote broadcasts. Such events provide an important window into how media producers construct the sense of identification that unites their audience, giving listeners the opportunity to *feel* like part of the group gathered around a particular station. In Austin and San Antonio, Regional Mexican radio stations host live remote broadcasts from nightclubs nearly every night of the week. DJs work on-site at a rotating roster of clubs as emcees, often leaving programming to another DJ not affiliated with the station. During the day stations send promotions teams to sites across both cities. Vans emblazoned with station logos park in front of grocery stores, Mexican restaurants, taco stands and other shops, registering passers-by for raffles and handing out bumper stickers and other station paraphernalia. Roaming DJs may do short on-location reports, incorporating them into regular programming, or the in-studio DJ may simply announce the location of the van and encourage listeners to stop by. On weekends stations may host more elaborate events in shopping center parking lots with DJs acting as emcees. In the example that I discuss in this chapter, for example, Univision radio hosted a multi-week singing competition for children called “Idolito del Pueblo,” or “The People’s Little Idol,” in various “Fiesta” supermarket parking lots throughout the spring. Elsewhere, Emmis Communication’s La Z put popular mid-day DJ and programming director “El Gallo” on site at Fiesta markets, leading games to give prizes to children and conducting a raffle for the adults. Such giveaways are a particularly important tool for capturing audience interest for Regional Mexican stations.

At these events, audiences show both personal allegiance to and investment in particular stations and DJs, even if such interest is typically mixed with a certain skepticism. Listeners feel involved in the stations, recognize them as markers of their Spanish-speaking community in their respective cities, but they do not hesitate to tell DJs and promotions staff what they like and do not like. They come from an ever-changing variety of sending-states in Mexico or other sending countries, and from a large variety of personal backgrounds. DJs and programmers strive to keep track of this variety and account for the broad local range of backgrounds and experiences, in order to hold these listeners' attention. Indeed, it is possible that these interactions actually strengthen a sense of identification between listeners and industry workers, since audiences can feel that their interests are at least partially represented by their interlocutors, and DJs feel they better understand their listeners, becoming more confident in the representations they create through their playlists.

As in the television industry, then, radio professionals have developed a statistical, saleable picture of their audience, a picture that is influenced as much by the industry that produces it as by real listeners. However, Regional Mexican radio professionals, more than television programmers or other kind of radio broadcasters, inform their programming decisions through a kind of contact with their audiences that resembles Ang's call for attention to the infinite variation of media consumers and consuming habits. This situation makes Regional Mexican radio more flexible and receptive to its audiences. The process of audience construction lies finally with listeners, who may or may not feel themselves to be part of an audience. The diversity of events

and of event attendees demonstrates that in some respects Regional Mexican listeners include vastly different groups—families, young club-goers, recent and not-so recent immigrants as well as second generation Mexican-Americans. But by deploying multiple processes of audience construction, stations suggest identity categories to listeners that they may then inhabit, permanently or temporarily, or reject. This tremendous effort in constructing and embodying commercial identities is the root of Regional Mexican radio’s cultural and financial power, but it is also provisional, negotiated, and constantly in danger of being undone by the “creative disloyalty of listeners” (Berland 1988:356). It is this degree of uncertainty that make Regional Mexican radio so interesting and makes its future so difficult to predict. In this chapter, I first describe the fraught relation between Mexican Regional broadcasters and audience research companies, relations based on a perceived history of mutual misunderstanding, and which have led broadcasters to be leery of such agencies and their methods. Then, I discuss how live events are both a source of information for programmers about their listeners and an opportunity for stations to make listeners feel part of this constructed audience.

ACADEMIC AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Academic reception studies invariably begin with the disclaimer that their object of study, audiences, is not real, but rather a fabrication of the media industry. “Audiences are unnatural phenomena” (Nightingale and Ross, eds. 2003:1); “there is no stable entity we can isolated and identify as the media audience, no single object that is unproblematically ‘there’ for us to observe and analyze” (Moore 1993:1-2). The media

audience was “invented” by the industry itself, and the industry has largely continued to define the parameters of audiencehood in the public imagination, mainly as a way to serve its own needs for stable incomes. In the early days of radio, for instance, producers were unsure how to make the medium profitable, and knowing how many people were listening, and to what, was a first step in converting radio into a commercial product. In the 1950s the diffusion of television in American homes stimulated further interest in audience research techniques. Many of the measurement tools currently used to measure audiences were developed in this era, including ratings, share, reach and frequency (Nightengale and Ross, eds. 2003:4). By the 1980s, industry and academic researchers alike began to pay attention to smaller, demographically defined “audiences” rather than a single monolith, a process dubbed “segmentation.” Within the industry, this shift was facilitated and encouraged by the proliferation of cable television stations and other media, while in academia, emerging paradigms from cultural studies encouraged researchers to look at listening and viewing from distinct sociocultural positions.

Even as researchers have subdivided the notion of audience into ever-smaller units, it has remained difficult to define. Determining the degree of attention required to be an audience member, and the degree to which listening, viewing, or reading media makes an individual a part of a group, are only two of the inherent problems with audience studies. Roughly, however, audience is the set of individuals who give some degree of attention to a particular media product, and who can therefore be characterized as having a basic familiarity with the content that is disseminated by the media channel in question. This definition of audience is particularly useful in approaching radio

consumption, where consumers' relative inattention and passive participation have long presented problems for analysis, leading media studies to focus instead upon participatory, content-rich media such as film, television, or literature (Brooker and Jermyn, eds. 2003; Hey et al. 1996). Radio does not demand full attention to make an impact, but relies instead on its pervasiveness, on a sense of recognition, comfort, and familiarity that consumers develop through the sheer quantity of time spent in passive listening.

Audience studies, however, are concerned not only with who the audience is, but with how they are affected by the media products they consume. Prior to the 1960s, the "silver bullet" theory, that audiences are passive receptors of information transmitted through mass media, was the dominant model. From the 1960s onward, scholarship shifted, as researchers began to view media as semiotic texts, and audience members as "readers" with interpretive power. While some Marxist scholarship in the 1970s perpetuated a deterministic view of audiences in which class prescribed individuals' interpretations of media texts, the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies suggested greater variation in audience interpretation (Moore 1993:6). Hall (1980) argued that television producers and consumers were linked in a dialogic relationship of encoding and decoding, in which the meaning of a media text is embedded both in producers' and audience members' sociocultural codes. Television programming, for instance, consists of iconic symbols, and Hall has suggested that many interpretations of audience reception are flawed by their own naturalizing, unilateral assumption of these symbols' meanings, thereby ignoring the semiotic processes on both sides of a media

text's social life. Social conventions guide the interpretation of these icons, in other words, but they do not entirely determine their meaning. Some viewers may read symbols entirely as intended by the producers' context, others may partially incorporate this intended meaning, and some may develop entirely alternative meanings.

An ethnographic turn in reception studies beginning in the 1970s, itself driven by the work of Hall and his colleagues, has also had an important impact on the kind of information generated about media consumers. In *Desperately Seeking the Audience* (1991), Ien Ang argues that the "audience" can be understood in two ways, as a discursive tool for the media industry and an institutional construction, or as actual people in real social lives. Since institutional audience research searches for a "typical" audience member, the types of large-scale statistical study that dominate industry audience research create and perpetuate falsehood about actual people's media consumption habits. Ang argues that for audiences, variation is the norm, and the "typical" viewer cannot possibly exist. Following Bourdieu, Ang encourages ethnographic audience research that "evokes the irreducible dynamic complexity of cultural practices and experiences" (Ibid.:161). Communications scholars have embraced Ang's recommendation and a number of ethnographic reception studies have appeared since the early 1990s. However, the field's dependence on large statistical surveys has been hard to shake. Many supposedly ethnographic reception studies are based on surveys or ethnographic interviews rather than participant observation. Moore acknowledges this tendency, but suggests that the increased awareness of the intention

behind ethnography has helped to achieve Ang's representations of the infinite variety of audiencehood.

If surveys are meaningless, if there is no "big picture," then what kinds of knowledge can audience research produce? A handful of studies that have taken this ethnographic, audience-focused approach with compelling results, may provide an answer. Mayer's *Producing Dreams, Consuming Youth: Mexican-Americans and Mass Media* (2003) revolves around field work with youth in San Antonio, where for four years she worked with a project teaching teens to make and edit their own videos. Mayer finds that among the youths she worked with access and use of mass media was varied. Watching television, especially prime time Mexican soap operas (novelas), was a family or group activity while listening to the radio, mostly Top 40 but also some Tejano and other genres, was a private one. Discussing mass media, however, and especially participating in fan culture, was an important method for identity construction and for forming social groups. Mayer argues that television novelas allowed their users to learn about and maintain ties with their Mexican heritage, while Top 40 pop helped them imagine their futures or aspirations, defined by an American white middle class norm. Per Ang's suggestion, the subjects of the study are depicted in varied social contexts, and their consumption patterns and interpretations of media texts are equally complicated. Mayer's work is particularly valuable because it incorporates multiple mediums, showing that music and television have very different meanings for her study's participants. Ultimately, her research demonstrates the multiple ways in which mass media use both enables and limits identity construction, and it discourages the reader from taking this

handful of subjects as representative models, by showing that media consumption or audience-ship cannot be reduced to a single model or type.

Despite studies such as Mayer's, reception studies have overwhelmingly dealt with television. Some have begun to address new, interactive, media, but almost none address radio audiences. This is a tremendous, if understandable oversight. If television audiences are difficult to identify, radio audiences are even harder. Watching television is rarely an independent activity, and one of the problems with conducting audience studies is to determine when "viewing" is actually taking place. Radio listening is an even more passive activity in most cases, and consequently it is even more difficult to analyze. However, radio, especially Regional Mexican radio, is characterized by a unique relationship between producers and audiences. Where television producers can never know who their audience really is, in radio, listeners call in, show up at concerts and events, wanting to shake the DJ's hand and chat. Production, in other words, is informed by the kinds of varied ethnographic information advocated in the most recent reception studies. This is particularly interesting given current trends in audience studies, where it seems that resolving production-side and audience perspectives is nearly impossible. Interested in capturing the largest possible number of listeners or viewers, media producers' worlds revolve around exactly the kind of information about audiences that academics renounce, and media professionals see little value in the individual interpretations and uses of their media texts.. In Regional Mexican radio, though, this could not be further from the truth, and the medium's efforts to construct a particular ethnic audience may actually provide substantive lessons for scholars of reception.

Spitulnik's work on the way that Zambian radio creates a national audience approaches the relation between broadcasters and audiences from a slightly different perspective. Drawing on Anderson's account of "imagined communities" (1983), Spitulnik suggests that radio is a "coordinated site for representing synchronized national community, and for marking its movement through time" (1994:26). She finds Anderson's concept too homogenous and stable, however, stressing instead the multilingual, multiethnic, mobile and urban experiences of diversity and uncertainty that surround interpretations of national radio in Zambia. Anderson's basic notion that media enables un-related members of a community to imagine themselves as connected roughly applies to Regional Mexican and other types of radio: radio producers select particular listener traits or demographics that they want to target, and work to cultivate dedicated fans by making them feel part of a radio "family." But, as Spitulnik recognizes, this process becomes more complicated when we take into account the full diversity of radio audiences. For Spitulnik, radio programmers had to balance difference to attract a very diverse listenership.

In Regional Mexican radio producers are engaged in a more active practice of including and excluding listener identity traits. For example, Regional Mexican radio alternately pushes away female listeners and welcomes them, encouraging listening through pop music gendered as feminine during certain times of the day, then abandoning them for a male-targeted hour of corridos prohibidos (Austin's *La Z*, see Ch. 4). As I discussed in Chapter Four, morning show hosts ask female listeners to call in, then make fun of them for the benefit of male listeners (Casillas 2008). Thus, while Regional

Mexican radio is working to create an imagined community, it is an inherently homogenous one in which culturally sanctioned differences between men and women are reproduced. The radio day is structured in male and female segments, based on assumptions about gendered activities: men get up early to go to work and listen to morning talk programming on the job, while women spend more time in the kitchen listening to the radio in the afternoon, as they prepare meals. Whether or not these listening patterns hold true, the programming day is structured around gendered listening blocks, which offer separate gendered spaces within the larger listening community. Listeners are not confined to their gendered blocks, and men may listen to pop and women to morning programs, but the notion of a temporal space divided by widespread assumptions about properly gendered activity remains to be perceived and adopted by consumers.

My analysis of Regional Mexican radio draws upon all of these earlier perspectives. It shows individuals as engaged actors in their own inclusion in or exclusion from the medium's audience, an engagement that is made especially clear at station events, where such listeners take complex stances towards audience membership. They indicate belonging by their very attendance, but they also critique the medium's sonic and social parameters as they make suggestions for playlist changes to DJs, thus alternating between engaged participation and disinterest. Following Meyer and Ang, I also assume a high level of diversity in consumption patterns in my analysis, but instead focus on how Regional Mexican stations bridge these differences at events, encouraging listeners to feel like part of an audience by sharing the same, face-to-face experience. Finally, I

describe the way that radio workers exert a special kind of agency in constructing this sense of intersubjectivity. Regional Mexican stations seem more aware than other media producers of the lack of a typical listener. Events and broadcasts cater to very different audiences, including families and younger club-goers, understanding that their audiences consist of both groups and others. Even within these factions, no typical listener exists, since they are divided by region of origin, length of stay in the U.S. or generation, gender, class and any number of other factors. Although Regional Mexican radio audience members are individuals first, they are actively drawn into a community through the action of the medium. Some of this work is achieved through face to face interaction with DJs and other audience members at events, but it is supplemented by “imagining” encouraged in on air programming. For this audience, radio becomes associated with a particular set of identity related experiences—singing along to Mexican standards, shopping at a Latino-oriented supermarket, or even being harassed by local law enforcement based on assumptions of “illegality”—that create a deeper connection with the medium and its imagined listenership.

IMMIGRANT IDENTITY AND AUDIENCEHOOD

Regional Mexican radio is most effective at creating a cohesive audience when it taps directly into Mexican-American and immigrant identities. The combination of genres demonstrated in Chapter Four shows how programming can combine diverse Mexican regional and generational identities on air to attract listeners of different backgrounds. Radio station events tie these listeners together even further by reminding

them of the cultural traits, values, and even anti-immigrant discrimination they share. A wealth of literature has explored immigrant adaptation experiences, from Milton Gordon's theories of "straight line" assimilation in the 1960s to contemporary theories of sustained transnational identities (Basch et al. 1994). Regional Mexican radio audiences represent a vast array of different adaptations to life in the U.S., from families with first and second generations living in Texas to young short-stay laborers. Radio stations serve not only as a resource for these listeners, but remind them that they are linked to one another, over and above the individual differences that necessarily divide them. The most important outstanding question, however, is whether or not this constructed sense of group identity eases immigrants' transition into the U.S. social system, or further segregates the group along internal lines.

Portes and Rumbaut's (1996) model of segmented assimilation, in which immigrants, and especially their children, enter a racially and economically stratified U.S. society, mirrors radio programmers' belief in assimilation as well as their compartmentalized understanding of listeners' taste preferences. Some immigrants assimilate "upward" to be incorporated into a white-middle class ideal, and others move laterally or even assimilate "downward" and wind up confined to the lowest socio-economic levels. Regional Mexican programming, like all dedicated Spanish-language programming, seems to encourage feelings of separateness that would hinder assimilation. Spanish-language media in general is often interpreted as a kind of "urban ghetto" of the media terrain, drawing consistently lower revenues per advertising minute than English language competitors (Napoli 2002). However, programmers actually view

Regional Mexican radio as part of an assimilation pipeline, and imagine their listeners as starting out as Regional Mexican listeners, but progressing through pan-Latin identified Spanish pop and then English language stations the longer they stay in the U.S. (Santos 2/5/10). The frequency with which radio listeners switch from station to station, gradually incorporating English stations into their pre-programmed favorites, shows that listening to Regional Mexican radio is in no way a detriment to incorporating “American” identity markers.

The idea of “cultural citizenship” provides another strand for exploring the relation between Regional Mexican radio and adaptation in the U.S. context. Ong defines cultural citizenship as the series of practices and beliefs that stem from immigrants’ negotiations with hegemonic forces that define national identity (1996:738). Through case studies of Cambodian and Chinese immigrants in the San Francisco area, she illustrates how different kinds of institutions regulate adaptation and impose gendered, white-masculine authority, transforming them into racialized national subjects. Class differences result in different outcomes for immigrant subjects, meaning that they may be cast as “problem” or “model” minorities through these kinds of conditioning, but both groups in the study are ultimately denied cultural citizenship. The notion of institutional control strikes an interesting parallel to the institutional concerns that I have argued shape the Spanish-language media industry’s cultural output. One on hand, the structure of the media industry, its demands for tightly segmented audiences, and its profit-based valuation of some audiences over others, denies Regional Mexican listeners full cultural citizenship. However, the practices of actual audiences tell a different story. At events

where we can observe real listeners in person, it is evident that some have adapted to Anglo-American norms to a greater degree than others. In spite of Regional Mexican radio's role in creating Mexican-American listening subjects, their institutional and cultural power cannot be unproblematically linked to cultural, ethnic, or racial isolationism.

