PREPRINT

Race-ing Masculinity: An Intersectional Analysis of the Spanish Public Platform Series *Riders*

Authors: Orianna Calderón-Sandoval, Ángela Rivera-Izquierdo, and Adelina Sánchez-Espinosa. *Feminist Media Histories*, Vol. 10, Number 4, pp. 109–131. (2024)

ABSTRACT

Studies about representations of *Latinidad* in US and European media have identified stereotypes like criminalization and hypersexualization. Furthermore, it has been argued that comedy operates as a double-edged sword in exposing racism, as humor can be deployed to simultaneously mask/justify and show/denounce racial discrimination and monolithic representations of Latinidad. Using a feminist intersectional perspective that foregrounds constructions of masculinities and racialization/migration as exclusionary factors, this essay discusses how RTVE Playz, the digital platform of the Spanish public television aimed at young audiences, represents *Latinidad* in its series *Riders* (2021). Situated within the dynamics of racialization in Spain, *Riders* stands out as an example of dark humor that both complicates and reinforces stereotypes. Through a close reading of the series, we assess its response to current social, political and cultural citizenship challenges.

KEYWORDS: Intersectionality, latinidad, masculinity, migration, onscreen diversity, public platforms, racialization, Riders, Spanish TV series

---

INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on how RTVE Playz, the digital VOD channel of the Spanish public broadcaster aimed at young audiences, portrays Latinidad—as traversed by racialization, migration, and masculinity—in the series *Riders* (2021). The series is considered a relevant contemporary case study due to its significant number of characters from the Latin American diaspora as well as its central character, a racialized young Spaniard of Colombian descent. Situated within the dynamics of racialization in Spain and how Latinidad, or so-called Latin American Spain, has been represented in Spanish audiovisual artifacts, we argue that *Riders* stands out as an eloquent example of dark humor that both complicates and dangerously reinforces stereotypes of Latinxs and, in particular, of Latino men.

In the first two sections of the essay, we provide information on immigration and racial discrimination in Spain. Next, we outline the depiction of Latinidad on TV, drawing parallels between the representational patterns common to American and Spanish serialized fiction. The fourth section points out the methodology employed in the analysis of the series. The results are presented in the fifth section, and the essay finishes with some concluding remarks regarding the limitations and potentialities of comedy for representing Latinidad.

IMMIGRATION AND RACIALIZATION IN SPAIN

Historically and throughout Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975), Spain was an emigration country, with Spaniards migrating to other places. However, this situation began to change in the 1990s, leading to an immigration "boom" at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with immigrants arriving from North Africa and Latin America, especially from Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina and Bolivia. By 2021 Spain had the largest total number of immigrants of all the European Union member nations.

According to the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE), out of 47.2 million people living in Spain in 2022, 5.58 million, or 12 percent were foreigners. The most common countries of origin were Morocco, Romania, Colombia, United Kingdom and Italy. After Colombia (6.7 percent of the total number of foreigners), the Latin American countries from which most people live in Spain are Venezuela (4.5 percent), Peru (2.5 percent), Honduras (2.4 percent), Ecuador (2.1 percent) and Argentina (1.8 percent). Nevertheless, these data are not exhaustive, as not all immigrants living in Spain are documented, and information on ethnic origin is not collected in any national statistics, as it is considered sensitive information under the 15/1999 Organic Law on personal data protection.

One category that is not reflected in official data is racialization, which has been defined as a process whereby dominant groups use cultural and/or biological criteria such as nationality, ethnicity, religion and language to create social hierarchies seen as "natural, inherited and inevitable." When certain groups are thus racialized, "there is no possibility of conversion, incorporation or inclusion for them in the dominant group." Indeed, naturalized immigrants or second- and third-generation citizens born in Spain of Latin American descent and with evident racialized markers report that, despite having Spanish nationality or having lived in Spain for years, they will never be able to call themselves Spanish, and no Spanish person would regard them as equals. This form of racial discrimination is precisely what the protagonist of *Riders*experiences, as detailed in our close reading of the series.

