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Chapter Title	Yvonne Orji's Docuseries, <i>First Gen</i> : First-Generational Narratives and the Impact on Audiences' Community Cultural Wealth	
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Abstract	The following chapter, applying community cultural wealth, examines first-generation Nigerian actress, comedienne, and producer Yvonne Orji's YouTube docuseries, <i>First Gen</i> (2015–current). Utilizing qualitative discourse analysis, findings reveal that first-generation American immigrants' experiences encourage and cultivate various forms of cultural capital, including aspiration and social capital, among immigrants and non-immigrants audiences. The narratives presented, and the subsequent audience comments, offer critique of intercultural differences including the tension often experienced by immigrants, including managing familial and cultural expectations and Eurocentric practices, the media's role in promoting assimilation, and the work of reimagining what constitutes an American identity.	
Keywords (separated by “ - ”)	Community cultural wealth - First-generation immigrants - Media - Qualitative discourse analysis	

Yvonne Orji's Docuseries, *First Gen*: First- Generational Narratives and the Impact on Audiences' Community Cultural Wealth

David L. Stamps

INTRODUCTION

Media representation is dynamic and evolving, and the influence of such depictions matters regarding viewers. To illustrate, previous literature posits that viewing favorable media portrayals is beneficial to audiences as material discourages stigmatization of the groups portrayed and prompts healthy self-perceptions among audiences of similar identities (McKinley et al., 2014; Stamps, 2020a). Building on this notion, the following chapter draws focus toward first-generation American immigrants, not only as represented in media but as media consumers and content creators. Specifically, this chapter examines Yvonne Orji, a first-generation Nigerian producer, actress, comedienne, and writer's docuseries, *First Gen* (2015–current), highlighting narratives of first-generation American immigrant's

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18 experiences in the United States. Within the series, individuals share their
19 stories, including confronting interracial and intercultural group differ-
20 ences and navigating perceptions of being framed as “other” in social spaces.

21 To this end, the following chapter discusses media and its influence on
22 viewers, offers an introduction to Orji’s docuseries, *First Gen*, followed by
23 tenets from the theoretical framework, community cultural wealth (CCW;
24 Yosso, 2005). CCW is adopted to examine media that not only elevates
25 the narratives of first-generation American immigrants but also showcases
26 how representation in Orji’s docuseries *First Gen* creates varied forms of
27 cultural capital among viewers. This is followed by the methodology used
28 for analyzing *First Gen* as well as over 350 user-generated online com-
29 ments by viewers of the same material. Last, findings and implications
30 from those outcomes are presented.

31 *Media’s Influence on Audiences*

32 Media messages communicate information about the behaviors, attitudes,
33 beliefs, and norms of different groups in society (Mastro & Stamps, 2018).
34 Unsurprisingly, these messages, when framed unfavorably, have wide-
35 ranging implications on audiences, including intergroup conflict and neg-
36 ative impacts on the viewer’s perceptions of society (Mastro, 2009).
37 However, when framed favorably, the media has the potential to positively
38 influence viewers’ self-esteem, self-confidence, and individual aspirations
39 (Stamps, 2020b). Likewise, counter-storytelling, such as reclaiming one’s
40 narrative in media, allows groups to be centered and build community
41 through shared identities and experiences (Ramasubramanian et al.,
42 2020). The opportunity for viewers to seek positive portrayals in media
43 has arguably shifted as traditional media outlets (e.g., broadcast television)
44 have become one of many opportunities for audiences to view content.
45 Additional outlets, including streaming services (e.g., Hulu), subscription
46 and pay-cable (e.g., HBO), and digital/social media (e.g., YouTube and
47 Facebook Live), offer various platforms for media consumption and
48 exposure.

49 Each of these media platforms has increased the opportunity for varied
50 communities to produce content that may elevate varying identities (e.g.,
51 race, gender, sexuality, immigration status) and the lived experiences of
52 groups that are often underrepresented (Stamps, 2020a). For example,
53 Issa Rae, writer, producer, and actress, created the web series, *Awkward*
54 *Black Girl* (2011–2013), and distributed it via her YouTube channel. The

series featured underrepresented characters telling stories and showcasing narratives that personified racial minorities in general and African-American women specifically. Not only was the platform a launchpad for Rae's Home Box Office (HBO) scripted series *Insecure* (2016–current) and her participation in films such as *The Hate U Give* (2018), the creation of *Awkward Black Girl* gave Rae autonomy. Rae coordinated, distributed, and managed the content, including other media-based projects, through her YouTube channel, each of which reflected identities unique to herself and her audience (Sherman, 2015).