Nevertheless, broader sociocultural circumstances often conspire to delimit the identity slots available to Regional Mexican broadcasters and their audiences, in ways that *are* linked to such stark discourses of difference. Illegality, for instance, has become central to the way outsiders perceive immigrants, and, consequently has become an identity that many Latinos have to fight against. Increasingly, popular sentiment developed through news and entertainment media has closely linked the ideas of “immigrant” and “Latino” with “illegal alien.” De Genova argues that illegality is produced by law enforcement (an institution) and re-created through “the spectacle of enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border” that is in turn, “socially inscribed upon the migrants themselves—embodied in the spatialized (and racialized) status of ‘illegal alien’” (2002:437). And because Regional Mexican stations are linked with the immigrant audiences they attract, the attention they receive from non-Latinos often manifests itself in relation to discourses of illegality.

The most applicable understandings of immigrant identity are the most flexible ones. Alba and Nee have argued that assimilation entails changes not only in immigrant identity, but also in that of the “mainstream” (2003). Massey and Sanchez add a structural dimension to this process, and describe a process of boundary-brokering, “in which

immigrants, encountering categorical boundaries that separate them from natives, do whatever they can to challenge, circumvent, or accommodate those divisions to advance their interests” (2010:16). They engage multiple theories of assimilation simultaneously, discussing how boundary blurring, segmented assimilation, ethnic enclaves, and transnationalism all might function simultaneously in changing immigrant identities. Changes in ethnic boundaries are largely regulated by the dominant ethnicity or class, however, and the recent wave of anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S. has not provided much forward movement in re-assessing the place of Latinos. The emphasis on institutional power in blurring ethnic boundaries is applicable to Spanish-language media, then, in some interesting but contradictory ways. Spanish-language media is itself an institution, and has been shaped by English language media institutions that de-prioritize Spanish speaking consumers. However, the increasing profitability of Spanish-language radio and other media gives an economic impetus towards separatism at the same time as it gives economic value to Latinos. Media, Regional Mexican radio included, becomes a sight for re-valuing the contributions of the Latino minority, and possibly shifting the boundaries that define “assimilation” and the “mainstream.”

INDUSTRY AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Without the work of audience research agencies the “Hispanic audience” would not exist as a national commercial phenomenon. Audience research conducted by national corporations like Arbitron is one of the first levels at which the idea of a Regional Mexican, or, more broadly, Hispanic audience is created, meaning that the

history and mechanism of formal audience research is crucial to understanding how Regional Mexican audiences are constructed as well. Formalized audience research is often viewed with some skepticism by programmers, and plays a less significant role in local station personnel's audience-targeting, but it fuels both advertising sales and managerial-level decision making. Research, then, is intertwined with if not determinate of programmers' audience constructions, and formal audience studies have often reflected the common knowledge and stereotypes that drive gut-instinct programming decisions shared at multiple levels of industry organization, helping to perpetuate these broadly outside of the industry as well.

Statistics like those currently supplied by Nielsen, for television, and Arbitron, for radio, were crucial in drawing advertisers' attention to Latino audiences in the 1980s, and still figure centrally in media sales presentations. Given the integral role research agencies play in generating profits for media companies, it is no surprise that the most powerful Spanish-language media conglomerates like Univision and SBS have taken great interest in audience counting methodologies. The companies have consistently argued that audience research methods developed to count Anglo-American audiences are insufficient for minorities, and have successfully lobbied for changes in these practices. In spite of the tensions between the two, audience research agencies and media companies exist in symbiosis. Media outlets do not get Nielson and Arbitron statistics for free: they subscribe. On the other hand, though they are devoted to conducting "independent" research, research agencies are also interested in keeping their clients, and Univision has used this power to advocate audience counting methods that include more

Latinos. English language radio began to adopt “scientific,” format-based programming model in the 1950s, but as I have detailed in previous chapters, this shift only occurred in the 1990s in Spanish-language radio.

Before this period, studies of the Hispanic audience were not produced by research companies, but by Spanish-language media providers. The Spanish International Network (SIN), which would become Univision in 1982, commissioned the first national-level study in 1979. Their research identified several key traits that are still attributed to Latino consumers today. Latinos are younger, and thus prime targets for developing brand loyalty; they have larger families and consequently buy more food and other goods; and Latinos speak Spanish and are more susceptible to advertisements in their mother tongue (Rodriguez 1999b:290). SIN used the study to sell their audience to then hesitant national advertisers. Prior to 1980, advertisers understood Latinos in terms of three distinct markets. In New York, Latinos were predominantly Puerto Rican, in Miami, they were Cuban, and in California and Texas, they were Mexican. Campaigns reflected this map of the market, and national advertisers like Budweiser, one of the first to target the Latino market, would produce ads with music and scenery meant to specifically target these three groups (Rodriguez 1999b:368). This advertising scheme did sometimes go awry; DJs and station owners from the pre-1990 period make jokes about radio ads featuring Celia Cruz that national ad agents sent to Texas stations. For them, these ads were a reminder about how little companies headquartered in New York or Miami understood about Texas Latinos (Tafoya 8/4/10). SIN’s efforts at national research, however, were the first steps in creating a pan-Latino audience. The company’s

size and dispersal across the U.S. made it advantageous to produce programming and advertisements that could air in any market. To achieve this, SIN stressed the characteristics that Latinos of different national backgrounds shared: youth, big families, and Spanish-language. The fact that SIN was responsible for both the first audience study, along with the Latino “character traits” used to create a Pan-Latino audience, demonstrates the power media producers have over the “scientifically” collected data about audiences.

Arbitron was originally created in 1949 to research television audiences, and only later added radio ratings to its product offerings. Competitor Nielsen edged Arbitron out of the television market, however, and in 1993 the company decided to work exclusively in radio. While Arbitron has scattered competitors, it is largely monopolistic in radio audience research. The company collects statistics in two primary ways: through diaries, and the Portable People Meter (PPM). Diaries have been the key collection method for most of Arbitron’s existence, and they are still used in many markets, including Austin. The company recruits participants by mail, and pays nominal amounts for participation. Participants receive a diary booklet in which they enter their daily listening, which stations they listened to, where, and for how long. This method has a few key problems, however. Firstly, few people are likely to remember their daily listening exactly or document it immediately. For example, most people flip through stations in the car, listening to a few songs on one, then on another, and so on. It is unlikely that they will capture the stations and time spent listening in full detail in a diary recorded hours if not days later. PPM was introduced in the early 1990s and though it has been adopted in

thirty-three U.S. markets, PPM ratings have yet to be fully integrated across the country. The Portable People Meter is a wireless device, about the size of a beeper, that participants wear all day. It picks up and records signals embedded in radio and television station transmissions, which themselves are transmitted by a device that Arbitron provides to clients.

Spanish-language media producers have long criticized Arbitron for under-representing Latinos in their research samples, and most recently, representatives of ethnic or minority medias have voiced concerns that their audiences are being undercounted by the new PPM technology. In 2008, ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Univision Communications, The Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies, Spanish Broadcasting System, The National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters and The Minority Media and Telecommunications Council formed the a lobby group called the PPM Coalition to protest inequalities in the PPM methodology. In the Winter of 2010, SBS reneged on a contract with Arbitron from 2008 and un-installed transmitter technology on its stations. Arbitron sued SBS, and the Supreme Court of New York issued a temporary injunction ordering SBS to reinstall transmitters. In spring of 2010, the PPM Coalition reached an agreement with Arbitron based on certain revisions, including disclosure of a previously disclosed engagement metric in 2010, increasing the PPM sample size for people 18-54 by approximately 10% by mid-2011, forming a minority leadership council in 2010 to bring the leadership of broadcasters and agency communities together, and expanding current initiatives directed toward advertiser outreach for minority radio. Spanish-language broadcasters continued to have concerns,

though. By summer, Univision had decided not to encode in PPM, pulling itself out of Arbitron ratings in PPM markets. Clear Channel and Cumulus also dropped Arbitron, both taking their business to Nielsen's radio ratings arm.

These disagreements over scientific methodologies in audience measurement may explain the extent to which Spanish-language media players feel that they are forced to rely upon other, more intuitive and interactive modes of audience research. But they also indicate that the importance of official audience research lies primarily in the business side of radio, rather than programming. Indeed, Univision's initial abstention from PPM counting was a tactic to lobby for greater representation of Latinos, and the politics of official audience research are a matter of life or death for Regional Mexican stations in particular. Latinos have been historically undercounted in audience research, and if Arbitron does not make a special effort to be more representative in their survey samples, Regional Mexican radio will appear to have fewer listeners than it actually does. Thus, station managers and owners have been charged with proving that their audience, or their potential audience of Spanish-speakers, exists in order persuade Arbitron to make changes.

Smaller companies, whose abstention would pose no serious loss to Arbitron, did not necessarily take the same stance on the new ratings technology that was taken by Univision. For BMP San Antonio General Manager Lance Hawkins, Univision's refusal to encode was a boon, since his stations' rankings jumped with his primary competitor out of the rating battle. Hawkins has embraced PPM, finding that it more accurately counts passing exposure to his stations. Anglophone listeners, for example, may be

exposed to a Spanish-language station when they have lunch at a local taqueria. With diary counting, they would not likely have noted this, but with PPM they are counted. BMP San Antonio Program Director Alfonso Flores mirrored his boss's favorable view of PPM, pointing out the flaws with the diary method:

A Hispanic listener will have the radio tuned all day long. But on the dial, lets say in a family of four, a Spanish-speaker has two kids, one fourteen and one sixteen, the parents are not confident to provide any kind of personal information. So the radio station could be tuning Norteño all day long, because in Mexican families, in the kitchen there is a radio tuned all day long to the same radio station. But the young boy, because he's probably Tejano, he's probably going to write KXTN or KISS, or whatever is more appropriate to his lifestyle. But with the PPM, with this monitor, we notice that people are exposed to radio stations all day long (Flores 3/1/10).

With PPM encoding, BMP's stations' "cume," or cumulative number of different listeners over a given period, and "TSL," or total time spent listening were both growing.

Audience research affects advertising in an obvious way, but it also has an indirect impact programming decisions. From a sales perspective, it is easier to sell advertising time on a station that is at the top of its market. Research also shows the ages and genders of listeners, and in radio males in the 18-35 age bracket are the most valued consumers. Arbitron statistics allow competing stations to identify and monitor one another. Both within a single market and across the U.S., stations will consult Arbitron statistics to identify which stations are doing well, and then will consult playlist databases to see what kind of programming is earning that performance. The combination of audience research and the availability of national playlist information has fueled a

scientific approach to programming. These types of statistics make musical decisions predictable, and programmers add new music based on a detailed understanding of how those new songs are performing in other markets among specific audience segments. New stations are also launched with this level of national, detailed information on hand.

The construction of a national Hispanic audience, then, has been crucial to the development of Spanish-language media activities in local contexts, Regional Mexican radio included. Large Spanish-language media companies are still working for stronger Latino representation in formal audience research, and accurate counting can be a question of success or failure for Regional Mexican stations. In today's consolidated media climate if there is no national "audience," there are no advertising dollars. However, the role of formal research in local constructions of the Regional Mexican audience is less direct. On some level, the stereotypes about Mexican-Americans and Latinos that drive the interpretations of statistics made by national companies are the same assumptions that motivate local decision making. But programmers generally value their own experience and judgment, based on decades of personal interactions with audiences, over formalized research, and any given broadcast week will tack back and forth between the two sources of information.

RADIO EVENTS AND AUDIENCES

Special events provide the clearest window into the kind of people that make up radio station audiences. They also provide a crucial space for listeners and station personnel to interact with one another. Through events, listeners have the opportunity to

experience being part of an audience in a more tangible way, while radio station representatives emphasize certain of the traits they share, as tailored to the particular kind of event in question. Event attendees may also experience other types of group identity, as when outside reactions to these assemblies provoke participants to reflect upon their nature. Regional Mexican stations sponsor a large range of event types. They may be large, widely advertised concerts that attract devoted listeners, or they may consist only of a DJ broadcasting live from a tent set up in front of a supermarket, where curious passers-by make up the audiences. The range of intensely to vaguely interested event attendees reflects the stations' audiences, which include avid listeners as well as others who flip radio stations more casually. Many events mix these two audiences, and while they may bring different expectations, their very shared experience as addressees brings them to a mutual awareness of the things they share.

The "Idolito del Pueblo" (The People's Little Idol) competition, organized by Univision Austin's radio and television stations in Fiesta supermarket parking lots across the city, attracted a mix of casual onlookers doing their Saturday shopping and contest entrants, consisting of children whose parents must have heard about the singing competition on the radio well in advance. Attendees interacted closely with the DJs and television personalities that adjudicated the competition, reinforcing broadcast personalities status as minor celebrities, but also their accessibility to local listeners. By contrast a Celso Piña concert at an Austin nightclub, sponsored by Univision radio, also attracted some devout station listeners and other attendees who were fans of the musical act, or were simply looking for something to do on a Friday night. Some of Piña's music

has become standard at clubs catering to Mexican-Americans and has consequently been featured on late night live remote broadcasts, but his music is not typical Regional Mexican fare. While the stations promoted the event heavily, they were noticeably absent on the night of the concert. However, an on-site DJ affiliated with the club helped to musically incorporate Piña's music by playing Regional Mexican standards between live sets. Here also, a sense of common experience of harassment among a very diverse audience was more properly fostered by means of a police raid at the nightclub, which created a kind of *communitas* among the diverse clubgoing audiences that was not otherwise convincingly registered in the music they heard. This mixture of different kinds of audiences with different levels of interest is characteristic of Regional Mexican stations. It is through their emplacement at the heart of such community-building activities that stations actively shape listenerships into "audiences," social entities that otherwise, would not exist as such.

"Idolito del Pueblo"

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in April, Univision Austin's two radio stations and television channel had set up camp in the parking lot in front of the Fiesta grocery store at the busy intersection of Interstate-35 and Stassney Lane. Three portable canvas awnings and two vans, all emblazoned with logos for one of the three Univision entities marked a boundary around a small platform stage, taking up about a quarter of the parking lot. One of the vans was completely covered with the La Que Buena logo, the more popular of the two radio stations. The logo consists of a flag-like red, green and white back-drop, along

with a picture of the syndicated morning-show host Piolín covering fully half of the vehicle. Two plush costumed children's entertainers, impersonating guitar-shaped cartoon characters, flanked the stage, dancing throughout the event and definitively marking it as a youthful occasion.

About thirty people lingered in the parking lot encampment while the promotions team organized the contestants for the day's event, a youth singing competition called "Idolito del Pueblo." This afternoon's competition was part of a series of runoff competitions, held every weekend for two months in grocery store parking lots across the city. Each weekend judges from the stations' ranks of on air personalities would choose one young contestant to compete in a competition at Univision's large upcoming Cinco de Mayo celebration. The winner of the competition would win a trip to Disneyland for a family of four. On this Saturday, an unidentified emcee entertained the crowd while the children signed up for contest and were pinned with large contestant numbers. They got in order and cued up the music, while three judges settled in their places under one of the awnings, chatting with members of the crowd.

When the organizers finished tidying up the details of the show, there were a total of fifteen entrants, ages four to twelve. Before each one performed, the emcee would ask the child's name, age, and where they were from. Some sang over karaoke tracks, others a capella, and others competed over tracks that included vocals. Each contestant sang only a minute or so of their song, and received comments from the judges, interspersed with frequent applause from the crowd. Performances varied quite a bit according to the child's age, experience, and skill. Some sang loudly and well, some could barely be

heard, some had dance routines and costumes while others did not. Musical selections were tremendously varied.

Savannah, the first contestant, was 10 years old. She appeared to be Anglo with fair skin and light-brown hair, and wore a white church dress with a black belt and black headband. She evidently spoke some Spanish but was not fully confident in her interactions with the emcee, and when she announced her song choice, a country tune called “Our Song” there was quite a bit of back and forth before the judges and emcee were sure they had heard the title correctly. There was a little delay in starting the instrumental CD track for her selection, and Savannah got off to a bad start and had to stop for nerves. The judges were warm, though, and encouraged her to start over—she gave more confident performance the second time. The audience applauded at the end of the song, and the 3 judges took turns giving comments on the performance. Even though the performance did not demonstrate a lot of technical talent, really the judges were uniformly supportive, complimented her on her dress, and told her she did a good job. After more applause, solicited by the judges and the emcee, Savannah stepped backstage and waited for the rest of the performances.