Significantly, in 2021 the Observatory of Diversity in Spanish Audiovisual Media (ODA) detected an increase in the presence of racialized characters in audiovisual artifacts between 2021 (86 characters, or 7.5 percent of the total number of characters analyzed) and 2022 (212 characters, or 12.3 percent of the total). This growth applies mainly to television series. The ODA 2023 report also reveals that most characters from the Latin American diaspora and/or of Latin American descent are white, and Latinas continue to play hypersexualized roles. ODA's work is an instance of the upsurge of activism against racial discrimination in the Spanish audiovisual industry. Other endeavors include the creation in 2021 of the Migrant and Racialized Women's Group within CIMA—the Association of Women Filmmakers—and from the Audiovisual Media, and the "The Black View" Platform for Ethnic and Racial Diversity in the Artistic Field in Spain. At the European level, a measure has been proposed in Sweden to reduce the under-representation and stereotyping of characters from the Latin American diaspora in the media, following the Chávez-Pérez test, an adaptation of the Bechdel-Wallace test for racialization.

In Spain, the Mixed Parliamentary Group presented a bill for an Organic Law against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance (122/000067) in

March 2024. This bill establishes that the publicly owned media must use antiracist language and guarantee the transmission of equitable, egalitarian, plural and nonstereotyped images of all ethnic and religious groups. Further, this bill comes after the approval in July 2022 of the new version of the General Law on Audiovisual Communication (Law 13/2022), whose lack of concrete measures to guarantee diversity has generated criticism from Spanish stakeholders. CIMA, for instance, reports that its demand to set a 40 percent quota for the broadcasting and cataloging of films and series directed by women was ignored. Lastly, Law 13/2022 entrusts the direct management of the state-owned public audiovisual communication service to RTVE—the Spanish Radio and Television Corporation—and establishes that its programming must reflect political, social and cultural pluralism, promote access to cultural, scientific, historical, and artistic knowledge, and promote the cultural and linguistic diversity of Spain.

RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN SPAIN

On May 21, 2023, during a soccer match between Valencia and Real Madrid at the Mestalla stadium (Valencia, Spain), the Afro-Brazilian Real Madrid player Vinícius Jr. was subjected to racist insults. In January 2023, he had already been the target of a hate crime when his effigy was found hanging from a bridge in Madrid. These highly publicized events are but an example of the racist attitudes prevalent in Spain.

According to Antonia Olmos, racism in Spain operates differently depending on the—perceived—country of origin of the foreigner or racialized person, so that discrimination against, for instance, immigrants from Morocco is not so much skin-color-based as it is Islamophobic. As Olmos argues, this phenomenon can be understood by looking back at the country's colonial history, in particular the milestones in the construction of the myth of the Spanish nation: the *Reconquista* and the *Descubrimiento*. The Spanish Reconquista was a centuries-long war led by the Christian kingdoms of Spain to reclaim the Iberian Peninsula from Muslim rule, which led to the portrayal of North African immigrants as dangerous "fanatic, anti-democratic, male chauvinist." The so-called Discovery of America, however, is full of representations of (Latin) Americans as "good savages" who had to be "civilized," which led to a paternalistic racist view of these "others" as backward and infantile.

The antiracist organization SOS Racismo Spain has been publishing an annual report on racism in the country since 1995. In their latest report, they warn of an increase in the number of racial discrimination complaints, from 29 in 2017 to 50 in 2022. Most of these complaints were filed by people who already have Spanish nationality, which confirms that it is not migratory status but racialization that triggers racist acts. SOS Racismo draws attention to the growth of the right in Spain and Europe, exemplified by the controversial immigration bill passed in France in December 2023 or by the latest European elections results. But anti-immigration and xenophobic discourses are far from new in Spain. The beginning of antiracist movements in Spain was marked by the murder of Dominican immigrant Lucrecia Pérez, committed by a group of far-right extremists in 1992.