Non-traditional media platforms, such as YouTube, offer opportunities for portrayals of varied groups to be celebrated and centered in media, such as first-generation American immigrants. Likewise, they provide depictions that highlight groups' intersectional identities, including those based on gender, race, and sexuality. To illustrate, The Shorty Awards, an annual awards ceremony honoring the best of digital media content, recognized media featuring narratives of LGBT American immigrants produced and distributed by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). This work notably was circulated on social and digital media making such content accessible to its audience. This material underscored the day-to-day lives of individuals who are often erased from or minimized in society. This work by HRC, specifically available on non-traditional media, provided viewers a space to see themselves and their lives reflected on-screen. This example offers support that immigrant portrayals in media, when present and accessible, may provide diverse representation and the potential to impact viewers when those same populations can tell their story.

This chapter aims to support such claims, advocating that media created by and tailored toward first-generation American immigrants can contribute to the viewer's self-perception in the form of acquired cultural capital. An examination of this type is appropriate as audiences are actively viewing media produced and distributed through non-traditional platforms (i.e., streaming and digital services) and exercising greater autonomy with regard to creating, sharing, and interacting with media content (Ito et al., 2009). For many viewers, particularly immigrants and non-white audiences, non-traditional media outlets are among the few spaces where favorable media representation exists (Sun et al., 2015). Considering these realities, this chapter recognizes media content from a non-traditional platform created by and representing first-generation American immigrants. This examination posits that audiences often situated on the

93 margins, when centered in media content, may view their identities and
 94 narratives as wide-ranging and multi-dimensional.

95 This reality, highlighting the vibrant identities and experiences of first-
 96 generation American immigrants, is necessary. First-generation American
 97 immigrants' distinctiveness includes examples of facing unique barriers
 98 that non-group members rarely confront. These include, but are not lim-
 99 ited to, the migration experience, including arriving in a new country with
 100 social and personal cues that differ significantly. Other examples involve
 101 treatment by peers in social spaces such as educational environments. For
 102 instance, many first-generation American immigrants face hardship nego-
 103 tiating homelife and school or professional settings. The expectations and
 104 social cues between these competing worlds often render individuals
 105 stressed and perplexed as they attempt to embrace self-efficacy and accom-
 106 modate people from both environments (Bondy et al., 2017). The expect-
 107 ation of achieving "The American Dream," a notion of prosperity, success,
 108 and upward social mobility, is often expected of first-generation American
 109 immigrants. Yet, representation of the dialectic tension between preserv-
 110 ing a cultural identity that is often counter to an assimilative existence in
 111 the United States is scarce in media. How does an individual decide what
 112 to wear, eat, and how to talk in social spaces that arguably vilify cultural
 113 and ethnic differences? Orji's work, *First Gen*, ushers in a much-needed
 114 representative piece, acknowledging and addressing these queries.

115 ***First Gen (2015–Current)***

116 Yvonne Orji is best known for her television character Molly Carter, in the
 117 Issa Rae and Larry Wilmore co-created and produced scripted series
 118 *Insecure* (2016–current). Orji was born in Nigeria, received a bachelor's
 119 and master's degree from George Washington University, and shifted her
 120 academic and professional goals toward pursuing comedy during a beauty
 121 pageant after performing stand-up for the first time (Davis, 2016). Orji's
 122 breakout role in *Insecure*, created for and by Black people, introduces
 123 audiences to an unapologetic first-generation American immigrant and
 124 her work, the docuseries, *First Gen* builds on those multi-dimensional
 125 experiences.

126 *First Gen* consists of straight-to-camera interviews from first-generation
 127 American immigrants. These individuals discuss their personal experiences
 128 with confronting cultural stereotypes, navigating interracial and intercultural
 129 group differences, and coping with feelings of isolation in social

spaces (e.g., school). *First Gen* also includes short, comical interviews with varied individuals whose cultural knowledge is tested regarding subject matter, such as naming countries within Africa. Last, *First Gen* debuts a situational comedy pilot trailer centered on Orji and her family's transition to and life in the United States. Each vignette in *First Gen* is available on YouTube. Viewers are able (and encouraged via the descriptions under each video) to leave comments related to the content.