The second contestant was a five year old by the name of Leonel, dressed sharply in the vaquero style clothing of a Regional Mexican pop star: he wore blue jeans, a black western shirt with an asymmetrical grey pattern, a little black cowboy hat, brim bent up at the sides, and boots. He was chubby-cheeked and adorable, the crowd commented on how cute he looked in his vaquero outfit. When he announced he would sing the then number one Regional Mexican radio hit, Banda Los Recoditos’ “Ando Bien Pedro,” the

emcee immediately knew the song. Leonel sang a capella, and while it was a little difficult to make out the melody for some of the verses, he shouted out the recognizable chorus, confidently winning the crowd over. He also gave a shout out to the Mexican state of Guanajuato at the end of his performance. As with the first performer, the judges complimented him on his outfit and only had nice things to say, an act that itself marked this event as something less than a competition, something more like a community event.

The third contestant, Stephanie, was seven years old and sang “Veronica” over a grupero instrumental track. The fourth contestant, Daisy, raised eyebrows when she announced she would sing “Como Tu Mujer,” in the audience mothers chuckled as the tiny eight year old sang the classic song about the pains of adult love. Another nine year old contestant sang “Los Laureles” over a mariachi backtrack. While she was quite out of tune, she perfectly mimicked the stage-pacing, hand gestures, and punctuating emotional wails of a professional mariachi performance. The emcee commented that this was a difficult song to sing, and she did a good job trying. A four year old male contestant also got some chuckles as he sang about a treacherous woman with the selection “Ojos Negros.” A ten year old in a sequined tunic and black leggings dropped low to the stage and wiggled her hips to Madonna’s “Music.” A nine year old girl sang a reggaeton selection: she knew the complicated lyrics well, and the emcee jumped in to stop her after about two minutes, one of the longer performances for the event.

A crowd of about fifty accumulated over the course of the event, mostly of families with small children, and often with an older relative. The performances took about an hour and a half, after which the judges selected four finalists: Leonel and

Stephanie were the audience favorites. The audience voted for two semifinalists by clapping for their favorite, and then again for a finalist. Stephanie, who by far had the most put-together performance of the afternoon, won the chance to compete in final competition at the Cinco de Mayo event. The other contestants were encouraged and told to come to the contest next weekend, to be held in a different Fiesta parking lot, for another chance to make it into the finals. All the kids were very good sports, and none seemed too disappointed in not winning. The winner took photos with her family and with the dancing guitar cartoon characters as the Univision team rapidly broke down the tents, stage and sound equipment.

Events like “Idolito del Pueblo” create important links between radio station personnel and their listeners, and they also reveal shared assumptions about the meaning of Regional Mexican radio. One aspect made very clear at this particular event is that Regional Mexican radio is family-oriented. The mature content of some of the songs and banter aired on Regional Mexican radio does not make it inappropriate for families: listeners take this mix of adult sensibility and family social environment in stride, as they did the adult-themed songs interpreted by two of the young contestants. This does not mean that audiences will accept any content as family-appropriate, but these guidelines are in part negotiated through events like this. In spite of the fact that DJs may make a raunchy joke on an afternoon talk program or play a violent narcocorrido, they also can interact with listeners and their children in a very respectful, family friendly environment. Listeners are not shy about telling DJs what they like and do not like about radio

programs when they meet them at these events. As one DJ remarked, “Regional Mexican listeners are very brutal—they’ll be honest.” (Ulloa 5/4/10). Stations ride a fine line between catering to families and to the young, single, club-going listeners who also make up a large segment of their audience. Events like “Idolito” and the Cinco de Mayo event the company hosted a few weeks later help to maintain this balance. Unlike television stations or, for the most part, English language radio stations, Regional Mexican stations create events for Mexican-American families where there otherwise might be none. And even as stations cater to younger audiences in some respects, families rely on the stations to serve as centers for community social life.

The variety of genres performed in the competition and the contestants’ personal backgrounds reveal a rapidly assimilating audience that is still tied to their parents’ strong Mexican identity, through events like these and, quite likely, through listening to the radio. Participants chose songs from Regional Mexican radio and classic Mexican ballads along with country, reggaeton and pop. The event was held entirely in Spanish, and it was evident that while they understood, many of the children did not speak Spanish well, some even speaking with a noticeable “American” accent. The first contestants’ ambiguous ethnicity demonstrates the full reach of Regional Mexican radio: the girl could easily be taken for Anglo-American, she sang a country song—a genre typically associated with White middle-America, and was uncomfortable speaking in Spanish. But there she was, competing in an event she or her parents had to know would be largely in Spanish. It is unlikely that she would attend this event unless some close relative or family friend was comfortable navigating the event in Spanish, but her ethnicity, at first

glance, could be easily disputed. Of course, the event was also promoted on the Univision television station, which targets the broadest possible spectrum of Spanish speakers. However, Univision's television affiliate in Austin rarely features local advertising or programming, while promotion on the radio station was frequent. This example counters what most Regional Mexican producers say about their listeners: while they suggest that their listeners are recent immigrants with closer ties to Mexico than Anglo-America, many of the young people showed American cultural identities as well in their performances. The event provided its attendees with the opportunity to feel like part of Univision's Regional Mexican audience, but highlighted some aspects of their audience construct more than others based on the context. For "Idolito" attendees, being part of a Regional Mexican audience means spending time with your family, and it can mean being more "American" than Mexican as well.

Celso Piña, Club Rumba Disco

By 10:30 pm, a line of about twenty people trailed out the door of the Austin nightclub Rumba Disco. Rumba Disco occupies one storefront in a strip mall of pawn shops, Latin groceries, and other small businesses in East Riverside, a neighborhood notorious for "high" crime rates and its large Latino population. By national comparison, there are no truly dangerous neighborhoods in Austin, but a handful of stabbings and other non-violent crimes, especially centered around the three or four nightclubs dotting East Riverside Drive, have earned the area a bad reputation. Rumba Disco hosts Mexican Regional radio station events nearly every night of the week, with different stations

laying claim to each night on a rotating schedule. Despite the club's relatively small size, with a capacity of no more than five hundred spectators at a time, it is also a major destination for Regional Mexican touring acts. Tonight, a Friday in late May 2010, the featured attraction was accordionist Celso Piña, famous for spearheading a new vallenato-infused cumbia sound in Monterrey, Mexico's contemporary youth culture.

Piña is not a typical Regional Mexican act; he does not fit easily into the format's generic trinity of banda, norteño and ranchera. His music is, however popular in clubs, and it may be heard occasionally on Regional Mexican night-time live remotes broadcast from clubs. Cumbia is an important style in Mexican-American music, but Piña's music marks a departure from the grupera and tejano cumbias that have been popular in Texas for decades. He has been a cornerstone of the Monterrey cumbia scene since the 1980s, but it was his 2001 album, *Barrio Bravo*, with its hit single "Cumbia Sobre El Rio," featuring a guest appearance by Control Machete, that gained international attention. The track mixed reggae, rap, and Piña's more folkloric Colombian cumbia vallenato background. The Latin Alternative, urban, youth culture surrounding Piña's music in Monterrey is a far cry from the rural, adult-oriented Mexican aesthetic represented in most Regional Mexican radio. However, as an important Mexican artist visiting Austin, he was likely to gain some media sponsorship. Since Regional Mexican stations are the only Spanish-language stations in town, they picked up the opportunity.

Regardless of a certain incongruity between Piña's music and Regional Mexican standard fare, the Univision radio stations La Que Buena and La Jefa were sponsors and avid promoters of the concert. The stations posted the event on their website, announced

it regularly on air, and gave away a few sets of tickets through on air call ins and raffles, facilitated by roving promotional vans. In spite of the stations' promotional efforts, it is remarkable how little information was available about event details. The stations give a telephone number to call for more information, but exact performance times and the amount of the cover charge were not readily available. For the twenty or so people waiting outside the club that night, these details were still a mystery.

At 10:30, it was unclear why the club was asking patrons to wait outside. A handful of people were visible inside the club, drinking beers at tables around a dance floor, so the club was evidently open. A blond, English-speaking bouncer stood outside, asking those waiting to stand against the club wall, rather than trail out into the parking lot as the line nearly doubled in size. Eventually the line started moving. A cashier behind a thick glass wall charged \$25 apiece for admission to the club, and more bouncers patted down male guests for weapons as they passed inside. The owner of the club hung out near the door along with the bouncers, speaking English, in contrast to the cashier and the largely female bar and wait staff, who spoke primarily in Spanish.

The club was dark and low-ceilinged, with a stained carpet that smelled like it had seen a lot of drink spills and sweaty dancing. The stage, in front of a dance floor that took up about a third of the space in the club, faced the front door, alongside a small bar at the back. Mirrors lined the walls, tall tables with stools occupied the area between the bar and the dance floor, and a few booths lined the wall on the far side of the stage. DJ Megabass, identified only by a deep-voiced, highly processed sound bite played between tracks, entertained the growing crowd with sets of about five songs each in a series of

rotating genres. First he played cumbia, then duranguense, and finally tierra caliente—prominently featuring the Regional Mexican group of the moment, El Trono de México, and later norteño and cumbia again. This mix is typical of Regional Mexican club nights at dance clubs across town: the DJ played exactly what he would play on any Univision-sponsored evening, regardless of its stylistic incongruity with this particular headliner. Three or four couples circled the dance floor to the cumbia set, and a different set of couples came on for the duranguense/tierra caliente set, marking differing musical preferences of the varying taste communities present. Televisions around the perimeter of the club showed music videos that only occasionally synced up with the music being played. If the DJ played Los Tigres del Norte, Los Tigres also appeared on the TVs, but the video might be of a different song, and might extend into a subsequent song by a different artist. At first glance, nothing in the club announced the Univision radio stations' participation in the event. The DJ was not affiliated with Univision and did not mention either of the stations: in fact, he did not speak at all. Because the event was a concert and, one would assume, subject to intellectual property considerations, it was not being broadcast on either of the stations. There did not appear to be any station signage at first glance, but from the dance floor two small signs, one each for La Que Buena and La Jefa were visible on the far right wall.

The crowd grew from fewer than fifty people around 10:30 PM to about three hundred at midnight. It would be impossible to describe a typical audience member. A dozen or so cowboy hats were visible atop the crowd, but none of the audience sported the slick vaquero dress common at other Regional Mexican events. Most men wore jeans

and polo shirts, and women were moderately dressy in jeans. There seemed to be equal numbers of men and women, and the age range was wide, ranging from spectators in their early twenties to those in their forties, nearly evenly distributed along the continuum.

Around 11:00 PM the opening band, San Antonio's Tropicalisimo Barrio, came on and opened with a few very fast cumbias, almost too fast to dance to. Because of the tempo they had a tropical feel, bordering on merengue. They played some hits, like Sonora Dinamita's "Mil Horas," and towards the end of the set played more ballads. The crowd seemed to like the band, and the dance floor stayed crowded, if not packed. There were a few different interpretations of cumbia dancing spinning around the floor, including the calmer, straight-faced, simple tejano style, as well as flashier dancers who incorporated elaborate spins. All ten band members were on stage, dressed in white dress shirts, black ties and black vests, with jeans. The *guiro* player also served as *animador*, encouraging the audience to dance and cheer. The group executed a couple of coordinated dance moves on stage, were very energetic, and sounded very tight. They transitioned easily in and out of breaks, combining cumbia, salsa, and other pop styles, and presented a very professional image, as if they were used to playing together.

Towards the end of the set, I went outside for some fresh air, since it was hot in the club, there were no fans, and the AC was on low. In the distance, I heard another Sonora Dinamita song from inside the club, and as I wondered if it was another cover or an original recording—it turned out to be a recording—I noticed a group of about 5 police officers and two cameramen, standing by a couple of police cars in the parking lot.

I figured they were on duty in the neighborhood and were taking a break, since they were chatting casually and displayed no sense of urgency. Other police officers gradually joined them, however, and all at once a group of about ten police officers, a couple of fire marshals, and two video cameramen headed towards the club together. They walked past security with little comment, the guards and ticket cashier nodding at them as they walked.

As soon as they walked in the door, the fire marshals headed straight to a curtained-off area between the bar and the ticket window, and peeked behind the sloppily-hung red curtain. I could see a drum set stashed in the dark but roomy area, but could not tell exactly what the officials were looking for. Later, the news reported that unlicensed construction was going on in this area, and the club was fined. The police officers dispersed among the crowd. A couple of officers asked a group of three young women sitting at a table to show their IDs – they did, seeming more indignant than alarmed. The rest of the police combed the crowded dance floor area, asking for identification. I recalled that when I came in the club no one asked for my ID or for any of my companions' IDs. It would have been easy for a minor, or someone without a U.S. drivers license to pass into the club.

After only five minutes or so, I saw one officer plow through the crowd and then out of the club escorting a man of about thirty, the officer holding the man's wrists behind his back. They took him out to the police car and searched him, and took him away after about 15 minutes of searching and questioning. The man almost seemed to be smiling in a "you caught me" kind of way as he was heading out, but he did not seem

afraid or angry, maybe only a little sardonic. Later, local news coverage revealed he was caught in the middle of a cocaine deal in the restroom: he had tried to flush the drugs down the toilet unsuccessfully as the police came in. Outside, another young woman was being questioned by the police: it seemed she was underage.

As mentioned above, however, the Celso Piña concert was not a “typical” Regional Mexican event. The crowd included a dozen or so politically active Latino graduate students, as well as journalists and other professionals who usually attend “Latin alternative” music events. This group immediately pegged the police intrusion as racial profiling, and began interrogating the police about their motives. The officers claimed the search was routine, that police conduct random searches at bars all across town. As a rather social bunch well familiar with the Austin music and bar scene, no one in the crowd outside could remember seeing anything like this raid before, especially not in the bars frequented by Anglos on Sixth Street and other areas of town.

At first it had been unclear why a camera crew had followed the police into the club. Now, the camera operators pulled out microphones with television station logos, revealing their status as part of the media. One of the reporters said that the police had called the stations to alert them of the raids, and the media crews were following the police from club to club along East Riverside. The reporter had never heard mention of similar raids in other areas of town either. Two news small news teams, one with a single camera operator and one with an additional reporter, interviewed some of the club goers, focusing on the evidently outraged Latin alternative crowd as the police prepared to leave. When they were ready, one police officer waved to the camera crews and they both

trotted off to their cars, ready to follow the group to the next raid. As they left, one of the bouncers outside complained that the police had been conducting these raids every week for two months. Other bystanders recalled they had heard the raids announced in the news earlier that day: they were, it was said, organized in response to the recent murder of a Cuban bouncer in the area. News reports from two local stations airing the next day revealed the official motive for the raids: the police claimed to be checking to see if bartenders were over-serving customers, leaving them vulnerable to crime.

Back inside the club, DJ Megabass spun a norteño set composed entirely of megastars Los Tigres del Norte and Ramon Ayala. After about thirty minutes, Celso Piña took the stage. The crowd rushed to the dance floor, first to take pictures and videos on their phones, then to dance. Bouncers circulated throughout the club checking for hand stamps and enforcing a policy barring drinks on the dance floor. Nevertheless, the heightened air of surveillance that hung after the police raid and through the hands-on approach of the bouncers, did not disrupt concert-goers, who danced and enjoyed the show. Celso played his hits first, followed by a more traditionally-inspired vallenato set, while dancers moved around the floor in a circle. As during the first band's set, some couples danced cumbia in an understated style more closely associated with tejano music, others showed off fancy turns and spins, and others stumbled over dance partners trying to teach them the basics. Towards the back of the floor, though, outside of the rotating wheel of dancers, a group of between five and ten younger audience members in their early twenties formed their own dance circle. They were dressed in baggy or low-slung jeans, or khakis and basic t-shirts in *cholo* style, and danced low to the ground, rotating around their small circle with

moves drawn from reggae and ska--in other words, in the *chuntaro* style of dancing that marks cumbia youth culture in Monterrey. The crowd danced until the club closed at 2:00 AM.

There is no question that Univision would like to count all of the people who came to the Celso Piña concert among their Regional Mexican audience, but it is unlikely that all of the guests would identify themselves as such. The range of ages, styles of dress and dancing, and of reactions to the police intrusion highlighted the different taste communities present at the event. Celso Piña's more contemporary urban cumbia sound is an extreme on the Regional Mexican musical spectrum, which holds more rurally-identified genres such as banda, norteño, and ranchera at its center. However, the selection of a local opening band with a more Regional Mexican style, and the DJ's between-set playlists, both drew Piña and his listeners into sonic connection with the format's core genres. Radio station sponsors La Que Buena and La Jefa were noticeably under-represented at the event, but played an important role in advertising it. The limited branding and sparse information that they provided demonstrates an informality in the way that radio station promotions and club events are organized, but these stations work to brand events, even if they are allowed only minimum access. Audiences tolerate less detailed information about events because of the limited number of venues and events targeted towards them, and because they are accustomed to the less specific information offered by radio advertising, as compared to, say internet promotions. Finally, the police raid of the club reveals the antagonistic relationship between local authorities and

Regional Mexican audiences. The opacity of official police motives created an aura of ambiguity around their relationship with this group, but they are also designed to create legally justifiable reasons for sustained surveillance. Audiences' un-alarmed reaction to this monitoring demonstrated both an acceptance of its inevitability, and a disdain for its real intent.