Spanish society's hostile attitudes toward immigrants and racialized people tend to be inscribed in a nationalist or culturalist logic. From a nationalist logic, nation and nationality are not socially constructed categories but "essential" realities, so that it is "normal" for each population to live in its national space. From a culturalist logic,

cultures are self-contained realms, and there are "mutually incompatible cultures that cannot coexist peacefully." Both logics lead to self-defense responses against granting "others" "excessive rights," and these "others," in turn, become a "subordinate minority."

Immigrants and racialized citizens are thus placed in the untenable position of having to identify with Spain as a nation, manifesting feelings of belonging and patriotism, while simultaneously being regarded as alien and different. Racialization and migration operate as exclusionary factors that keep immigrants of Latin American origin in a social position inferior to that of the national population. Negative attitudes in Spanish society are further fueled by the media's emphasis on portraying immigrants and racialized people as criminals or, conversely, as precarious victims.

LATINIDAD ON TV

This section outlines the main characteristics of the representation of Latinidad in American and Spanish serialized fiction. After a chronological summary of previous findings on the representation of racialized characters on Spanish television, we look at American television to identify patterns common to both countries. We pay special attention to the prevalent stereotypes at the intersection of gender and Latinidad.

It was not until the 1990s that foreigners and immigrants began to appear more prominently in Spanish media, especially in the so-called cinema of alterity, characterized by critical realism and concerned with issues such as immigration, unemployment, drug use, and non-normative gender and sexuality. During this time, racialized characters tended to play secondary roles, often as the protagonist's friends, and had illegal or subaltern occupations such as domestic work, show businesses or sex work. In addition to their marginality and little relevance to the plots, immigrants were portrayed as passive, victimized bearers of problems that ultimately had to be solved by white characters, depicted as charitable saviors. In sitcoms, a tension between critical parody and the reproduction of negative stereotypes has been found.

The most extensive study to date analyzes over 2000 racialized characters in more than 100 television shows broadcast in 2011 in prime time in Spain. According to its findings, immigrant characters in Spanish fiction play mostly background roles, have less dialogue and are more likely to be illiterate, unskilled, poor or unemployed than white natives. They are also more likely to play villains and be involved in violent acts. More recent studies have shown more positive representations, but negative stereotypes prevail. Racism, xenophobia and discriminatory attitudes are often masked through comedy, as analyses of series such as *Aída* (Telecinco, 2005–2011) and *La que se avecina* (Telecinco, 2007–) have illustrated.

An analysis of the representation, images and stereotypes of Latin Americans in six fiction series broadcast in Spanish prime time during 2014–2017 (*Vis a Vis, Antena 3 and Fox España*, 2015–2019; *La Embajada, Antena 3*, 2016; *La que se avecina*, Telecinco, 2007–; and *Aída*, Telecinco, 2005–2011) shows that, although they are generally characterized as amiable and responsible, they are also portrayed as emotionally unstable due to their uprooting from their homes and families and their enforced acceptance of abusive treatment for the sake of integration into the host collectives.

To our knowledge, no study has analyzed exclusively the intersections between Latinidad and gender in Spanish series. The ODA 2021 diversity report only mentions *Sky Rojo* (Netflix, 2021–2023), highlighted as the series with the highest percentage of racialized women. This aspect, however, has been widely researched in American shows. Researchers have found, for instance, that stereotypes of Latinxs in American television include the negative portrayal of the male "bandit," usually connected to criminality and drugs and featuring centrally in "narconovelas", and women tend to be portrayed as socially disadvantaged victims or martyrs.

