

My TV Wish List for Future: Latin-Culture Network but with English Dialogue

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My TV Wish List for Future: Latin-Culture Network but with English Dialogue

By Amanda Osorio
UCF Forum columnist
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I am watching beautiful, empowering African American women being celebrated on a BET show called *Black Girls Rock!* The audience is full of African Americans celebrating their accomplishments, and network CEO Debra Lee and first lady Michelle Obama come out onstage to address these successful women.

I am watching with the feeling of awe and empowerment for myself, but as a Latin woman instead. Then I stop for minute and ask my mother, “Why isn’t there a Latin network like BET?”

She replied, “There is: Univision and Telemundo.” I flip to them during the commercial break and watch.

“It’s in Spanish,” I responded.

“You asked for a Latin network. There it is,” she said.

I can’t accept this. I didn’t grow up watching a predominately Spanish-speaking network. I speak English and my favorite shows do not consist of Spanish soap operas or outrageous game shows made for my abuela in the middle of the afternoon.

The Latin network I look for is a mixture of English AND Spanish demographics that have TV shows such as *Jane the Virgin* and *Ugly Betty*, where the base is from a Latin culture, but the portrayal combines an American script.

Not every Hispanic and Latino speaks Spanish from an infant. Not every Hispanic embraces their Latin roots so obviously. I am one of those children who is a first-generation American. My identity is defined by listening and watching Beyonce instead of Selena; Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul, instead of Celia Cruz, the Queen of Salsa; and Drake instead of Daddy Yankee.

So why isn’t there a network for Latin viewers like myself where we can be proud of our beautiful heritage, while balancing what America has to offer? New York, Chicago and even my new neighborhood, Kissimmee, has a diaspora of Puerto Ricans that are proud of our culture but embrace our American culture as well.

Actress Gina Rodriguez said it best with how she views this idea: Movement Mondays. Her social hashtag invites the idea of Latinos and Latinas creating a more diverse Hollywood through music, movies and the media.

Since I'm enrolled this semester in Knightly Latino, a UCF student group that produces stories of interest to the Central Florida Latino community, I am more passionate to envision this network. I am glad that we have some platforms that balance the Latin and American culture: Latina Magazine, South Florida radio station 94.9 FM Hits that combines Latin music and American pop hits, and lastly the Latin American Studies classes at UCF, which provide courses and a better understanding of our culture with pride.

It is now more important than ever to accept Latin citizens who will create shows, music, and movies that will impact and inspire others. So why isn't there a network where we can finally embrace these achievements without stereotyping us in one box?

There are many U.S. residents of Hispanic heritage who would love such a new network, which would immediately attract a lot of viewers.

Someday soon I hope to sit down and watch some Hispanic-themed shows in English, combining the best of my worlds.

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