The concert provided Univision with the opportunity to bring new groups of listeners with different taste preferences into the Regional Mexican fold. On one hand, it is possible to read the decision to promote the concert on Regional Mexican radio as stereotyping Piña's fans as recent, working class immigrants just as the police had. Univision may have assumed that just because the artist was Mexican, dropping him into a prefabricated Regional Mexican club going experience would be appropriate. At this event, different attire, styles of dance, and choices about which kinds of music to dance to indicate a number of different taste communities were present. Musically, the DJ's sets anchored this more generically ambiguous event within a Regional Mexican context, and served to incorporate individuals who may not self-identify as Regional Mexican listeners in that audience.

While it is true that Univision had no other format in Austin to act as promoter and host of the event, the fact that they were able to stretch the definition of Regional Mexican and its audience to accommodate Piña's performance is characteristic of the format's overall flexibility, as discussed in Chapter Four. Piña is moderately popular with Regional Mexican audiences, and popular with a broader Mexican and Mexican-American audience. It costs stations little to promote an event like this one, especially

since stations also have standing relationships with clubs that encourage collaboration. This combination of Regional Mexican with Latin alternative and other audiences, though somewhat unusual, was neither problematic nor a departure from stations' normal strategies. Stations mix whatever works and experiment to find new programming strategies: they are not concerned about occupying ambiguous territory, at least in the temporary and insulated space of a single event.

While this flexibility can be seen as a positive, Regional Mexican's effort to be a catch-all also adds to an aura of confusion manifested here in the lack of specific details provided about the concert before hand. Radio was the primary vehicle for advertising the event. Because radio ads pass by quickly and listeners are often listening casually, and because it is unlikely anyone would remember or write down the full specifics of an event as communicated on the radio, listeners are often content with partial information. Hearing about the event, catching the venue, the artist and the day is enough. Listeners are not confirming information online, radio is their most important source of entertainment information. No one waiting in line knew how much entrance to the event would cost, when the club would start admitting guests, or when the various acts would go on. This lack of information is more or less common for club events, it is rare to know exactly when each band will go on stage, but the lack of specifics on cover fee or the time doors would open was a little unusual. La Que Buena and La Jefa had also advertised on air that women would be admitted free before 10:30 PM, but this turned out not to be the case at the club. This misinformation, and waiting at the door to find out that tickets were

\$25, a somewhat steep cover charge was not problematic for the attendees because of the looser networks of information covering the Regional Mexican scene.

Mexicans and Mexican-Americans who listen to Regional Mexican radio know that they live in a political environment where immigrants are judged with suspicion, and which often equates Mexican ethnicity with illegal immigration. The appearance of the police at Rumba Disco the night of the concert was not a unique experience of public surveillance for attendees, many of whom are accustomed to being viewed with suspicion and consequently both wary and indigent. While the police claimed to take public security as their first priority—preventing drunk club patrons from potential property theft and violent crime—most members of the audience immediately assumed the raid had to do with immigration. The police excuse was a somewhat hard to believe for many, insofar as law enforcement generally focuses on catching criminals rather than identifying potential victims. They were certainly within their rights in monitoring the club's building codes, checking for underage drinking, and, when they came across the drug deal in the bathroom, they were entitled to arrest its perpetrator. The fact that similar raids almost never take place in non-Latino bars, however, suggests other motives. And the fact that, regardless of what the police team's official motives may have been, the patrons of the club uniformly understood that the raid was racially motivated conditioned their understanding of the situation, reinforcing the perception that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans will always be under tight watch.

The camera crews added another layer to the question of surveillance. While police represent government surveillance, the television news reporters represent a public

gaze. Cameras helped to strengthen the police's position, protecting them from claims of inappropriate behavior by providing the trappings of transparency. Television news stations are also interested in the raid for the ratings the footage can bring to their own stations. Narration of the story showed one thing: police preserving public safety, looking out for the residents of Austin's rougher neighborhoods. The visuals showed another though. Footage of police officers questioning Latinos demonstrates that local authorities are working to control the "immigration situation." Concerned viewers, whose suspicions have been raised by the recent onslaught of conservative rhetoric against immigration are assuaged by the images of surveillance of Latinos, while at the same time they are absolved of criticisms of racism or violation of human rights by a protectionist narrative.

CONCLUSION

The "Regional Mexican Audience" is an idea constructed at multiple levels for different purposes. Arbitron's recognition of a national Hispanic audience is crucial for Regional Mexican radio's survival: without sufficient lobbying to convince Arbitron of the groups' existence they would be lost in distorted statistics. However, the parameters of the audience created by national research agencies do not exactly match that of local programmers, who trust their firsthand experiences more than official research. But even as radio programmers draw on decades of experience and personal interactions with listeners, they too are imagining the audience, attributing overarching characteristics to a diverse group. Stations are able to encourage individual listeners to feel like part of their audience through public events, a cornerstone of the Regional Mexican format. Both

passive and active Regional Mexican radio consumers attend the concerts and supermarket parking lot live remote broadcasts that stations use both to identify and involve their current and potential listeners. At some events stations are more present, and attendees have the opportunity to interact more closely with radio station personalities. Univision's "Idolito del Pueblo" created a community where one did not exist before, with DJs, television broadcasters, and corporate branding as a center. A family oriented event, "Idolito" drew avid listeners and intrigued passers by into this created community. Regional Mexican "audience" was being actively created at this event. The Celso Piña concert drew together an even more diverse group of attendees into a more subtly labeled Regional Mexican audience. Radio hits played during the breaks helped to sonically brand a concert with a more broad appeal as "Regional Mexican." The group attending the concert, in spite of their socio-economic if not ethnic diversity, also shared the common experience of government surveillance during the police raid at the concert. Regional Mexican radio advertising was largely responsible for assembling the audience, but the police intrusion reminded attendees that they share more than media consumption; they are also an ethnic group under racially motivated public and legal suspicion. Audience is at its root an industry construct, and experiences of media consumption are more individual and more varied than predictable or "typical." Events like these demonstrate how fractured and diverse the Regional Mexican audience can be, but they also show how radio can become a focal point for actual collective experience.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The discourses that surround the U.S. immigration debate too frequently exclude the voices of immigrants themselves, and focus instead on racialized and isolationist rhetoric that does not acknowledge the complexity of the issue. Proponents of tightened immigration control portray foreign nationals like Mexicans as recent, unwanted intruders disrupting a stable, cohesive American social fabric to which they are alien, ignoring the generations upon generations of predecessors that have made the U.S. the diverse and complicated society it is. Opponents also focus on the U.S.-Mexico border as the primary symbol of illegal immigration and the failures of national security. Because the majority of immigrants who cross this border, illegally or legally, are either Mexican or Central Americans who have traveled through Mexico, the broader concept of “immigration” becomes racially marked, as non-white and Latino. And too often, media images reduce the real complexity of the issue, failing to recognize the broader failures of U.S. immigration policy, ignoring other methods of entry, and overlooking the multitude of nationalities and ethnicities that make up today’s immigrants..

If much mainstream media reportage tends to essentialize immigrant and Latino identities, Spanish-language media seems to provide a space for more nuanced representations. Television, print media, and radio in Spanish may not be entirely controlled by Latinos, but an increased number of Latino cultural workers in the industry, combined with a drive to capture the attention of Latino audiences, is creating a more hospitable environment for debating and defining the place of Latinos in U.S. society.

Here, multiple experiences and points of view may come to engage one another, producing a more realistic debate over the present experience and future development of an American society fundamentally shaped by immigration. Radio has proved to be an especially open area for constructing and testing new identities, because of its relatively low production costs and because of its close ties to local listening communities. And Regional Mexican radio, as the most popular contemporary Spanish-language radio format, best illustrates the ongoing oscillation between nationalized versions of Latino commercial ethnicity and local community, a key space within which Latino lives are currently shaped.

This is because radio workers, as part and parcel of their everyday activities, seek to resolve competing demands between the music promoted by national conglomerates, and the evolving tastes of their local listenerships. Programmers understand Regional Mexican audiences primarily as a composite of listeners from different states in Mexico, and in creating playlists they select music associated with those regions most strongly represented in the local market. In order to do this successfully, they monitor population shifts, through personal contact with audiences at live remote broadcasts, and through word of mouth. Their “local” selections, however, are not recorded by local musicians: rather are chosen from a pool of nationally popular music. Thus, the national interests in the music industry define the musical parameters from which stations craft localized identities. As gatekeepers, however, programmers do retain some control over the success or failure of particular songs and artists, and if programmers across the country decide that a particular song will not appeal to their audiences, it will become difficult for that

song or artist to succeed. However indirect the process may be, then, it is programmers' assessment of changing market trends and demographics that influences the notion of "the Latino market" relied upon by the national industry.

In this way, Regional Mexican radio becomes an important communication technology mediating the relation between those who seek the Latino market and the changing communities which constitute that market. Demographics do not bear easy, one-to-one relations with music genres, no matter how much the music industry would like to believe this is true. Rather, regional identity, generation, age, gender and class become linked with musical styles over decades of association and industry work. To really understand how Regional Mexican radio's combination of different musical genres taps into Latino identity, then, we need to understand how the industry is structured, how the history of individual genres impacts their social meaning, and how genre and format themselves function. In Chapter Two have argued that the structure of the Spanish-language radio industry, and the organization of individual companies and stations, together determine the rules by which programming is created, thus influencing its effect within the local listening environment. In Chapter Three, I suggested that the radically different structure of the Tejano music industry from the close of World War II to the 1980s created an environment for broad experiments in radio programming. Such historical perspective allows us to see how radio programming adapted to address the changing composition and identity of Latinos in Texas, a trend that is still evident today. Chapter Four broke down the component parts of radio programming – individual songs and genres - to demonstrate how these match with programmers' understanding of their

audience. Chapter Five, however, showed that in spite of programmers' efforts to understand their audiences, much of their work is directed toward creating a sense of "audiencehood" for listeners who consider themselves primarily as unique individuals. Audience definition, in fact, , shows a cyclical relationship between national level radio producers, who identify their listeners as minority immigrants, and local programmers, who, on some level, encourage their listeners to feel like a minority, and like immigrants. And radio's work in defining a distinct vision of minority immigrant experience can be viewed positively or negatively. On one hand, consciousness of this identity can foster an awareness of the injustice of the prevailing social order and a willingness to work for change. On the other, it may be that commercialization of Latino identity encourages listeners to "stick to their own," and accept social stratification.

While several scholars have examined the social impact of Spanish-language media in the United States, this dissertation is unique in its effort to explore the connections between national and local levels of organization. Corporate structure affects cultural output at multiple levels, and, as I have suggested, the interaction between these different structural tiers provides a mechanism for negotiating commercial ethnic identity. The work of mediators at different levels of this structure, then, has a significant public impact. Further, as humans with all their irregularities and personal motivations, mediators' specific kinds of influence are highly individualized,. In Regional Mexican radio, local programmers constitute a living link between real audiences and corporate

decision making. They exert their influence using tools that are prescribed by the industry structure—nationally circulated playlist databases and audience research reports—but the ways that they interact with listeners, and the ways that they interpret their audiences’ needs can vary from programmer to programmer. Such a situation is likely to recur in other sites of cultural mediation, demanding greater attention to the choices that they make, a kind of attention that is best provided through institutional ethnography.

The limited scholarship that exists on Tejano music and on Mexican(-American) music has largely overlooked the relationship between the two, but as I have argued here, further attention to this area yields insight into the probable future development of Texas-Mexican music and society alike. For instance, I have suggested that from a structural perspective, Tejano radio can be seen as a direct precursor to Regional Mexican radio, and a place from which to draw lessons about the course Regional Mexican radio. In both cases, radio has been closely entwined with the ongoing definition of musical genres and of the listening communities that “match” them. Tejano genres, and their representation on Tejano radio, adapted to the changing environment in which Mexican-Americans lived, adjusting to the heightened emphasis on assimilation experienced after the second World War, and a continued flow of immigrants from the north of Mexico, each of which had direct musical outcomes in the invention of *orquesta*, and the rising popularity of *norteño*, respectively. Likewise, the rise in contemporary popularity of *banda* and *duranguense* can be traced to shifts in sending sites. *Banda* became popular first in California when more immigrants began to come directly from rural areas, without stopping first in large cities in Mexico. Both the power of the West Coast media industry

and the continued migration of these individuals, many of whom spread out from California in search of better or more reliable work, influenced the broader distribution of the genre. Likewise, duranguense stemmed from a concentrated population of migrants from the state of Durango in Chicago, and, now, tierra caliente is poised for broader exposure as more and more immigrants arrive from Central Mexico. In spite of the class and generational conflict that exists between Tejanos and newer Mexican arrivals, it is crucial to understand that these two categories have influenced one another, in terms of musical style as well as patterns of media dissemination.

Within the already limited field of radio studies, format has received scant attention, even though it is a crucial mechanism by which programmers connect particular audiences to certain kinds of music. Understanding how format functions is interesting in and of itself, but format can also serve as a model investigating other mechanisms of cultural mediation. With the recording industry in peril over the introduction of electronic distribution, new ways of tying audiences to music are currently being developed. The format model suggests that listeners will be predisposed to consume music that falls within a relatively narrow range of genres, sharing certain musical and extramusical characteristics with a somewhat arbitrarily defined “core.” Websites that generate tailored playlists, like Pandora, and Genius, iTunes’s selective shuffle program, operate on the same principle. Even as radio becomes a smaller segment of commercial music consumption, the structure it has created for linking audiences to music remains a viable tool, and the way that it operates to co-categorize sound and

audience may provide insights even as its “home” technology becomes less central to the music industry.

Audiences are crucial to radio’s survival, but there is little research that has focused upon the means through which audiences are created. Industry-oriented studies tend to rest upon the false assumption that an “audience” is a discrete, bounded group of individuals whose characteristics and responses to media can be defined with relative ease, and then studied. Cultural studies approaches such as Ang’s influential model, by contrast, rightly recognize the individuality of media consumers, but fail to show how individualized understandings of audience members can lead to broader understandings of the industry. Here, I have shown how radio stations use live remote broadcasts and other community events to make independent-minded listeners feel like part of a group, tapping into existing group identities like race or immigrant experiences, and reifying their parameters and their content for their listeners and event attendees.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

By focusing on the state of Texas in this dissertation, I have added to a media literature that has focused too much on the more urban, more densely populated coastal regions of the U.S.. Indeed, much of Regional Mexican radio’s most powerful expansion is happening in rural, Midwestern, Southeastern, and mountain states, areas identified as “new gateways,” where small and medium-sized cities have seen dramatic increases in immigrant populations since the 1990s. In new gateways, stations inevitably reveal interethnic tension and misunderstanding, as they work to prove the viability of Spanish-

speaking audiences local advertisers, but they also provide a “lifeline” for listeners adjusting to new communities. Importantly, initial Spanish-language station offerings in new gateway communities typically adopt the Regional Mexican format. In spite of the exclusionary implications of the format’s name, in these smaller markets, programming draws on shared experiences of immigration and minority status to draw Central Americans and other Latino audiences. Research in these smaller communities would reveal the different tactics programmers take to include non-Mexican listeners, and how those listeners respond to the dominance of this medium, topics of particular interest as we continue to develop the notion of a “Pan-Latino” commercial identity in the U.S.

Small markets, however, have little impact on musical change, and there are real insights to be derived from studying Mexican Regional music in largely-overlooked larger markets as well. Los Angeles was the site of the first major innovations in Regional Mexican radio - the commercial reinvention of banda and norteño - but other markets, most notably Chicago, have been sites for innovation too. Home of the third largest Latino population in the U.S., Chicago was the point of departure for the most recent “new” Regional Mexican genre, duranguense. Duranguense is an example of a “local” genre, favored by Chicago’s immigrant population from Durango, that became a commercial hit across the U.S. and Mexico. One of my contacts in Austin worked as a DJ at Chicago’s La Ley in the early 2000s, the period during which duranguense was introduced on the radio, and has already provided insight into how the process took place. Because of the station’s success, its Program Director had near-complete control over introducing new genres, and those artists who have become the biggest names in the

genre got their start on La Ley. Research in Chicago would further show the process by which the genre was “discovered,” how it gained play outside of the city, and how local music scenes have fared after the music’s entrance in national markets.