This representation of Latina women coincides with the stereotype of the "faithful-self-sacrificing señorita" or the "good-girl/Madonna." Other examples include *Narcos* (Netflix, 2015–2017), centered on drug lord Pablo Escobar, or the case of the Salamancas from *Breaking Bad* (AMC, 2008–2013). The closest female version of the bandit that Charles Ramírez-Berg exposes is the "hyper-sexualised temptress or harlot." Examples include Gabrielle Solís from *Desperate Housewives*(ABC, 2004–2012) and Sofía Vergara's character in *Modern Family*, Gloria Delgado (ABC, 2009–2020). Other common Latinx stereotypes include the male buffoon, such as George López (ABC, 2002–2007), whose female version desexualizes women, as happens with Betty Suárez (*Ugly Betty*, ABC, 2006–2010). This stereotype can be associated with the identification of Latinxs (especially men) as "cowardly, apathetic, and dormant." There is also the Latin lover, a hypersexualized and sometimes violent and possessive male character, like Esteban Reyes (*Weeds*, Showtime, 2005–2012). The female version of this stereotype is the dark lady, also a Latin lover but virginal and inscrutable, as is the case with Jane Villanueva (*Jane the Virgin*, The CW, 2014–2019).

These representational patterns, however, are not set in stone, and often stereotypical characters cannot be reduced to just one single stereotype. A case in point is Joel from *The Last of Us* (HBO, 2023–). Joel, originally white in the videogame that inspired the series, is played by racialized Chilean actor Pedro Pascal. Immersed in a postapocalyptic zombie universe, this character combines violence with affection and care for the teenage coprotagonist. Likewise, in her analysis of *Devious Maids* (ABC, 2013–2016), the first US commercial TV series with five Latina female protagonists, Fitria Sudirman notes that two characters (Carmen and Marisol) subvert views of Latina women. The stereotypes subverted are those that associate Latina women and domestic work, as the characters display independence and toughness, are educated and rebel against male and white supremacy. However, in keeping with the usual trend, these female characters are hypersexualized and presented as erotized or seductive.

Although, as a rule, American TV series, like Spanish ones, advance negative stereotypes of Latinxs, a gradual move toward more complex representations can be observed. The TV series *Vida* (Starz, 2018–2020) resists Anglo-white domination through the use of Spanglish and the introduction of queer culture, in addition to being a feminist show, meaning "that female main characters are prominent in unconventional plots." In their analysis of *One Day at a Time*(Netflix, 2017–2020), Esteban del Río and Kristin Moran contend that the series' "cultural specificity invites solidarity among Latina/os and non-Latina/os alike rather than using national cultural specificity as a comedic wedge," revealing the intrigues of living as a Cuban American woman in Southern California. The series has been categorized as "woke" and speaks to issues such as feminism, the objectification of the female body, queerness and

intergenerational sexual identity, with the potential to challenge dominant representations of Latinas.

This overview shows that there are stereotypes about Latinxs that demonstrate a process of "glocalization," that is, "the flexibility of the global media market to integrate local factors and the ability to articulate local contents in global ideas." The common trend is to represent Latinidad in a controversial and generally negative way across borders, with stereotypes that apply equally to American and Spanish productions. In terms of gender, both male and female characters are represented as socially and educationally disadvantaged. The tendency is to portray male characters as hypermasculine, violent, brutish, associated with illegal activities and, often, overtly sexualized. Women tend to be hypersexualized or portrayed as weak and inferior to men and, in particular, to white male (and also female) supremacy.

METHODOLOGY

After looking at the representational trends of Latinx characters in Spanish and American TV and the concepts and stereotypes that seem at work, we turn to our specific case study, the RTVE Playz series *Riders*.

To carry out the analysis of the series, with a focus on the intersection between Latinidad and masculinity, we—the three authors—first watched the entire series individually, looking for scenes in which race and/or gender were prominent and paying attention to potentially stereotypical portrayals. We then analyzed together the narrative arcs of the protagonist and the six main secondary characters, as well as the soundtrack. We jointly decided to close-read a sample of ten scenes. Following a feminist close reading, our interpretation of the scenes was informed by our critically situated stances within Feminist Intersectional and Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities frames.

Close reading as a methodology implies effectively putting the focus on the external world of politics and society when performing textual analysis. As a feminist methodology, it also implies taking on board our own contextual positionalities, as Jasmina Lukić and Adelina Sánchez Espinosa remark when addressing how different results can arise from different interpretative frameworks. Thus, our feminist approach to close reading foregrounds gender as a critical concept and attends to intersectionality, acknowledging race, class and age.