The conversations by first-generation American immigrants presented in *First Gen*, including by Orji, embrace varied understandings that resonate with audiences across the spectrum of identities, including, but not limited to, race, gender, sexuality, generational, and immigrant status. These narratives are also told from a non-white, first-generation American immigrant point-of-view, centering voices that are often erased within mass media. Within this work, it is recognized that Orji's work, representing often-ostracized audiences and placing first-generation identities as a prominent feature of storytelling, creates and reinforces social and cultural capital for first-generation American immigrants (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Considering this, the framework CCW is applied to demonstrate how affirmative media creates community, builds cultural capital, and offers audiences content that may increase self and group perceptions.

Community Cultural Wealth

Grounded in critical race and critical cultural theorizing, CCW considers the unique nature of historically oppressed and marginalized groups engaging in counter-storytelling and "naming one's own reality" (Yosso, 2005, p. 72). Specifically, Yosso (2005) defines CCW as an inclusive framework acknowledging the "knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by communities of color to survive and resist macro and microforms of oppression" (p. 77). Yosso (2005) initially adopts CCW as a mechanism to challenge deficit interpretations of social and cultural capital in unequal schooling outcomes for racial minorities. However, the recent CCW application among qualitative and critical cultural scholars argues that favorable media depictions may also provide social and cultural capital to audiences (see Brooms & Davis, 2017; Stamps, 2020b).

Yosso (2005) identifies six forms of capital within the CCW framework. These include linguistic capital (varied communication skills shared among a group), navigational capital (an individual's ability to maneuver through

167 social institutions), and resistance capital (the knowledge, skills, and
168 thoughtful engagement that inform behaviors to resist subordination).
169 The remaining three types of capital inform this analysis. These include
170 aspirational capital (the ability to maintain hope and dreams for the
171 future), social capital (an individual's resources used to navigate societal
172 issues), and familial capital (social networks to build community when fac-
173 ing oppression and marginalization).

174 Community cultural wealth disentangles the notion that capital is solely
175 associated with the accumulation of monetary wealth and class status
176 (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). In contrast, CCW focuses on cultural prac-
177 tices and individual experiences that enable individuals to negotiate and
178 navigate social situations. These tools may be found within an array of
179 settings, including exposure to and consumption of media (Brooms &
180 Davis, 2017; Stamps, 2020b).

181 First-generation American immigrants often exist at the intersection of
182 immigration status, race, gender, and other identities. The distinctiveness
183 of their lived experiences is complicated as each faces different forms of
184 xenophobia, racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of discrimination in
185 the United States. CCW offers a lens to examine how these community
186 members can reclaim personhood and experience favorable outcomes
187 through building community, seeing representations of themselves in
188 media, and ideally experience increases in well-being in the midst of deal-
189 ing with prejudice.

190 To illustrate, Stamps' (2020b) research highlights several media depic-
191 tions of minorities in scripted television that embody a spectrum of identi-
192 ties, including race, class, and sexuality. They argue that these media
193 characters offer viewers the opportunity to broaden their self-perception,
194 increase favorability toward their social group, and create the potential for
195 increasing resistance, aspirational, and navigational capital. Katz (2010),
196 while not explicitly applying CCW, distinguishes immigrants, particularly
197 immigrant adolescents' media use, as a direction-finding tool providing
198 navigational and social capital for viewers in seeking health-related
199 resources and building trust with community-based organizations.

200 Contrary to deficit-oriented frameworks, which attempt to explain how
201 media reinforces social stigmas and stereotypes among audiences, CCW
202 illustrates how Orji's docuseries, *First Gen*, provide social and cultural
203 wealth for first-generation American immigrant audiences. By examining
204 *First Gen's* inspirational narratives, the chapter draws an association

between media text and audiences' potential to build and nurture aspirational, social, and familial capital. 205
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From this integrated perspective, the following research question(s) 207
frame this examination. Within the docuseries *First Gen*, which thematic 208
narratives are presented among first-generation American immigrants? 209
Notably, within the first-person interviews, what stories are shared, 210
acknowledging the unique experiences of first-generation American immi- 211
grants? Second, how do viewers of the docuseries demonstrate cultural 212
capital via their user-generated comments from the media vignettes pre- 213
sented in *First Gen*? 214