Cross-promotion between radio and television is another fruitful area for further investigation. Univision is the most obvious example here: with interests in both television and radio, the company regularly promotes one medium via the other. Radio stations air advertisements for the network’s popular novelas, and television programs regularly feature guest appearances of popular music artists. The principle difference between the two media is the reach of their audiences. While radio ultimately caters to local audiences through specific formats, national television programming features a wider array of types of music to appeal to more diverse national audiences. It would be rare to hear a *bachata* artist on any of Austin’s current Spanish-language stations, but television programs regularly feature the genre. Originally a Dominican genre, *bachata* is popular throughout Latin American, including Mexico. However, in Mexico and in the U.S. it is part of the Spanish Contemporary Pop format, a format that has repeatedly failed in Austin and San Antonio. It is possible that television viewers tune out artists they find less relevant in their local communities, or view them as celebrities worthy of any of the celebrity adoration promoted on entertainment news and variety programming. Alternately, television may be a medium for promoting broader acceptance of genres that previously had limited or regional followings. Radio tends to follow such trends: if more Pop or other formats begin to appear across Texas, it may be that television is expanding the popularity of these genres and artists.

Based on historical evidence of other kinds of media in transition, it is unlikely that Regional Mexican radio will remain as flexible as it is today. I have argued that, as it stands, the format represents a borderlands rather than a transnational framework for identity construction, but it is likely that the increased consolidation of the media conglomerates that own these stations will cause a shift towards a more transnational model. As companies continue to negotiate content exchanges, operating agreements, and partial sales across national boundaries, using these discrete tactics to circumvent national media ownership regulations, it is likely that they will devise strategies to more easily replicate content in more markets, creating greater programming homogeneity. Regional and local companies that own these stations may be right in believing that audiences prefer localized programming strategies, but in a business environment that is increasingly hostile to smaller businesses, this may not matter. However, because radio is, compared to other kinds of mass media, relatively cheap and easy for audiences to access, it is likely that it will remain a site for change and commercial innovation.

New electronic means of music distribution will also play a role in the development of Regional Mexican radio, or, more broadly, or music media that target Mexican-Americans. While Latinos have traditionally been viewed as less technically savvy than Anglo consumers, new consumer studies are showing a shift in the rate of Latino technology adoption. Latinos are more likely than other consumers to access the web through mobile phones than any other group, and, according to a Scarborough research study, 22% of Latinos with cellular phones use them to download music, as opposed to only 15% of all wireless users (“Hispanics,” www.radio-info.com). Along

with increased use of texting and accessing social networking sites through smartphones, this figure make Latinos a very desirable target for new forms of music delivery. It remains to be seen, however, exactly how these delivery systems will take shape, and how they will segment and target this growing market.

Exploring new regions where Regional Mexican stations operate, and fleshing out its interaction with other forms of Spanish-language media would give more information on the format, as it stands today. As I have discussed throughout this dissertation, however, one of radio's most important traits is its quickness to change and adapt to new situations. Future research, then, must necessarily follow changes in the medium itself. It may be that in another five years Regional Mexican radio will be ousted by another format, or another type of music media all together. But following radio's rapid changes is surely one of the best ways to follow and understand the continual transformation of Mexican-Americans, and U.S. Latinos more broadly.

Appendix A: Tejano Programming Transcripts

Figure 1: KMXX Austin, DJ Victor Balderas

Afternoon Programming Excerpts, circa 1980

Song	Artist	Genre
Station ID, Pre-recorded female voice over conjunto tejano: Escuche música incomparable con su locutor más amable, nada menos que Octavio Víctor Balderas. No se pierda esta programación en la preferida, La doble “x,” su estación!		
[Listen to incomparable music with your friendliest DJ, none other than Octavio Victor Balderas. Don’t miss this program, on your favorite, double X, your station!]		
DJ Talk: Buenas tardes amable gentil auditorio. Aquí, estamos escuchando “Mosca Time” de vuelta. Estamos el día de hoy trabajando, mañana también voy a estar aquí, mañana en la tarde, así es de que estén al pendiente y de allí el día sábado y domingo, y así es que vamos a tener... [Singing:] Ya se va diciembre, ya es año nuevo... Saludando Armando Pérez, hoy por la tarde. Bonito potpourri de polcas de Domingo Zapata. [Grito]		
[Good afternoon, kind listeners. It’s “Mosca Time” again. We are working today, and tomorrow I’ll be here too, tomorrow in the afternoon. We hope you’ll be waiting out there on Saturday and Sunday, and we’re going to have...[Singing:] December’s almost over, it’s almost the New Year. Shout out to Armando Pérez, this afternoon. A pretty potpourri of polkas by Domingo Zapata. [Yells]		
Polka medley	Domingo Zapata	Conjunto tejano
DJ Talk: [Singing] En un rincón del alma, donde tengo la pena, que me dejó tu amor, da da da di da da dum, da di di da da dum... Ando por quererte. [Talk] Viene, Brown Express, saludando, hoy por la tarde a la familia Benavides. También por la familia, por acá, por acá, por acá... de Santos y Guadalupe Ochoa. [Over intro to next song] Mike y Aurelia Herrera. La familia Núñez, a Petra Méndez, a Virgi Ramírez.		
DJ Talk: In a corner of my soul, where I carry the sorrow, that you left me, my love... I go on to love you. [Talk] Here it comes, on the Brown Express, greetings, this afternoon to the Benavidez family, also for the family, umm... the Santos and Guadalupe Ochoa families, [over music] Mike and Aurelia Herrera. The Núñez family, to Petra Méndez, and Virgi Ramírez.		
(Unknown)	(Unknown)	Orquesta
DJ Talk: Que caro estoy pegando por quererte a luz, sale mama... A brindando más, más música. Estamos brindando música fuerte a través de Radio Alegría de Tabo Balderas. Brindando para ustedes su apreciable familia que siempre ha sido tan amable a través de tantos años, pues aquí hay cuatro años echando gritos y echando habladas y [singing] na-na-na-na. Pues no sabemos muchas veces ni lo que voy a programar pero como quiera. Parece que dicen que sale a toda muy bien. A mí no me crees dijo, aaaahhh, yo no fui fue-te-te... Pégale, pégale, dicen! Aquí, mira, los Torbellinos del Norte, “Por ningún motivo” mamá!		

<p>DJ Talk: How much it's costing me to love you out in the open. Giving you more, more music. We're giving you the greatest music on Radio Alegría with Tabo Balderas. Giving to you and your appreciable family who have always been so kind throughout the years, well, here are four years, with hollers, talk, and [songs]. Well, often we don't know what I'm going to play, but still, people say that it turns out really well. You don't believe me, it wasn't me. Hit it, hit it, they say. Here, Los Torbellinos, "Por Ningún Motivo" mamá!</p>		
Por ningún motivo	Los Torbellinos del Norte	Norteño
<p>DJ Talk: ¿Qué le parece? Bonita selección aquí con nada menos que Alejo Salinas y Los Torbellinos del Norte a través de Radio Alegría con Tabo Balderas. Vamos a pasar las noticias y luego volvemos aquí. Bien, el Grupo Salamanco en esto éxito del pasado, "El perico de oro" [Grito, mid-intro]</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: What did you think? Nice selection here with none other than Alejo Salinas y Los Torbellinos del Norte on Radio Alegría with Tabo Balderas. We're going to the news and then we'll be right back.</p>		
El perico de oro	Grupo Slamanco	Conjunto tejano
<p>DJ Talk: [Singing] ¿Quién te lo dijo, dulce amor mío, que te quería, quién te contó? No te crees de cuentos, ni de falsedades, ¿verdad? Entonces aquí, en "Radio Alegría" vamos a brindar una a selección que ha sido, pero, de las fuertes de Reinaldo Obregón. Tú sabes que aquí Reinaldo tiene un estilito muy sobresaliente. Y vamos a brindarla para todos que nos están escuchando hoy por la tarde en East Austin. Para usted y su familia, en especial, de parte de Tabo Balderas, y de Reinaldo Obregón y Radio Alegría.</p>		
<p>Who told you, my sweet love, that I loved you, who told you ? Don't believe stories or lies, right? Here on Radio Alegría, we are going to play a selection that has been one of the Reinaldo Obregón's most popular. You know that Reinaldo has a beautiful style. And lets dedicate this to everyone listening this afternoon in East Austin. For you and your families, especially, from Octavio Balderas, and Reinaldo Obregón and Radio Alegría.</p>		
Nubes, nubes, nubes, nubes	Reynaldo Obregón	Orquesta, waltz
<p>DJ Talk: Reinaldo Obregón aquí a través de Radio Alegría con la música fuerte, "Nubes, nubes, nubes, nubes."</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: Reinaldo Obregón here on Radio Alegría with the best music, "Nubes, nubes nubes."</p>		
<p>Ad, pre-recorded by DJ: La Joyería Crown y la Mueblería Crown, están teniendo una gran venta espectacular sin pago de enganche. Escuchó bien. No tendrá que dar pago de enganche en ninguno de los artículos que compre. Y tome meses para pagar. Con el plan de crédito que tiene Crown ahora puede obtener las famosas marcas de muebles y artefactos y también finas joyas sin pago de enganche. Aún estando los precios hasta 60% de descuento. Esto es en las tres Mueblerías Crown. Usted verá las etiquetas con los precios reducidos muy claritamente. Marcas como Sealey, Broyle Hill, Basset, Riverside, Speed Queen, Gibson, Singer. Así es que usted sabe que estamos hablando de muebles de alta calidad a precios bajos. En Crown Jewellery obtendrá finos y hermosos relojes de las marcas Lussien, Picard, Seckle, Pulsar y más. Hermosos diamantes, y joyas de oro, arracadas, collares, anillos y más. Y todo a precios de descuento. Apúrese a Crown!</p>		

<p>Crown Jewelry Store and Furniture Store are having a spectacular sale with no down-payments. You heard right. You won't have to make any down-payments on any item you buy. And take months to pay. With the Crown credit plan you can now get the famous furniture and artifact brands and also fine jewelry without a down-payment. Even with prices marked down by as much as 60%. This is happening at the three Crown furniture stores. You will see all the tags with the prices marked down very clearly. Brands like Sealy, Broyle, Basset, Riverside, Speed Queen, Gibson, Singer. So you know that we are talking about high quality furniture at low prices. At Crown Jewelry you'll find beautiful, fine watches from name-brands like Lussien, Picard, Pulsar and more. Beautiful diamonds, and gold jewelry, pendants, necklaces, rings and more. And everything at a discount price! Hurry over to Crown.</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: No se pierda, la venta es hasta las nueve de la noche el día de hoy en Crown's Jewlery en tres lugares para servirle, las Mueblerías Crown. Brindando más música fuerte aquí a través de Radio Alegría. Viene Ramón Ayala y Los Bravos del Norte con esa que dice, "Que va, que va, que va," pues, ¿pa' dónde va? A través de Radio Alegría.</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: Don't miss out, the sale lasts until 9 pm today at Crown Jewelry, and Crown Furniture at three convenient locations. Giving you more great music here at Radio Alegría. Next up is Ramón Ayala y Los Bravos del Norte with that song that goes "Que va, que va, que va" Well, where are they going? Here on Radio Alegría</p>		
Que va, que va, que va	Los Bravos del Norte	Norteño
<p>DJ Talk: ¿Qué le parecer? bonita selección con Ramón Ayala, "Que va, que va, que va." Comenzamos con música de las 5 de la tarde hasta las 12 de la noche, siete horas de empacamiento como luego dicen con Tabo Balderas. Con música pero fuerte como ésta, una que dice, "El muchacho alegre." [Grito] Cecilio Garzo y los Casinos aquí en Radio Alegría. Anímate mamá, animate! No estés triste.</p>		
<p>What did you think? Beautiful selection with Ramón Ayala "Que va, que va, que va" We begin with the music at 5 o'clock until midnight. Seven hours of good living, as people say, with Tabo Balderas. With music strong like this one, a song that goes "El Muchacho Alegre" Cecilo Garzo y los Casinos here on Radio Alegría. Cheer up mamá, cheer up! Don't be sad.</p>		
El muchacho alegre	Cecilio Garzo y los Casinos	Orquesta w/ accordion
<p>DJ Talk: Saludando a Petra Méndez. "Pues Tabo, fui una de tus primeros fans que tuviste el año '78." Saludando a Petra, recordando el '78. [Over intro to next song] Soy de Tejas, mamá!</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: Saying hi to Petra Méndez. "Well, Tabo, I was one of your first fans back in '78" Greetings to Petra, remembering '78. I'm from Texas, mama!</p>		
Soy de Tejas	Steve Jordan	Conjunto
<p>DJ Talk: Eso ¿qué dijo al último? Soy de Tejas y me gusta ser un hombre que no te gusta.</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: What did he say at the end? I'm from Texas and I like to be a man whom you don't like.</p>		
<p>Station ID, female vocal, sung, over salsa music: KMXX, double X, Austin</p>		
<p>DJ Talk: Y para continuar con el ánimo fuerte de Radio Alegría y Tabo Balderas. Se tambalea mamá!</p>		

DJ Talk: And to continue, with high spirits of Radio Alegría with Tabo Balderas. We're rockin' mamá!		
(Unknown)	Pegaso	Grupera (cumbia)
DJ Talk: ¿Que le parece? Bonita selección con el grupo Pegaso, aquí en Radio Alegría. Pues, brindando todas las selecciones para todos los que están reportando por allá en Montopolis. Están poniendo allí con Octavio Balderas, también para Mario Rivera de parte de María, también para Antonio Torres que nos están escuchando, para José Ángel Hernández que cumple años de parte de su mamá Gloria, y de parte de su hermanos Jorge y Manuel, Jr. Para Lilia Martínez de parte de Arturo Recendis. Pues no tenemos tiempo de buscar las selecciones que nos piden pero, sí, la que sigue por orden... Para ustedes....Anoche nos estaba platicando, Tony de la Rosa, dice, "si yo voy a un lugar, a jugar billar o algo y tienen un pianola, esta es la selección que yo le pongo dinero todo el tiempo para escuchar porque me gusta." "Con el Tiempo," su propio inspiración.		
DJ Talk: What did you think? Nice selection with the band Pegaso, here on Radio Alegría. Well, giving you all the selections for all those who are at Montopolis. They're over then with Octavio Balderas. Also for Mario Rivera from Maria, and for Antonio Torres, who's listening to us. For Jose Angel Hernandez, its his birthday, from his mom Gloria, and his brothers Jorge and Manuel Jr. For Lilia Martínez from Arturo Recendis. Well, we don't have time to play are your requests, but we do have time for those in order... for you... Yesterday I was talking with Tony de La Rosa and he was saying that if he goes somewhere to play pool or something and they have a jukebox, this is the song that I always put in money for because I like it. "Con el Tiempo" its own inspiration.		
Con el tiempo	Tony de la Rosa	Conjunto
DJ Talk: Estoy con Tony de la Rosa nos fuimos a porrear aquí, a la calle 6 al oeste, rumbo al sol, se mete como lo dicen el calle sol, [leans back, mumbling] Estuvimos porreando allí, un, quién sabe hasta que hora estaría Tony allí pero andaban varios artistas que vimos, que tuvimos el honor de ver, Joe Bravo, Leonard Dávila, Eva de la Rosa, Tony de la Rosa, el grupo Los Unidos estaba tocando, muy bonito. Aquí vamos a saludar por la tarde a Ramiro Luna de parte de María Ramírez, para Juan de la Cruz de parte de José Solís, también para Roberto de parte de Rosa. Onda fuerte con Tabo Balderas. Little Joe, Johnny y la Familia, "Cartas Marcadas."		
DJ Talk: We went clubbing, on west Sixth Street, headed toward the sun, the sun sets on this streets as they say... We were clubbing over there, who knows how late Tony was out, but there were several artists that we saw, that we had the honor of seeing, Joe Bravo, Leonard Dávila, Eva de La Rosa, Tony de La Rosa, the band Los Unidos was playing, really nice. We're going to send out greeting this afternoon to Ramiro Luna from Maria Ramirez, to Juan de la Cruz from Jose Solis and for Roberto from Rosa. Lots of fun, with Tabo Balderas. Little Joe, Johnny y La Familia, "Cartas Marcadas."		
Cartas Marcadas	Little Joe y la Familia	Orquesta, Onda Chicana
DJ Talk: ... cuando empezamos este hizo el resurgimiento a la popularidad, el rey del popotitos, ¿se acuerda del popotitos? Era Manolo Muñoz. De '78 par acá, ha dado un impacto muy sobresaliente. Empezamos juntos, él con su pegue y yo aquí en la difusora Radio Alegría en el 78. Y aquí viene esta que lo hizo nuevamente popular a Manolo Muñoz, "Llamarada."		
DJ Talk: when we started, this guy had a resurgence of popularity, the king of popotitos, do you remember popotitos? It was Manolo Muños. From '78 onward, he was been a very good performer. We started together, him with his hits and me on Radio Alegria in '78. And here's the one that made Manolo Muñoz popular once again, "Llamarada"		

Manolo Muñoz	Manolo Muñoz	Grupera
DJ Talk: Tabo Balderas, mama! [Grito]		
(Unknown)	(Unknown)	Conjunto (instrumental polka)
DJ Talk: Saluando a todos cumbiamberos. Y a los de Sarah Brose. Saludando Jesús, Martín, Lupe Visera.		
DJ Talk: Greetings to all the cumbia fans. And to those with Sarah Brose. Greeting to Jesús, Martín, and Lupe Veserra.		
Carolina	(Unknown)	Grupera (cumbia)
DJ Talk: No olviden el baile en el San José Hall de beneficio para la sociedad de St. Vincent De Paul. Los invita el coro de la iglesia San José de la misa de las 12, este sábado de 8 a 12 con el conjunto Cariñito, \$4 la persona en San José para la sociedad, todo lo que se recauda es para la sociedad de St. Vincent De Paul. Y, sale, la muñequa que canta, Laura Canales.		
DJ Talk: Don't forget the dance at San Jose Hall for the benefit of the St. Vincent De Paul Society. The noon choir at the San Jose Church invites you this Saturday from 8 to 12 with the band Cariñito, \$4 per person at San Jose for the Society. All the money that is raised is for the St. Vincent De Paul Society. And, the doll that sings, Laura Canales.		
Si vivi contigo	Laura Canales	Tejano pop/orquesta
DJ Talk: Nuevamente le damos las gracias por convivir aquí con Tabo Balderas a través de Radio Alegría, nuestra programación de hoy en la tarde. Y le recomendamos para que escuche Radio Alegría muy de mañana con Lupe Pérez. Baldo de los Santos, Enrique Samaniego, Greg Álvarez, aquí a través de Radio Alegría. Y mañana no estaré aquí, ni este fin de semana hasta el siguiente fin de semana, Tabo Balderas. Que diosito me los bendiga a cada uno de ustedes pasen muy buenas noches y pórtense bien que nada les cuesta. [Over ending of last song, song continues]		
DJ Talk: Once again we thank you for listening here with Tabo Balderas on Radio Alegría, to our program this afternoon. And we recommend that you listen early in the morning with Lupe Pérez. Baldo de los Santos, Enrique Samaniego, Greg Álvarez, here on Radio Alegría. And tomorrow I won't be here, nor will I be here next weekend, until the weekend after that, Tabo Balderas. That God bless you for me, and that you have a very good night, be good, it's not so hard.		