Intersectionality refers to "how multiple interlocking social identities reflect diverse systems of power, privilege, oppression, and inequity." There is a growing concern to study men and masculinities from an intersectional perspective, with Aída Hurtado and Mrinal Sinha's *Beyond Machismo: Intersectional Latino Masculinities* being of particular interest to our study. Hurtado and Sinha argue that studies of men and masculinities tend to impose an either/or way of thinking that obscures how Latino men experience patriarchal privilege and marginalization as a result of the construction of their social identities. They argue that the term machismo has been used extensively to talk about Latinxs, ignoring the diversity of attitudes among Latino men and the sociocultural changes affecting their communities. The analysis offered here investigates how the intersection between gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity and social class is reflected in a contemporary Spanish series with a Latino man as its protagonist. Our interest in whether machismo continues to be the

standard in representing Latino men leads us to make use of concepts developed by gender studies and, more specifically, within Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities, such as Raewyn Connell's "hegemonic masculinity"; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's "homosexual panic"; "caring masculinities" by Anna Jordan, Karla Elliot or Nial Hanlon; and the relationship between masculinity and violence in Sayak Valencia's "endriago" subjects.

Finally, we look at *Riders* having in mind Cedric Clark's stage model of representation, which articulates a key organizing principle for understanding how the media constructs representations of minority social groups. Following this model, racial/ethnic groups go through four stages of representation in the media. At the first stage, invisibility or nonrecognition, a particular race or ethnic group rarely appears on screen, being systematically unacknowledged. At the second stage, ridicule, a racial group will appear more frequently but represented as stereotypically stupid, lazy, irrational, one-dimensional or simply laughable. At the third stage, regulation, an ethnic group may be represented in roles that uphold social order, as judges or policemen, that is, as enforcers or administrators of the dominant group's norms. Finally, a particular social group reaches the stage of respect when its members play diverse and nuanced roles, being represented equally to any other (dominant) group. Within Clark's model, the representation of Latinidad in Spanish series seems to oscillate between between the first two stages. Our aim is to explore to what extent this applies to our case study, considering that *Riders* belongs to a hybrid genre between thriller and comedy-drama.

RIDERS: THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD OF COMEDY

Produced by RTVE and LACOproductora with a script by Alejandro Alcaraz and Javi Valera, *Riders* is a Spanish streaming comedy-thriller series that premiered on RTVE Playz in May 2021. Directed by Beatriz Abad, it tells the story of Áxel, an aspiring video game programmer of Colombian descent who must work as a rider delivering food by bicycle after his younger brother falls into debt due to his gambling addiction. His problems begin when a Venezuelan drug dealer forces him to work for him, using his rider status as a façade to deliver drugs. Áxel also meets three other riders—Nancy, Clau, and Luk—who become his friend, his romantic interest and his rival. Issues such as crime, violence, poverty and discrimination are depicted in a comedic tone that simultaneously masks/justifies and shows/denounces racial discrimination and dominant, monolithic depictions of Latinidad.

In *Riders*, Áxel is introduced as the caretaker of Jorge, his younger brother. Their mother, the audience learns, was born in Colombia and has temporarily come back to the country to take care of her elderly father. It is established that they are in a precarious financial situation, caused in part by Jorge's gambling addiction. Although Áxel is somewhat hard on his brother, his affection for him prevails, as when he reprimands him and cuts off the internet but right after points out that he has "left macaroni in the fridge" (Ep. 1. 04:22–04:24). He further states that "an older brother has to protect and help his younger brother" (Ep. 6, 04:42–04:45) and installs parental control on Jorge's phone so that he cannot bet online. Thus, it could be argued that Áxel embodies a form of "caring masculinity," described as "masculine identities that exclude domination and embrace the affective, relational, emotional, and interdependent qualities of care" and that requires men "to resist hegemonic masculinity and to adopt values and characteristics of care that are antithetical to hegemonic masculinity."47