METHOD 215

Building upon previous literature analyzing identities and dialectal engage- 216
ment within mediated contexts, qualitative discourse analysis was con- 217
ducted by a team of undergraduate research assistants and the author 218
(Stamps, 2020b). Qualitative discourse analysis addresses the discursive 219
properties of communicative engagement concerning the broader social 220
structures and cultural practices (Cheek, 2004). *First Gen* provides an 221
opportunity to increase the understanding of the human experience. In 222
this particular instance, the experiences of first-generation American immi- 223
grants who, in the past, are disputably underrepresented within a substan- 224
tial amount of media text and scholarship. Applying qualitative discourse 225
analysis presents the rare occasion to consider the dual relationship 226
between media subjects (i.e., those depicted within *First Gen*) and 227
responses from audience members via user-generated comments. By 228
examining the broader discourse and the agency displayed by audiences' 229
viewing of media content, we may better understand how audiences dem- 230
onstrate CCW. 231

Data Procedures 232

Four undergraduate research assistants participated in four, one-hour 233
training sessions on thematic coding. The coding process included analyz- 234
ing media text, identifying salient themes within the content, returning as 235
a group, and collectively re-examining that data. The research team mem- 236
bers received physical and digital copies of the user-generated comments, 237
digital links to the *First Gen* media content, and physical materials (e.g., 238
writing utensils and note pads). Research assistants were encouraged to 239

240 reread and revisit all data as needed and retain all notes during the coding
241 process. For the analysis, each vignette was watched with enough repeti-
242 tion to conduct an in-depth examination, including explication of the ver-
243 bal discourse, transcription of the text, and concentrated attention toward
244 implicit and explicit messages that illustrate the experiences of first-
245 generation American immigrants. This method is in line with existing
246 research examining media content that may influence audiences' impres-
247 sion formation, judgment, and attitudes (Williams & Korn, 2017). Once
248 researchers completed their analysis, data were analyzed collectively, and
249 consistent themes were discussed and clustered together with supporting
250 quotes from media vignettes.

251 The analysis of user-generated comments was conducted using Yosso's
252 (2005) descriptions of CCW. The research team categorized each com-
253 ment (when applicable), filing them within one (or more) of the types of
254 cultural capital (e.g., aspirational capital, social capital, and familial capi-
255 tal). After performing initial coding, the research team collectively clus-
256 tered the comments into appropriate types of capital. Open discussion of
257 where each comment would best support a particular type of cultural capi-
258 tal occurred until an agreement was met among the research team (see
259 Stamps, 2018).

260 Media Content Media content available on the *First Gen* YouTube
261 page includes six media vignettes and the pilot trailer. With roughly twenty
262 minutes and thirty-four seconds of footage, *First Gen* defines, through
263 narratives, what it means for first-generation American immigrants to be
264 "othered" in various spaces in the United States. The series also highlights
265 the unfamiliarity that many individuals experienced with varied cultural
266 and socialization practices. Each media vignette is available on YouTube,
267 and the episodes available date back to February 4, 2015. User-Generated
268 Comments A portion of data for the current chapter included user-
269 generated comments posted below the *First Gen* media vignettes.
270 Published comments appeared between 2015 and 2019. At the time of
271 data collection, 354 comments were available, and authors of those com-
272 ments used an alias (e.g., "smartaleck05") or their full name, and either
273 was displayed above the comment. Within the sample of quotes refer-
274 enced, only first names or alias are used to encourage anonymity.
275 Individuals could comment on the *First Gen* media vignettes and reply to
276 previous comments from other users. Both original comments and replies
277 to original comments were analyzed. Not all individuals who posted

comments on the *First Gen* YouTube page explicitly state that they identify are first-generation American immigrants. However, comments such as “Finally! As a first-generation Nigerian-American, I want to see something LIKE THIS!” provide evidence that a considerable number of viewers identify as first-generation American immigrants. Thus, all user-generated comments were included in the analysis. Findings

Analysis from Media Content

Upon examination of the *First Gen* media vignettes, two overarching themes emerged: how mass media often presents white narratives as normative, and the personal feeling of being “othered” as a first-generation American immigrant in various social spaces. On-camera participants discussed how mainstream American television typically normalizes white storylines and socialization practices. However, these depictions are often representative of whiteness and often contradicted the cultural exercises of many first-generation American immigrant families. One Asian American interviewee shared, “I was ‘shanghaied’ by [the TV show] *Full House* (1987–1995) because they [the characters] talked about anything and I thought I could do that too ... but it’s not true.” This participant further reveals that within her family discussing private matters and taking part in public activities that may be viewed as shameful are considered improper. For this participant, the storylines presented in *Full House* created a myth that people are generally extroverted, individualistic, and blatantly direct regarding communication with family members. These misnomers were among the first opportunities where the interviewee witnessed their culture and cultural practices minimized or erased. The media depictions presented in *Full House* symbolically erased their high-context cultural dynamic and social norms, showing a falsehood regarding how various families communicate.