Figure 2: KXTN 107.5 San Antonio, Tejano & Proud

November 24, 2010, approx. 11:00AM – 12:30 PM

Song	Artist	Genre
Cruz de Madera	Michael Salgado	Conjunto
<p>Talk:</p> <p>DJ Johnny: Se porta bien que nada le cuesta, y se porta mal me habla. Hi, Goodmorning.</p> <p>Caller: Goodmorning Johnny. Hey Johnny... I just wanted to wish all the military people a Happy Thanksgiving. I got two boys, one in the Navy and the other one in the Marines. They're not around right now, but they'll be back. Because of them we're having Thanksgiving. Thanks</p> <p>DJ Johnny: My brother, thank you so very much. I couldn't have said it better myself, man. Right, you know, we tend to forget our men and women, este, who are in uniform. You know they put on that uniform day in and day out and they ask no questions, they just do as they're told and go.</p> <p>Caller: And they're out there eating turkey in the sand and we're over here at the table.</p> <p>DJ: Yeah, aquí, bien panzones, verdad, living off of what they do. To all of our men and women in uniform, we support you, we appreciate what you do, we salute you. And to the families that are not able to be with their loved ones because they're serving our country. Thank you my brother.</p> <p>As we leave, what do you say I play "Soldado Razo" by Bob Gallarza for all our men and women in uniform.</p> <p>Other DJ: Oh, good choice.</p> <p>DJ Johnny: Hey listen, y'all have a good safe Thanksgiving. I'll be back on the radio tomorrow from 6-11, and uh, Nikki, Petey, you guys have a good safe Thanksgiving, alright? And I know Big Pappa's going to eat his heart out, not literally, but, I mean, he's going to eat to his heart's content.</p> <p>[Over Intro, strings playing the Star Spangled Banner, followed by solo accordion, then orquesta tejana]</p> <p>Bob Gallarza, 10:57, 3 minute shy of the 11 o'clock hour. For all our men and women in uniform, who put on that uniform day in and day out, ask no questions, just do as they're told. For the families of these loved ones who are spending yet another Thanksgiving without their loved ones at the head of the table. Thank y'all so much, God bless y'all.</p>		
Soldado Razo	Bob Gallarza	Orquesta
<p>Station ID, pre-recorded: KXTN San Antonio, KLTN HD2 Houston, KLJA HD2 Austin, Univision Radio Stations</p>		
Baila esta kumbia	Kumbia Kings & Selena	Tejano pop (cumbia)
<p>Talk: Tejano Proud KXTN 107.5, con Kenney G, Good morning. Jimmy González y Mazz, "Mi vida sin to amor" KXTN</p>		
Mi vida sin tu amor	Jimmy González y Mazz	Tejano, polka
<p>Station ID, pre-recorded: Tejano and Proud, KXTN</p>		
Como te extraño	Pete Astudillo	Tejano, cumbia
<p>Station ID, pre-recorded: KXTN</p>		

<p>Ads: Allstate insurance (Spanish) Alamo Downtown, auto sales (English) Novelas y serias.com (Spanish) Univision iPhone application (Spanish) Univision.com (Spanish)</p>		
Boulevard de sueños	Fama	Tejano, cumbia
<p>Talk: Tejano Proud KXTN 107.5. Aquí estan Los Palominos, “Mi Obsession” on KXTN 107.5</p>		
Mi obsession	Los palominos	Conjunto / norteño
<p>Station ID, pre-recorded: San Antonio born and raised. Tejano and Proud, KXTN</p>		
Cumbia pa que	Tabu	Cumbia, pop
<p>Station ID: Listener: Tejano and Proud, Recorded: KXTN 107.5</p>		
Te quiero, te amo	Pesado	Norteño/Tejano, Reg. Mex. Crossover
<p>Talk: Tejano Proud KXTN 107.5. Aquí esta Selena, “El Chico del Apartamento Five-Twelve” (says number in English)</p>		
El Chico del Apartamento 512	Selena	Tejano, pop
<p>Station ID: Tejano and Proud KXTN 107.5 is Listener: Big Red with your barbacoa taco Always San Antonio KXTN, 107.5</p>		
Del otro lado del porton	Ramón Ayala	Norteño
<p>Talk: Tejano and Proud 107.5, Kenney G. Still to come, we’re going to give you a chance to win KXTN movie tickets to the San Tiglos Theatres, for the Thanksgiving Weekend. Elsa García, “La Luna Sera la Luna” KXTN</p>		
La Luna sera la luna	Elsa García	Tejano, pop
<p>Station ID: Listener Sound Byte: Crystal Leon, Tejano and Proud KXTN 107.5</p>		
Chiquilla (2007)	AB & the Kumbia Allstarz	Cumbia

<p>Ads: Nationwide (Spanish) Cuentas Claras, sponsored by Allstate (Spanish) Allstate (Spanish) Fred Loya Insurance (English) Univision.com, recipes (Spanish) Univision.com, music (Spanish) Univision.com, toolbar (Spanish)</p> <p>Station ID: Univision, your home for Johnny Ramirez in the morning. KXTN</p>		
El Juego es tuyo	Mazz	Tejano, pop (cumbia)
<p>Talk: Tejano and Proud KXTN 107.5 with Kenney G. Pues ya ? Thanksgiving, hope you and you're family are going to have a great Thanksgiving Day. And, throughout the holiday season, take us along, if you would please, we would appreciate that. Aquí esta Vicente Fernández, "Mujeres Divinas" KXTN.</p>		
Mujeres divinas	Vicente Fernández	Ranchera
<p>Station ID: Listener Sound Byte: San Antonio is Fiesta [Supermarket], Market Square, and the Spurs. Kimberly Hinojosa, I'm Tejano Proud. Recorded Announcer: KXTN 107.5</p>		
Toma mi amor	La Mafia	Tejano, pop
<p>Station ID: Artist Soundbyte Montage: Hi this is Intocable, Hi this is Jay Pérez, Hi this is Bobby Pulido, Hi this is Elida Reyna Recorded Announcer: KXTN San Antonio, KLTN HD2 Houston, KLJA HD2 Austin, Univision Radio stations</p>		
Baila conmigo	Stefani	Tejano, conjunto fusion, with flamenco intro and pop vocals.
<p>Talk: Orale! Tejano Proud KXTN 107.5 Kenney G. Hope you're having, or, actually, getting ready to have a nice Thanksgiving with your family. A lot of people coming into town for the weekend. So if you're out and about driving into San Antonio give us a call, let us know where you're coming from. At ###-###. We'd love to here from you, verdad Here's Shelly Lares, whew, "Es que estoy enamorada"</p>		
Es Que estoy enamorada	Shelly Lares	Tejano pop (cumbia)
<p>Talk: Tejano Proud 107.5 con Kenny G. What are you doing for Thanksgiving? Listener (recorded): My sister's, I'm making dressing at 5, and she's cooking the rest.</p>		

Well have a Happy Thanksgiving, girl! There you go, Sylvia, thanks for the call, and have a great Thanksgiving Weekend tambien, ok. Aquí esta Ram Herrera con “Amor y Besos” KXTN.		
Amor y Besos	Ramiro “Ram” Herrera	Tejano pop (polka)
Talk: Tejano Proud 107.5 KTXN Kenny G. Yes? Listener (recorded): I just called to say hi to everybody in San Antonio, Texas, all the way from Wilbur, Minnesota. Alright, spending the Thanksgiving weekend up in Minnesota. Cold country up there, gonna have a cold turkey, right? Alright. Aquí esta Intocable, “Deja me ser yo” KXTN		
Dejame ser yo	Intocable	Norteño/Tejano, Reg. Mex crossover
Station ID: KXTN, the Tejano and Proud Nation, KXTN (Over musical montage featuring reggae in Spanish and Tejano) Ads: Cuentas Claras, sponsored by Allstate (Spanish) Allstate (Spanish) Alamo Downtown, auto dealers (English) Univision.com, iPod video application (Spanish) Station ID: Tejano and Proud. And the songs that you dance(d) to all night long at your wedding. 107.5 KXTN		
Somos dos gatos	Hometown boys	Conjunto
Talk: Whew-ee! Tejano and Proud, KXTN 107.5. Getting ready for Thanksgiving. Where you goin’? Listener (pre-recorded): I’m gonna be at my parents house, yeah. DJ: What part of San Anto? Listener: San Antonio, right here, Southeast side. DJ: Alright, Southside! De San Antonio, baby. Getting ready for the turkey, verdad? Here’s Jay Pérez, gonna be at Grand’s on Friday night. Whew! “Sin Condición” on KXTN.		
Sin condicion	Jay Pérez	Tejano, conjunto
Talk: Tejano Proud KXTN 107.5. Congratulations to Jessica Shoop, Miss Shoop, on KXTN, tickets to see Jay Pérez on Friday night at Grand Central Station. By the way, Miss Shoop, you gotta call me back so I can give you some information. Miss Shoop, Jessica Shoop, alright. The “Shoop, Shoop” song, y’all remember that? Maybe you don’t, but anyway, aquí esta group Mazz from KXTN.		
Demasiado herido	Mazz	Tejano pop (polka)

Appendix B: Regional Mexican Programming Transcripts

Figure 1: José “El Gallo” Gadea, La Z 12-1PM, Dec. 6, 2010

Song	Artist	Genre
Para Siempre	Vicente Fernández	Ranchera
Station ID: KLZT Bastrop, Austin. Con pura música perrona y todos tus trancazos. 107.1 La Z		
El Trokero Lococho (Clean)	Gerardo Ortiz	Banda
Eres Mi Droga	Intocable	Norteño
Ando Bien Pedo	Banda Recoditos	Banda
PSA: El Jugeton de La Z, with Toys for Tots		
Station ID: 107.1 LaZ.com		
Ad: Calamia Law Firm		
Ni Parientes Somos	Los Tigres del Norte	Norteño
El Primer Tonto	Cardenales	Norteño
Station ID / Give-away: 107.1 La Z, mas cerca de tí. Y este lunes estaremos regalando passes VIP para el baile privado de martes en Carnaval con El Güero y su Banda al Fred Loya Insurance 500 William Canon de 12 a 2 de la tarde. Mas detalles al 107.1 LaZ.com.		
[107.1 La Z, closer to you. This Monday we're giving away VIP passes to the private dance on Wednesday at Club Carnaval featuring El Güero y sus Banda at Fred Loya Insurance, 500 William Cannon from 12-2 PM. More detailes at 107.1 LaZ.com]		
Station ID / Give-away: 107.1 La Z, mas cerca de tí. Y este martes estaremos regalando passes VIP para el baile privado de martes en Carnaval con El Güero y su Banda en La Michoacana 502 Stassney Lane, de 8 - 10 de la mañana. Mas detalles al 107.1 LaZ.com.		
[107.1 La Z, closer to you. This Wednesday we're giving away VIP passes to the private dance on Wednesday at Club Carnaval featuring El Güero y sus Banda at La Michoacana (grocery), 502 Stassney Lane, from 8-10 AM. More detailes at 107.1 LaZ.com]		
Por Tu Amor	Alacranes Musical	Dur/Tierra Cali
El Infiel Mas Fiel	Palomo	Norteño, waltz, virtuosic accordion
Station ID with caller sound bytes: La raza de Austin escucha "107.1," "Que es la mejor de Austin y toca puros trancazos," "107.1," "La Z," puros trancazos		

[La raza in Austin listens to 107.1, the best in Austin, playing pure hits, 107.1 La Z, pure hits.]		
Un Puño De Tierra	Ramon Ayala	Norteño
DJ Talk, over song intro: La Z, te acompaña, tu compa El Gallo, en este tardecito chulo y bonito. Esta bien bonito este lunes con La Z, puros trancazos.		
[La Z, at your side, your friend El Gallo, in this beautiful afternoon, this lovely Monday with La Z, pure hits.]		
Millonario De Amor	Sergio Vega "El Shaka"	Dur/Tierra Cali
Station ID: La Z		
Te Quiero Mas	Los Palominos	Norteño, pop, in drums esp.
DJ Talk, over Intro: 107.1 La Z, puros trancazos. Te acompaña, El Gallo. Lunes bien bonita, y mañana nuestra baile privado con El Güero y su Banda en Carnaval. Entrada gratis, allí nos vemos a partir de las 8.		
[107.1 La Z, pure hits. Here with you, El Gallo. It's a beautiful Monday, and tomorrow our private dance with El Güero y su Banda in Club Carnaval. Admission is free, we'll see you there starting at 8.]		
Y Aquí Estoy	K-Paz	Dur/Tierra Cali
El Ejemplo	Los Tigres del Norte	Norteño
DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z, puros trancazos. Te acompaña, tu compa El Gallo. Donde anda la raza de Monterrey? Orale, Los Rayados [soccer team]. Ayer lograron su cuatro titulo en la historia. Felicidades a todos Los Rayados, a toda la raza de Monterrey.		
[107.1 La Z, pure hits. Here with you, your friend El Gallo. Where are my people from Monterrey? Orale, Los Rayados [Monterrey soccer team]. Yesterday, they won their fourth title ever. Congratulations to Los Rayados, and to all my people in Monterrey.]		
Sufriras	Palomo	Norteño
Station ID: La Z		
Como Arrancarte	Vagon Chicano	Norteño
No Me Digas	El Chapo de Sinaloa	Banda
Station ID: La Z		
Hermoso Cariño	Vicente Fernández	Ranchera, classic
Station ID: De San Marcos a Hutto, puros trancazos. 107.1 La Z		

Ojala	Pesado	Norteño
Station ID: Puros trancazos		
Te Ves Fatal	El Trono de Mexico	Dur/Tierra Cali
Station ID: La estacion de los trancazos. 107.1 La Z		
Ese Loco Soy Yo	Grupo Liberacion	Grupera, balada

Figure 2: Armando “El Chiquilín” Ulloa, La Z 4-5PM, Dec. 8, 2010

Song	Artist	Genre
Vete Ya	Valentin Elizalde	Banda
Station ID: KLZT Bastrop, Austin. Con pura música perrona. Y todos los trancazos. 107.1 La Z		
Basta Ya	Conjunto Primavera	Norteño, w/ sax
<p>DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. Oye, el día de hoy es el día oficial del metrosexual, eh. Así como lo escuchan, el día de hoy, si conoces a un metrosexual, todos aquellos individuos que se sacan las cejas, que se hacen bikini wax, que se hacen manicure, pedicure y por supuesto cuidados de piel, y que además de que son fanáticos de como se visten, el día de hoy, tienes que felicitarlos, por que el día de hoy es el día nacional de los metrosexuales. Así que, si conoces uno, salúdalo, felicítalo, no sé, cómprale algo para depilar las cejas, algo. [recorded laughter]. Oye, quiero hacerle una pregunta a todas las mujeres. Oye, mujeres, ¿les gusta o no les gusta que un hombre sea un metrosexual? ¿Qué se depile las cejas, qué se haga manicure, pedicure, toda la cosa, eh? ###-#### No más quiero ver que dicen las mujeres, ###-####, ¿Les gusta, no les gusta?</p>		
<p>[Only hits! Hey, today is the official day of the metrosexual. You heard right, today, if you know a metrosexual, all those individuals who pluck their eyebrows, get a bikini wax, get manicures, pedicures, and of course get skin treatments, and on top of that, are obsessed about the way they dress, today, you have to congratulate them, because today is the national day for metrosexuals. So if you know one, congratulate him, I don't know, buy him something to wax his eyebrows, something. Hey, I want to ask all women a question. Hey ladies, do you or don't you like a guy that is metrosexual? Who waxes his eyebrows, gets manicures, pedicures, the whole deal, huh? I just want to see what women say, ###-####, do you like it or not?]</p>		
Loco	Grupo Pesado	Norteño
Station ID: Este compa, así es raza. El Chiquilín de La Tarde. 107.1 La Z.		
Sin Evidencias	Banda MS	Banda
<p>DJ Talk: [Singing] Duerme tranquilo mi amor. Oh yeah baby, 4:12 de la tarde. Banda MS, oiga, aquí en La Z. Y vamos de volada porque seguimos con el Jugetón. Y nos vamos con mi querida Chilanga, what's happening mi Chilanga?</p>		

[Singing: sleep tight my love. Oh yeah baby, 4:12 pm. Banda MS, hear it, here on La Z. And let's move on quickly to my dear Chilanga (Chilanga is a nickname for people from Mexico City). What's up my Chilanga?]