However, the type of care that Áxel provides is not fundamentally counterhegemonic, for breadwinning can potentially be (re)masculinized through the discourse of distinct qualities of male nurturing that emphasize control and self-determination, thus perpetuating a patriarchal logic. Áxel's is a form of care that could be referred to as "care-as-providing-for," offering both "protection" and "production."48

Áxel navigates the contradictions of masculinity as a cisgender, heterosexual, dark-skinned young man. Through his everyday experiences, the series exposes the racial microaggressions that he constantly faces as a racialized man in Spain. An example of this can be found in the following casual conversation with Clau and Luk:

Clau: [talking about Nancy, a Cuban rider] She says everything with such a gravity, like Mufasa in the clouds

Luk: Yes, but the crappy version of The Lion King with Latino audio [he spits]

Clau: You're a bit racist, aren't you?

Luk: Fuck, that was a joke. [Pointing at Áxel] And he found it funny, didn't he?

Áxel: Well, my mother used to play the movie for me with Latino audio

Luk: Thanks a lot man, now I'm a racist. Fuck! All my matches on Tinder are Latinas!

Clau: And now that's just so male chauvinist!

Luk: Why the fuck do you have to give moral lessons to everybody?

...

Clau: You know, I think I'm starting to find the Latino accent quite attractive

Áxel: The Latino accent? There's like 100 of them

Clau: Oh god, how awful, I sound like Luk. How would your accent be?

Áxel: Well, I'm from Carabanchel [a Madrid neighborhood], but I'll try to do it. [Speaking with a Colombian accent] If you want to see Clau being a micro-racist, subscribe to my channel.49

In this way, racial microaggressions are not only exposed but also criticized and deconstructed within the diegesis of the story.

Despite his complacent and overly apologetic demeanor, Áxel sometimes engages in patronizing and homophobic attitudes. Examples of this include when he stands up for Clau against Luk, thus taking her fragility for granted (Ep. 4, 12:57); or when he is compelled to emphasize his heterosexuality ("I am not gay" [Ep. 2, 10:51]; "no homo" [Ep. 3, 00:27–00:30]). More than overt homophobia, he incurs what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick calls "homosexual panic," that is, the fear and anxiety that others may identify him as homosexual.50 Moreover, he constantly falls into a competitive,

hypermasculine dynamic with Luk, to the point where Clau asks them: “Why does everything have to be a contest over who has the biggest dick?” (Ep. 4, 13:19–13:22).

Despite being the household breadwinner, Áxel is portrayed at the beginning of the series as anything but high-achieving, and people often refer to him as “logy” (o.v. empanado [Ep. 3, 00:41; Ep. 5, 04:53]). Furthermore, mansplaining is subverted, albeit with nuances. As experienced riders, Nancy and Clau advise Áxel on how to be most efficient. However, Áxel’s ignorance is constantly evinced by his actions (or lack thereof) and the contrast between his relative need for control and the other rider’s perception of him as gullible or incompetent is made evident. However, his best friend Carlos is keen to stress that “Áxel ‘the machine’ has a strategy for everything” (Ep. 3, 14:15– 14:18) and “can get out of anything” (Ep. 7, 08:51–08:54). More or less deliberately, the series establishes an association between masculinity, power and resourcefulness, attributes generally identified as characteristic of what Raewyn Connell termed “hegemonic masculinity.”51 The only openly homosexual character is, in fact, white upper-class Carlos. He is portrayed as stereotypically conforming to the paragon of the queer homosexual man: hypersexual and promiscuous, always on dating apps and involved in BDSM-tinged “chills” or chemsex parties.52

Hypersexualization is a common stereotype when representing Latinxs in fiction. Partially—and problematically—this is subverted in the series, as it is not the Cuban female character (Nancy) but the racialized male protagonist who is parodically fetishized by a client, a powerful Spanish woman who owns a video game development company. This is brought out in a scene full of colonialist references:

Woman: You know what happens to me with the Latino thing? Every time I’m near it, I want to strip it away.