In another example, an Indian-American interviewee discusses an occasion when their cultural identity was disparaged within a social setting:

In the sixth grade, there was this class assignment where everyone had to bring a recipe from home, a potluck lunch, and everyone was bringing in their mom’s favorite recipe that they usually eat at home, and I was the only one that had ethnic food. I was the only one that went home [at the end of the day] with a completely full tray. No one tried anything, not even a bite; everyone was super weirded out by it.

314 The participant later in the video shares that eating ethnic cuisine is trendy
315 *now* but admits that growing up, consuming ethnic cuisine in public could
316 feel isolating. This remark demonstrates how someone could feel “oth-
317 ered” by identifying their cultural cuisine as “weird” due to an explicit
318 distinction between her and her peers’ identity. Likewise, the lack of
319 acknowledging diverse cuisine within an activity meant to represent differ-
320 ences and inclusion was a failure.

321 This example illustrates how media narratives presented outside of a
322 white, non-immigrant racial frame are needed to normalize immigrant
323 cultures’ particular aesthetics. As Stamps (2019) notes, television pro-
324 grams such as *Jane The Virgin* (2014–2019) and *Fresh Off the Boat*
325 (2015–2020) brought to the small screen immigrant identities and cul-
326 tural representations including those associated with cultural cuisine and
327 coming of age celebrations (e.g., quinceañeras) and holidays (e.g., Chinese
328 New Year). Although the author stops short of implying favorable out-
329 comes among viewers witnessing their identities and cultural representa-
330 tions seen on-screen, the application of CCW, as previous research asserts,
331 may demonstrate the potential for such findings.

332 Another interviewee, an Asian first-generation immigrant, mimicked
333 this same sentiment, sharing the following:

334 There are white people everywhere; then there is me, I’m brown, short,
335 black hair, and the Asian girl. Even though I tried to whitewash myself, had
336 the Abercrombie, had the chains, I was like a skater girl ... and it didn’t
337 work. No matter how much you try to assimilate, at the end of the day, it
338 doesn’t matter.

339 For this impressionable first-generation American immigrant, they did not
340 see their identity within social spaces. They responded by attempting to
341 assimilate to a white or “Americanized” culture, and unfortunately, this
342 action did not render a favorable outcome. To this interviewee, the enact-
343 ment of whiteness was a performance, and the clothes and mannerisms did
344 not detract from their cultural and ethnic appearances.

345 The docuseries highlights the contrast of participants’ first-generation
346 American immigrant identities, American social practices, and how their
347 uniqueness (e.g., cuisine and visual appearance) is considered foreign and
348 viewed as non-normative among peers. This sentiment was also recapped
349 by a first-generation Indian-Spanish male stating: “I think if you don’t fit

the certain mold that people expect of you, they kind of diminish your legitimacy, you're not ethnic enough, Black enough, you are *not* enough." 350
351

The data derived from the *First Gen* media vignettes present the opportunity to examine first-generation American immigrant narratives. While representative of some experiences, these interviewees show how individuals navigate a social and cultural space that often did not wholly represent their cultural identities. These narratives suggest a consistent through-line that non-white, first-generation American immigrants may feel "othered" and often have to confront this in various spaces, including educational settings, and different stages of their lives, from adolescence to adulthood. 352
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The distribution of *First Gen* on the digital media platform YouTube provides an opportunity to investigate the direct responses from audiences via their comments below the content. *First Gen* offers a community-building component as viewers can witness their own identities and lived experiences presented on the platform and engage in discussions via the digital platform. These comments show the potential for audience members to acquire social and cultural capital by viewing first-generation American immigrants' representations in the docuseries. 360
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Aspirational Capital 368