Live Remote DJ, "La Chilanga": Así es, mi metrosexual [laughs] DJ Talk: No seas payasa! "La Chilanga": Hoy estamos aquí en el Juguetón. Estamos aquí, pues tratando, ya sabes que seguimos con esta misión, con este sueño de ponerle una sonrisa a nuestros niños. Así que pues hoy tenemos la misión de que venir a traerles un juguete nuevo, oye, de la cantidad, que sea, no nos estamos poniendo nuestros moños. Las cosas es de que nada más traigan un juguete nuevo. Vamos a estar aquí en Riverside y Burton, aquí en donde está Cash Pawn hasta las 6 de la tarde. Así que, pues, estamos invitando a toda la gente hermosa que sabemos que tienen un gran corazón. Porque ayer nos demostraron allí en el Club Carnaval. Así que pues vengase para acá porque los vamos a estar esperando muy calurosamente para que también nos vengan a saludar, ¿ok? Además, estamos registrando para boletos de Paulo Rías y también, pues, se van a llevar boletos para el cine. ¿Listo? Así que vengase para acá y ayudemos esta tarde a los niños más necesitados, es Toys for Tots para que, pues traigan un juguetito con que se pueden divertir, ¿ok? Estamos en Riverside y Burton con el Juguetón de La Z, 107.1. Puros trancazos.

Chilanga: That's right my metrosexual! DJ Talk: Don't be silly! Chilanga: Today we are here in the Juguetón (toy drive). We're here, well, you know that we are continuing with this mission, with this dream of putting a smile on our children's faces. That's why today we have the mission of coming and bringing them a new toy, hey, of whatever price, we are not picky. The thing is just that you bring a new toy. We are going to be here on Riverside and Burton, here in front of Cash Pawn until 6 pm. That's why we are inviting all the beautiful people whom we know have a big heart because yesterday you showed us at Club Carnaval. That's why you should come over here, because we are going to be waiting for you and give you a warm welcome so that you'll come say hi, ok? On top of that we're registering people to win tickets to Paulo Rias, and also, you'll be receiving tickets to the movie theater, ok? So come down here and help us this afternoon, help the most needy children, it's Toys for Tots, so that, well, bring a little toy that they can play with, ok? We are at Riverside and Burton with the Juguetón of La Z 107.7. Only hits.

PSA: La Z & Toys for Tots, "Juegeton de La Z"

Station ID: 107.1 LaZ.com

Ad: Calamia Law Firm, Immigration Law

Ad: WellMed Senior Clinic

Ad: Fred Loya Insurance

Ad: Viva Food Mart

Te Quiero Mucho

Patrulla 81

Dur/Tierra
Cali

Ad: WellMed Senior Clinic		
Station ID: Compartir esta música es nuestro proposito. Somos 107.1 La Z. Puros trancazos.		
Como Arrancarte	Vagon Chicano	Norteño
DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. "Como Arrancarte," Vagon Chicano. cuatro de la tarde con 24 minutos. Y el día de hoy es el día nacional del metrosexual. Y le estoy preguntando a todas las mujeres, mujeres, ¿qué les parece? ¿Les gusta el hombre que sea metrosexual, o no? Anda para acá ###-#### La Z. Buenas tardes!		
DJ Talk: Today is the national day of the metrosexual. And I am asking all women, ladies, what do you think? Do you like a man to be metrosexual or not? Come on call in ###-#### La Z. Good afternoon!		
Caller 1: Pues, claro que si me gusta. Pa que se anden bien lindos.		
Caller 1: Of course I like it. So that they're going around looking cute.		
DJ: A ver. ¿Cómo te llamas?		
Let's see, what's your name?		
Caller 1: Reina.		
Reina		
DJ: Oye Reina. ¿A tí te gusta el hombre que sea metrosexual, mi hija?		
Hey Reina. Hey girl, do you like a man that is metrosexual?		
Caller 1: Claro que sí.		
Of course.		
DJ: ¿Por qué te gusta un hombre que sea metrosexual?		
Why do you like a metrosexual man?		
Caller 1: Porque se ven bien clean-cut, bien arregladitos, y se ven guapos.		
Because they look really clean-cut, dressed up nice, and they look handsome.		
DJ: ¿Pero que se hagan pedicure, manicure y toda la cosa?		
But that he gets pedicures and manicures and that whole deal?		
Caller 1: Todo, todo.		
Everything, everything.		
DJ: Mira, yo pensaba que a las mujeres no les gustaba esto. Orale pues mi reina, gracias Reina. Vamonos por acá, La Z, buenas tardes!		

Look, I thought that women didn't like all that. Well, thanks, my darling, thanks Reina. Lets go over here, La Z, good afternoon!
Caller 2: Hola, buenas tardes Chiquilín.
Hi, good afternoon, Chiquilín (nickname means, small, tiny)
DJ: Quiubole, ¿quién habla?
Hi, who's speaking? (quiubole, is slang, just means hi)
Caller 2: Estela.
DJ: A ver Estela, ¿a usted le gusta a el hombre que sea metrosexual o no?
Estela, do you like a metrosexual man or not?
Caller 2: Oh, sí, claro que sí.
Oh, yes, of course, yes.
DJ: ¿Por qué le gusta?
Why do you like it?
Caller 2: Porque el hombre tiene que andar limpio también como las mujeres. Nosotras nos esmeramos tanto para arreglarnos, así que el hombre también tiene que andar, pues, limpio.
Because men have to look clean just like women. We do our best to look nice, therefore men also have to be, you know, clean.
DJ: Mira, ya son dos mujeres que sí. Y le gusta que se haga pedicure, manicure, y toda la cosa?
Look, now we have two women who say yes. And do you like for him to get pedicures, manicures, the whole deal?
Caller 2: Oh, sí, claro. Yo llevo mi esposo para que se haga el manicure y su pedicure.
Oh yes, of course. I take my husband to get the manicure and his pedicure.
DJ: Ah, orale, pues ya esta mi reina. Gracias por tu llamada, hija, ¿eh? Orale, pues. Oye, me estan sopriendo, las mujeres, que modernas! ###-#### ¿Qué opinan? ¿Les gusta que su hombre sea metrosexual o no les gusta para nada?

<p>Hey, well, thanks, that's it my girl. Thanks for your call, eh? Thanks, then. Hey, these girls are surprising me, what modern women! ###-#### What's your opinion? Do you like your man to be a metrosexual or do you not like it at all?</p>		
Ni El Diablo Te Va a Querer	Los Rieleros del Norte	Norteño
<p>Station ID: Si no suenan en La Z, no son trancazos. 107.1 La Z</p>		
El Ejemplo	Los Tigres del Norte	Norteño
<p>DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. En diez minutitos les voy a decir como se van a poder ganar un par de boletos para ir a ver a Polo Urias este dominguito en Club Carnaval. ¿ok? En diez minutitos le voy a decir como se va por ganar ese par de boletos así que ponganseme bien listos para ir a ver a Polo Urias. Pero primero llamas al ###-####, ¡Buenas tardes!</p>		
<p>In ten short minutes I'm going to tell you how you can win a pair of tickets to go see Polo Urias this Sunday at Club Carnaval, ok? In ten short minutes I'm going to tell you how to win that pair of tickets, so get ready to go see Polo Urias. But first, call ###-####. Good afternoon!</p>		
<p>Caller 3: Nada más te quiero decir que sí me gusta los hombres que sean metrosexuales pero hay que ver, Chiquilín, ¡que hay unos que exageran!</p>		
<p>I just wanted to tell you that, yes, I like guys that are metrosexuals, but you've got to see, because there are some who exaggerate!</p>		
<p>DJ: Ok, un ejemplo de uno que exagere.</p>		
<p>Give me an example of someone who exaggerates.</p>		
<p>Caller 3: Pues, por ejemplo, que se depile las piernas, para no tener vellos, porque el hombre, como quiera, está guapo que tenga vellosas piernas para que no pierda su masculinidad.</p>		
<p>Well, for example, guys who wax (or shave) their legs, so that they don't have any hairs, because men, anyways, its nice that they have hairy legs, so that they don't lose their masculinity.</p>		
<p>DJ: Ah, ok. Entonces usted dice un manicure, pedicure, se la perdona, pero eso depilarse las piernas y todo ese rollo.</p>		
<p>Ah, ok. So you're saying that a manicure, a pedicure, can be forgiven, but to shave your legs, that a something else!</p>		
<p>Caller 3: Las piernas y los brazos, Chiquilín porque está bien allá, y ¿por qué depilase?</p>		
<p>The legs and the arms, Chiquilín, because it's all right there, and why shave?</p>		

DJ: Ok, ok. Ya está mi reina. Eh, gracias por tu comentario, mi hija, ¿eh?		
Ok, ok. That's it, darling. Thanks for your comments, ok?		
Caller 3: Andale		
Ok.		
DJ: Orale, pues, ya los escucharon en 107.1. Mujeres, ¿les gusta que su hombre sea metrosexual, sí o no? Y si hay un hombre, pues un muchacho que lo rechazaron por ser metrosexual, también me avisan. ###-####		
Ok, then, you heard it on 107.1. Women, do you like your man to be metrosexual or not? And if there is a man, a guy who has been turned down because he is metrosexual, let me know.		
Paz En Este Amor	Fidel Rueda	Banda w accordion
Station ID: 107.1		
Me Duele	Roberto Tapia	Banda
DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. Te quieres ir a ver a Polo Urias este dominguito en Club Carnaval, pues, allí te va. Cuando escuchen la canción de Vicente "Chente" Fernández, la de "Que De Raro Tiene," reportarse a ###-####, ok? "Que De Raro Tiene," Vicente "Chente" Fernández. Allí, le va una pista. Pegadita los comerciales.		
Do you want to go see Polo Urias this Sunday at Club Carnaval? Well, here you go. When you hear the song by Vincente "Chente" Fernández, the one called "Que de Raro Tiene," report to ###-####, ok? "Que de Raro Tiene," Vicente "Chente" Fernández. Here, that's the clue. Close to the comercial.		
Esta Llorando Mi Corazon	Beto y sus Canarios	Banda
DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. Y vamos de volada porque seguimos con el Juguetón de La Z. Chilanga, dónde andas?		
And let's go right away because up next we continue with the Juguetón de La Z. Chilanga, where are you?		

Chilanga / Live Remote DJ: Estamos aquí en Riverside y Burton, estamos aquí en Cash Pawn. Pues invitando a toda la gente a que nos ayuden en esta misión a cumplir un sueño más que es de ponerle un sonrisa a nuestros neños hermosos, que pues en esta navidad, no tienen la posibilidad de tener un juguete para divertirse para gozar estas fechas especiales. Queremos invitarlos a que nos ayuden donando un juguete nuevo. No importa la cantidad que cueste, el juguete, la cosa es que siempre nos estamos ayudando y sabemos que la gente hermosa que nos está escuchando que va saliendo de trabajo se puede dar la vuelta para acá. Estamos aquí en Riverside y Burton, ok? Vamos a estar hasta las 6 de la tarde. Y acá el calorcito humano es el que se siente, acá no hay nada de frío. Porque? Porque la gente ha venido ayudarnos. La gente ha venido a donar sus juguetes nuevos. Vengase para acá estamos aquí en Cash Pawn en Riverside y Burton hasta las 6 de la tarde, pues, esperando que nos ayudes a ponerle una sonrisota en estas fiestas navidadañas. Así que aquí los estamos esperando. Es el Juguetón de La Z 107.1. Puros trancazos.

We are here on Riverside and Burton, we're here at Cash Pawn. Well, inviting everyone to come help us in this mission, to fulfill this dream of putting a smile on the faces of these beautiful children if you can, this Christmas, because they don't have the possibility of having a toy to play with and enjoy during these special dates. We want to invite you to help us by donating a new toy. The cost does not matter, the point is that we are always helping each other and we know that the beautiful people who are listening, who are just leaving work, can come stop by. We are here on Riverside and Burton, ok? We will be here till 6 pm. And here it isn't at all cold, all you feel is the human warmth. Why? Because people are coming to help us. People are coming to donate their new toys. So come on over, we are here at Cash Pawn at Riverside and Burton until 6 pm, well, waiting for you to come help us put a smile on these faces during the holidays. So we'll be waiting for you here.

Ad: Don Cheto, Giveaways

Station ID: LaZ.com

Ad: HEB

Ad: Nationwide

Ad: Calamia Law Firm, Criminal Law

Station ID: 107.1 LaZ.com

Me Nortie

Conjunto Primavera

Norteño

Station ID: Canciones que nunca salían de moda. De lunes a viernes a las 6 de la tarde. La hora más prohibida de la radio. La Hora de los Corridos Prohibidos con El Chiquilín en 107.1 La Z. Puros trancazos.

Songs that never go out of style. Monday through Friday at 6 pm. The most forbidden hour on the radio. The Hour of the Forbidden Corridos with El Quiquilin on 107.1 La Z

Que de Raro Tiene	Vicente Fernández	Ranchera
Station ID: La Z		
No Me Digas	El Chapo De Sinaloa	Banda
<p>DJ Talk: 107.1 La Z! Puros trancazos. "No Me Digas," El Chapo de Sinaloa, 4:55 de la tarde. Su compa Chiquilín aqui saludando a todo mi razilla. Hay un saludo para todo mi raza que está chambeando en este momento en los diferentes restaurantes para los que andan en los supermercados también echale todo las ganas al mundo. Su compa Chiquilín aqui acompañandolos hasta las 7 de la tarde. Anda por acá ###-### a todo mi razilla. La Z, buenas tardes! Quien habla?</p>		
<p>“No Me Digas” El Chapo de Sinaloa, its 4:55 in the afternoon. You friend Chiquilín, here, sending greetings to my people. A greeting to all my people who are working at this moment at the different restaurants, for those who are at the supermarkets also, give it all you’ve got. You’re friend Chiquilín with you until 7 pm. Call in ###-### to all my people. La Z, good afternoon, who’s speaking?</p>		
Caller 4: Para los boletos!		
For the tickets!		
DJ: Los boletos para ira a ver a Polo Urias este domingo en el Club Carnaval.		
The tickets to go see Polo Urias this Sunday at Club Carnaval.		
Caller 4: Sí, seguro!		
Yes, of course!		
DJ: A ver mi compa, ¿Cómo te llamas?		
Let’s see, friend, what’s your name?		
Caller 4: Me llamo Marceliano		
My name is Marceliano* (I hear Maximiliano, but I’m not sure)		
DJ: A ver mi compa, bien facilito, si te quieres ganar este par de boletos para ira a ver a Polo Urias este domingo en el Club Carnaval, ¿cuál fue la canción ganadora y quién la canta?		
Ok, friend, really easy, if you want to win that pair of tickets to go see Polo Urias this Sunday at Club Carnaval, which was the winning song and who sings it?		
Caller 4: La canta mi tío Chente		
My uncle “Chente” sings it.		
DJ: ¿Y cómo se llama la rola?		