Building on previous work applying CCW, several forms of cultural capital emerged from the examination of audience comments, for example, aspirational capital, which is the ability to maintain and sustain optimism and positivity in the future. This type of cultural capital is best engrossed through cultural lessons and shared advice. Within the data, audiences acknowledge the on-camera interviewees' pursuits and how these shared narratives influenced their ambitions as first-generation American immigrants. An example of this is shown in a comment by Shauna: 369
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My sister and I are both first-generation, and I can so relate to this [*First Gen*]. I, too, am a very artistic person, and having a mother from South America, who sacrificed greatly for us to be here certainly didn't allow for me to feel 100% confident going forward with my gifting ... but I will prevail! 377
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Shauna shows her appreciation for her mother's sacrifice migrating to the United States. However, Shauna admits how her aspirations may not align with her mother's sacrifice. She recognized her first-generation American immigrant identity, her future aspirations, and the possibility for both to 381
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385 co-exist. More importantly, she felt compelled to openly discuss, via the
 386 comment section, the tension that exists, and her determination to suc-
 387 ceed in her endeavors.

388 Viewers shared how they were inspired and found the material in *First*
 389 *Gen* to be relatable and applicable to their identities. Likewise, audience
 390 members recognized how this content could be a catalyst for pursuing
 391 individual goals. As Mossogbe states, “I can definitely relate, we need
 392 [content] like this, thank you so much for pursuing your dreams ... and
 393 showing that I can pursue mine,” and Angela shares, “The accuracy of
 394 this!! This is my life story. I’m in that dilemma as we speak [pursuing one’s
 395 dreams] and trying to figure out where to go next.” Each of these com-
 396 ments speaks to the potential for media representing first-generation
 397 American immigrants’ narratives to provide CCW for audiences with
 398 shared backgrounds and similar aspirations.

399 Interestingly, many first-generation American immigrants discuss the
 400 tension between embracing the “American Dream,” their cultural heri-
 401 tage, and the commitment to family members and parents’ sacrifice to
 402 immigrate to the United States to have access to different opportunities.
 403 To illustrate, Joanna’s comments capture this, recognizing her parent’s
 404 intentions (as well as a jovial connection to one of the individuals speaking
 405 on camera, as they have the same name). She states, “My name is Joanna,
 406 too, and I am a First Gen Jamaican-American. I relate to this so much. I
 407 know parents don’t want anything bad for us—they want the best [for us],
 408 and these videos ring so true.”

409

Social Capital

410 Social capital is recognized as the acquired network of contacts and
 411 resources that individuals rely on to navigate society. Audience members
 412 demonstrate various forms of social capital. For example, individuals lean
 413 on networks, including friends, because of their shared experiences, not-
 414 ing that *First Gen* prompts conversation. Linda shares her experience from
 415 viewing *First Gen* and how it resonates within her social circle as she and
 416 her friends navigate majority-white spaces.

417 I am first gen Jamaican, and most of my friends growing up were first-gen
 418 of some other country/nation/continent/ethnicity (Yugoslavian, Persian,
 419 Italian, Argentinian). I think that was because we indeed had similar experi-

ences. Being first-gen also gives you a dual-layer of Edward Said's concept of "The Other" because, as a first-gen, you are othered in so many different areas—growing [up] alienated from the culture at home, [and] being visibly or audibly othered among the dominant culture.

Linda acknowledges the significance of social circles where similar lived experiences and shared points-of-view take place in safe spaces. She includes how the harsh reality of being American and a first-generation immigrant may create conflict at home as family members may not understand American social cues. Linda shares how confronting a Eurocentric society, which creates and sustains "otherness" among those who are not visibly part of white identity, can feel isolating. This dichotomy is unique to first-generation American immigrants, and these narratives represented in media create a space for viewers to see their personal experiences reflected on-screen.

Viewers note how messages presented in *First Gen* unapologetically discuss what it means to be othered by non-immigrants in the United States. These same audiences mention conflict among family members due to familial expectations that often diverge from family members' notion of success or identity. In some scenarios, these themes are apparent for audiences who may not be first-generation American immigrants. For example, "kemicutie" discusses how *First Gen*'s content relates to her life,

This is pretty much my life, except my mother is Black American. You can only imagine the disappointment ... now at almost 39, I'm a stay-at-home mom. You can imagine the conversation my parents had with me about that choice. Oh yeah, and my husband is white. It was a big deal when my husband tried to call my parents by their first name. You know the rest. This totally speaks to me and shows me that I am not alone in figuring out how to deal with it.

As both an emotional and communal resource, social capital was revealed within comments, demonstrating how audiences face barriers, including within their homes. Viewers may look to media as a resource or respite in the form of social capital, using such text to engage in dialogue about navigating societal issues, including marrying outside of one's culture and seeking social support from friends.

454

Familial Capital

455 Familial capital signifies the creation of communal space with like-minded
 456 individuals, including, but not limited to, family, friends, and other indi-
 457 viduals of a shared identity. This form of capital advances cultural knowl-
 458 edge, employing narratives and storytelling by individuals that possess
 459 shared identities. Familial capital provides a sense of community history
 460 while also engaging in a commitment to community well-being. Within
 461 *First Gen*, audiences identify the narratives that resemble kinship, which
 462 also offer lessons of coping. Stella demonstrates this as she witnesses gen-
 463 erational representation discussed within the media vignettes, and how
 464 they resemble her relationship with her mother and daughter. She under-
 465 scores the significance of her cultural identity and her attempts to intro-
 466 duce those to her child's various social spaces. Stella also realizes the
 467 duplicity as she has to explain her whereabouts to her mother when her
 468 personal choices clash with her mother's cultural beliefs.

469 As a daughter and a mother, I am both Agatha and Joana [interviewees from
 470 the *First Gen* media vignettes]. I am guilty of shoving samosa snacks into my
 471 child's lunch box, all the while trying to come up with a way to explain to
 472 my mother where I spend my Monday evenings—in an improv class in the
 473 basement of a Synagogue! This show [*First Gen*] is worth my support!

474 Stella identifies the tension of navigating an American immigrant identity.
 475 She wants her daughter to embrace their culture. Yet, her personal deci-
 476 sions seem to contradict her desire to respect her mother's expectations,
 477 acknowledging her actions as potentially derailing that goal. Stella reflects
 478 on the intricate nature of her existence as a first-generation American
 479 immigrant and the reality of navigating complicated relationships. Stella
 480 saw her actions (sending her daughter to school with ethnic snacks) as
 481 intentional, and while not the norm, was meant to celebrate her family's
 482 cultural identity. Stella also saw her own choice to downplay or discredit
 483 her ambitions because they may not align with her mother's expectations.
 484 The richness of her existence as a first-generation American immigrant was
 485 made visible in *First Gen*, and she saw herself represented in those
 486 narratives.

487 For many first-generation American immigrants, there exists a unique
 488 path navigating a society that often seeks to erase or whitewash non-
 489 Eurocentric cultural identities, encouraging first-generation American

immigrants to assimilate. Likewise, many individuals wish to respect their family's sacrifice and hold on to their cultural practices and traditions. The docuseries, *First Gen*, illustrates this intricate existence and, for first-generation American immigrants, provides a space for audiences to build community, seek social support, and learn to navigate structures that often minimize their identities and social norms.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

First-generation American immigrant media representation offers viewers the opportunity to see themselves and their day-to-day lives reflected on-screen. Orji, as creator and producer, offers herself and her success as examples of cultural capital for first-generation American immigrants and general audiences alike. Orji proudly shares in her 2020 HBO stand-up special, "Momma, I Made It," how her mother, who once wanted her to become a medical doctor, now asks people, "Have you heard of HBO? Home Box Office. Yes. That's where my daughter is." Orji states that her mother now celebrates her daughter's success as an actress, producer, and comedienne. Likewise, Orji's road to success as a first-generation American immigrant is colorful, celebratory, and, more importantly, as seen in her journey presented in media, possible. Media is a space to witness such stories and, more importantly, inspire others to embrace their identity.

As CCW recognizes, media representation matters, and communities that are often relegated to the margins, including first-generation American immigrants, utilize various spaces, including media, to build cultural capital to create community and thrive in society. *First Gen*'s creator, Yvonne Orji (2015), shares with her audience, who have viewed the *First Gen* media vignettes over 40,000 times, "We're in this great country [America] that affords us the ability to do *other* things, [and] for us to have the 'American dream' and part of that is incorporating America into *our* dreams."

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AU1	Please check if identified heading levels are correct.	
AU2	Please provide details of Bondy et al. (2017) in the reference list.	
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AU5	Please provide missing volume number and page range for reference [Stamps, 2020a, 2020b].	