And what's the name of that song?		
Caller 4: "¿Qué De Raro Tiene?"		
"¿Qué de Raro Tiene?" (What's Strange about That?)		
DJ: ¿Y a qué hora salió?		
And what time did it play?		
Caller 4: Bueno, de 4:50 ya, entonces		
Well, 4:50, then		
DJ: Es todo mi compa! Ya tienes tu par de boletos para ir a ver a Polo Urias este domingo en Club Carnaval. ¿A quién se va a llevar, hombre?		
That's it friend! You've got your tickets to go see Polo Urias this Sunday at Club Carnaval. Hey man, who are you taking with you?		
Caller 4: Me voy a ir con la chica ????? que tengo.		
DJ: Ya está. ¿Y originario de dónde?		
That's it! Where are you originally from?		
Caller 4: De Veracruz.		
From Veracruz		
DJ: De Veracruz, mi compa. No más, me diga ¿quién toca puros trancazos?		
From Veracruz, my friend. Just tell me, who plays only hits?		
Caller 4: La 107.1, con mi compa Chiquilín.		
107.1, with my friend Chiquilín.		
Necesito Decirte	Conjunto Primavera	
Station ID: De Bastrop a West Lake Hills. Puros trancazos. 107.1 La Z.		
Yo Se Que Te Acordarás	Banda El Recodo	Banda

Figure 3: La Que Buena (Univision) 3-4PM, Dec. 6, 2010

Song	Artist	Genre
Station ID: Menos plática. Mucha más música. 104.3 La Que Buena. Nadie toca más.		
Less talking. Much more music. 104.3 La Que Buena (The Very Good One). Nobody Plays more.		
Te Odio Y Te Amo	Duelo	Norteño Progresivo
DJ [Over Song Intro]: La Que Buena 104.3. Nadie toca más música! Esta hora (?) por El Dorado Night Club. Recuerda que los fines de semana son más divertidos con más música y más diversión en El Dorado Night Club. Hecho de La Que Buena.		
Nobody plays more music! This hour --- in Dorado Night Club. Remember that weekends are more fun with more music, more entertainment at El Dorado Night Club. Made by La Que Buena.		
No Pasa Nada	Germán Montero	Banda
Station ID: 104.3 La Que Buena.		
Ad: AT&T.com		
Ad: Piolín Piñata Giveaway		
Ad: AT&T U-Verse TV		
Ad: Ford of Texas		
Station ID: La Que Buena 104.3. Le da acceso al instante. Le da oportunidades de ganar pases VIP, boletos para conciertos, artículos autografiados por tus artistas favoritos, noticias de última hora, chismes, videos y fotos de locura de tus locutores favoritas www.laquebuena1043.com , www.laquebuena1043.com . es la ventana de tus páginas favoritas de facebook y much más. Haz click ahora, en www.laquebuena1043.com .		
The one with immediate access. We give you opportunities to win VIP passes, concert tickets, autographed items by your favorite artists, breaking news, gossip, videos, and crazy photos of your favorite announcers www.laquebuena1043.com , it's the window for your favorite websites like facebook and much more. Click now on www.laquebuena1043.com		
Ad: Subway		
Ad: Walmart		

Ad: Texas Lottery, Scratch-offs		
Ad: Wingstop (restaurant)		
Ad: Fred Loya Insurance		
Station ID: Y ahora, otra hora con mucha más música llegadora. 104.3 La Que Buena. Nadie toca más.		
La Calabaza	La Arolladora Banda El Limón	Banda
DJ: La Que Buena 104.3. Nadie toca más música. Buenas tardes! Te acompaña, Ana Elise. Oiga, entre las tres de la tarde y las 3:30, la primera llamada va a llevar boletos para el gran bailazo de Los Cuatro de Sinaloa, de Los Cuatro de La Sierra, ha! En Club Escapade 2000.		
Nobody plays more music! Good afternoon. Ana Elise here to accompany you. Listen, between 3 and 3:30 pm, the first phone call is going to take home tickets for the big dance party hosted by Los Cuatro de Sinaloa, by Los Cuatro de La Sierra. At Club Escapade 2000.		
Ni El Diablo Te Va Querer	Los Rieleros Del Norte	Norteño , w/ sax
Station ID: Photos, conciertos y mucho más en Laquebuena1043.com		
Espero	Montez de Durango	Dur/Tie rra Cali
Song ID: Montez de Durango, "Espero"		
Station ID: Photos, conciertos y mucho mas en Laquebuena1043.com		
Ajuste De Cuentas	Pesado	Norteño , waltz
Station ID: 104.3 La Que Buena.		
Ad: Club Escapade 2000, Fiestas de los Lunes		
Ad: Lone Star Title Loans		
Ad: Club Escapade 2000, Fiestas de los Lunes Cumbia, bachata, and then 'audience' voice yells, "Y nosotros, que anda," [plays norteño]		
Ad: Wallgreens		
Univision Noticias, preview		
Ad: Noticias Univision 62, local television affiliate		
Ad: Club 82nd		
Ad: Direct TV, soccer packages		
Ad: ATT&T Windows Phone		
Ad: McDonalds		

Station ID: Y ahora, otra hora con mucha más música llegadora. 104.3 La Que Buena. Nadie toca más.		
Se Nos Murío El Amor	El Güero Y Su Banda Centenario	Dur/Tierra Cali
Song ID: El Güero Y Su Banda, "Se Nos Murio El Amor"		
<p>DJ: La Que Buena 104.3. Nadie toca más música. Felicidades a nuestra ganadora que se llevo este par de boletos para el gran bailazo de Los Cuatro de Sinaloa y Los Diferentes De La Sierra. Te quiero decir estas invitado para que nos mandes tu mensaje de texto al ###-#### con la palabra "buena." Que por cierto (?), le mando beso enorme Herman y Jerico de parte de su papi, que los quiere muchísimo. Para toda la gente de Guerrero, muchachones, portense bien, La Que Buena.</p>		
<p>Congratulations to our winner who is taking home a pair of tickets to the big dance party by Los Cuatro de Sinaloa and Los Diferentes de la Sierra. I want to tell you that you're invited to send us a text message to ###-#### with the key word "buena." By the way, I'm sending a big kiss to Herman and Jerico on behalf of their father, who loves them very much. To all the people of Guerrero, boys, better behave, La Que Buena.</p>		
En Cambio Tu	Tierra Cali	Dur/Tierra Cali
Ad: Piolín, la broma de hora giveaway		
Al Diablo Lo Nuestro	Espinoza Paz	Banda
Station ID: La Que Buena. [Artists] "Que tal amigos, nosotros somos [together] Cardenales de Nuevo Leon. Sigue escuchando más música norteña aquí en" 104.3 Que Buena.		
Estado Civil	Vicente Fernández	Ranchera
<p>DJ: La Que Buena 104.3. Nadie toca más música. Oiga, le quiero mandar una saludito enorme a mi ?, recupare pronto por de un accidente que tuvo por hay. Te mando muchos besitos. Por cierto, recuerden que en punto de las cinco de la tarde El Bolillo les presenta un buen combiazo. Además para todos que se quieren seguir registrando para la Piolín Piñata, ganar sus boletos por los mejores bailes, y muchas, muchas más cosas. No se pierda al Bolillo a partir de las 4 de la tarde. Para más información visítanos página en internet www.laquebuena1043.com, La Que Buena.</p>		
<p>Hey I want to send a big greeting to my ?, get better soon from an accident he had somewhere. I'm sending you lots of kisses. By the way, remember that at five o'clock on the dot, El Bolillo will present a good mix of music. Moreover, for all those who want to keep registering for the Piolín Piñata, win your tickets to the best dances, and many, many more things, do not miss Bolillo beginning at 4 in the afternoon. For more information visit us at our web page www.laquebuena1043.com. La Que Buena</p>		
La Llamada	La Firma	Balada

Figure 4: La Jefa (Univision) 2-3PM, Dec. 6, 2010

Song	Artist	Genre
Que Vuelva	Horoscopos de Durango	Dur/Tierra Cali
Pre-recorded song ID: Que Vuelva		
Station ID: KLJA Georgetown, Austin, La Jefa 107.7 La mera mera. Un estación de la familia Univisión		
Millonario de Amor	Sergio Vega "El Shaka"	Dur/Tierra Cali
Song ID: Sergio Vega, El Shaka, Millonario de Amor		
Station ID: La Jefa 107.7 La mera mera		
Gente de Arranque	Voz de Mando	Banda, Waltz
Pre-recorded caller montage: [Female] ? Escuchando en el trabajo La Jefa 107.7 La mera mera. [Male] A mi me gusta La Jefa 107.7 porque pone música bien perrona.		
Ando Bien Pedo	Banda Los Recoditos	Banda
Ad: Mexican Customs, holiday travel advice		
Ad: Cuentas Claras, women and finances, sponsored by Allstate		
Ad: Allstate		
Ad: Univision.com iPhoe/iPod application		
Ad: Novelasyserias.com		
Station ID: Con mas música jefa, 107.7 La Jefa		
El Columpio	Rieleros del Norte	Norteño, waltz, w/ sax
Song ID: Rieleros del Norte, El Columpio		
Station ID: La Jefa 107.7 cerrado ?		
Me Gusta Lo Bueno	Los Dareyes de la Sierra	Banda, in 3, w/ Acc
DJ Talk: Ay, La Jefa 107.7 que te invita a la gran celebración navideña próximo miércoles 8 Dec. Club Gorilaz del 10700 de North Lamar. Se presenta Grupo Puente con Arturo Rodriguez, ex-vocalista de Guardianes del Amor. No te la pierdas con La Jefa 107.7		
[Ay, La Jefa 107.7 invites you to the big holiday celebration next Wednesday, December 8th at Club Gorillas at 10700 North Lamar. Group Puente will be there, with Arturo Rodrigues, ex-vocalist of Guardianes del Amor. Don't miss it, with La Jefa 107.7]		

El Enamorado	Los Titanes de Durango	Banda
Ad: Toydrive, ad cut off mid-way		
Ad: Cuentas Claras, reviewing credit reports, sponsored by Allstate		
Ad: Allstate, good driver rewards		
Ad: Nationwide Insurance, family plan (including extended family in your home)		
Ad: Univision.com iPhoe/iPod application		
Ad: Mexican Customs, holiday travel advice		
Station ID: Parte de la familia Univision radio. Solo 107.7 La Jefa, La mera mera		
El Buchon	Los de Sonora	Banda, lead acc, huapango
Station ID: La Jefa 107.7		
Comandos del MP	Voz de Mando	Banda, lead acc, narcocorrido
Song ID: Voz de Mando, Comandos del MP		
DJ Talk: La Jefa 107.7, La mera mera en Austin. Oiga, no se pierda las domingos por la noche la transmisión en vivo desde club Gorilaz en el 10700 del North Lamar. Es el mejor ambiente en Austin con la mejor mezcla de música en el Club Gorilaz. La Jefa 107.7. Ahora si vamonos! Subale!		
[Ay, La Jefa 107.7, The best one in Austin. Hey, don't miss out on Sunday night's the live broadcast from Club Gorilaz on 10700 North Lamar. It's the best scene in Austin, with the best mix of music in Club Corilaz. La Jefa 107.7. That's it! Let's go! Turn it up!		
Pistear, Pistear, Pistear	Chuy Lizarraga	Banda, huapango?
Esta Llorando Mi Corazon	Beto y sus Canarios	Banda w acc, polka
Station ID: 107.7 La Jefa		
Lobo Domesticado	Valentin Elizalde y su Banda La Guasaveña	Banda, rhythm? - orig salsa
Station ID: Mas música [musical montage], mas música jefa. 107.7		
Ad: Cuentas Claras, reviewing credit reports, sponsored by Allstate		
Ad: Allstate, good driver rewards		
Ad: Mexican Customs, holiday travel advice		
Station ID: Escuchas 107.7 La Jefa, la mera mera		

Solo Junto a Ti	Conjunto Atardecer	Dur/Tierra Cali
Song ID: Conjunto Atardecer, Solo Junto a Ti		
Ad: Raul Brindís y Pepito Morning Show		
Valentin Elizalde	Te Quiero Así	Banda, polka
Song ID: Valentin Elizalde, Te Quiero Así		
<p>DJ Talk: Es La Jefa 107.7 La mera mera en Austin. Que te invita a la transmisión en vivo en Club Escapade 2000 todos los sabados y lunes por la noche con la parranda garantizada en Club Escapade 2000. Mic Mic [calls to DJ entering studio]! Como están, está frio, verdad? Pero está bonito el día. No se pierda las pesadas con mi compadre Conejo, Mic Mic.</p>		
<p>[This is La Jefa 107.7, the best in Austin. We want to invite you to the live transmission in Club Escapade 2000 every Saturday and Monday night, good time guaranteed at Club Escapade 2000. Mic Mic! How are you [two people enter studio], it's cold out, isn't it? But it's a pretty day. Don't miss out on the fun with my friend Conejo Mic Mic.] *Las pesadas, is refereing to a heavy handed joke, and Conejo is his friend's nickname.</p>		
Quiereme Mas	Patrulla 81	Dur/Tierra Cali
Station ID: 107.7 La Jefa		
Fruta Prohibida	Los Elegidos	Banda, in slow 2
Station ID: Cierro con La Jefa 107.7		
Si La Quieres	Horóscopos de Durango	Dur/Tierra Cali

Figure 5: Fiesta Mexicana 1PM, Dec. 6, 2010

Song	Artist	Genre
Ebrio de Amor	Valentin Elizalde	Banda
Donde Vas Chiquilla		Banda
Mi Amante	Sergio Vega	Banda
Station ID: Acarrate de la fiesta. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Sufre	Los Dareyes de la Sierra	Banda
Station ID: En Austin, más artistas, más música con Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Y Si Te Robo	El Coyote y Su Banda	Banda
Vas a Aprender a Llorar	El Porto de Sinaloa	Banda
Station ID: Durante el dia, casa, trabajo o escuela, visitanos en www.fiesta971.com . Ya viene muy pronto.		
[All day long, at home, at work or at school, visit us at www.fiesta971.com . We'll be right back.]		
Ad: Chulo De La Mañana		
Ad: Los Reyes Mexican Restaurant		
Ad: Salon de Belleza Latinos		
Ad: Buena Suerte Newspaper		
Station ID: Acarrate de la fiesta. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Volver a Mi Serenata	Los Alegres Del Barranco	Norteño
Station ID: Fiesta Mexican 97.1FM		
El Troquero Lococho	Geraldo Ortiz	Banda
Station ID: Acarrate de la fiesta. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Tu Camisa Puesta	Jenni Rivera	Banda
Amor a la Ligera	Banda Rancho Viejo	Banda
Station ID: Directamente desde Guadalajara, esperale Noches de Fiesta a partir de las 8 de la noche. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Los Secretos de Amor / Yo Me Siento a Morir / Si yo te extraño / Si tu no vuelves	?	Banda
Station ID: Acarrate de la fiesta. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Envueltos en sabanas	Adan Romero	Banda

Ponte En Mi Lugar	Espinoza Paz	Banda
Ad: Chulo de a Mañana		
Amor de Habitación	Lobito de Sinaloa	Banda
Niña de mi corazón	La Arrolladora Banda Limon	Banda
Station ID: Acarrate de la fiesta. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Ad: NoteHispano, syndicated program on Fiesta Mexicana		
Se Fue	El Trono De Mexico	Dur/Tierra Cali
El Corrido de Don Alejo Garza Tamez	Sinaloa 21	Banda w acc, narco.
Station ID: Acarrate de la fiesta. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
Mideo	Vicent Fernández	Ranchera
Station ID: Esta es la casa de Chulo. Fiesta Mexicana 97.1FM		
El Proximo Tonto	Banda Machos	Banda, heavy synth

Figure 6: La Ley, San Antonio 3-4PM, Dec. 8, 2010*

Song	Artist	Genre
Pobre Loco	Duelo	Norteño
DJ Talk:		
Mix Angelez Azules	Angelez Azules	Grupera, cumbia, medley
Station ID: La Ley 95.7		
Si Supieras	La Leyenda	Norteño, slow cumbia
DJ Talk:		
Me Apagaste la Luna	Chon Arauza	Grupera
Station ID		
[Break]		
Robarte un Beso	Intocable	Norteño, rock drums
DJ Talk:		
Pero Tu No Estats	Flash	Grupera, cumbia
Station ID		
Mil Veces Te Querre	Salomon Robles	Norteño, cumbia
Station ID: Mas música sin parrar. La Ley 95.7		
Cuanto Te Debo	Traileros	Norteño
Station ID: La Que Manda, La Ley, La Ley 97.5		
[Break]		
Station ID: La Que Manda en San Antonio, La Ley 97.5		
Amarte a la Antigua	Capi	Cumbia
DJ Talk:		
Tus Mentiras	Pesado	Norteño
Station ID		
Cumbia Navideña	Fito Olivares	Cumbia
DJ Talk:		
Necesito Mas de Tí	Duelo	Norteño
Station ID: La Ley 95.7		

Si Me Hubieran Dicho	LMT	Norteño, cumbia
DJ Talk:		
A Ella	El Poder del Norte	Norteño
News		
Station ID:		
Maria Salome	Mojado	Norteño, cumbia

*Disrupted transmission made transcription of talk impractical.

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