Áxel: But I’m Spanish.

Woman: I see. What the fuck do I care?

...

Áxel: I’m studying video game development. I’d love to work here. Do you know how I could get in?

Woman: You have to do our own Master’s Degree for 13,000 euros and then work with a scholarship for 300 euros. What do you think? Otherwise, you have another option, because, as I told you, I love to eat Latino food.

Áxel: I’m Spanish. My mother is Colombian, but the arepas are different there.

Woman: I don’t care, I’ll have ceviche.

Áxel: That’s Peruvian.53

This scene again reveals the role of humor in representing Latinx or racialized characters as a double-edged sword when used as a tool for critical racial/ ethnic interrogation. Although harassment and colonialist mindsets are criticized, comedy is

the primary discursive mode with which this violence is represented, partly reinforcing a patriarchal sexual script in which female desire and the objectification of a man are "unthinkable" and, therefore, a source of mockery. Moreover, the portrayal of the male Latin lover is neither innovative nor subversive. This stereotype also emerges when Nancy discovers that Áxel is doing something dubious or illegal and immediately thinks that he is a sex worker.

According to Cuban actress Dayana Contreras, who plays Nancy in the series, her character has been important in her career for its prominence in the story, its "depth and development," and for not being stereotyped.54 Nancy is an outgoing immigrant who works as a rider and cleaner because she cannot find a better-paying job. Throughout Riders, she is presented as smart, multifaceted and fully aware of her being exploited without victimizing herself for it. She offers Áxel counseling with tax paperwork—a job she usually does for other riders. She is always raising questions related to work, precariousness and money, common topics of conversation between immigrants in fiction. After Áxel's first day as a rider, he and Nancy have a conversation about their plight:

Áxel: [Rubbing his leg] I don't know if I have strained it while delivering or if it's just numb from waiting.

Nancy: The first day is the worst. The second is better, especially if you don't come back. Come on, bring it over here. [Taking an ointment out of her bag] Look, this is to loosen muscle stiffness; you know, improve trophism and increase lymphatic flow. I took some courses as a massage therapist. It's very difficult to get a job and you have to know how to do everything and above all, how to keep the job.

...

Áxel: When I was interviewed I was told that I could choose my hours and my orders.

Nancy: But you've just started and you only have five points. If they take one point away from you, you're going to hand out an order when Van Damme shoots a movie.

Áxel: It's really unfair.

Nancy: It's not "unfair," it's called "algorithm." I also took some app development courses.

Áxel: It's all fucking rigged.

Nancy: Of course it is. We're Latinos in Spain working as riders for two euros an order. And now I'm going to clean some offices for eight euros an hour.55

On his second day, when Luk is surprised to see Áxel back, Nancy says with resignation: "I knew it. For us, there's no other choice" (Ep. 1, 23:20). Despite the relative novelty of her character, it is important to clarify that Nancy remains a background character, appearing only to help the male protagonist's story move forward.

Áxel's narrative arc evolves from being precarious and powerless to increasing his economic and sexual capital. This change comes about through meeting Orlando and Luismi, a Venezuelan cartel drug trafficker and his lapdog. Orlando represents a comic twist on the bandit stereotype. Shark- minded and obsessed with Jeff Bezos, Orlando is aggressive but not truly intimidating to the viewer, despite his various death threats to Áxel. This is achieved through humor, including Orlando's fascination with the character of El Sabio (the protagonist of a telenovela he is hooked on) and his anger at Áxel for spoiling (but also his admiration for figuring out) the plot. Likewise, the intimidating facade of the capos is shattered in a scene in which Danilo, the Colombian leader of an enemy cartel, ends up on his knees, crying and begging for mercy from Áxel. Despite the jocular tone of the series, violence is not absent: Luismi beats up Jorge, and Áxel delivers a severed finger to Danilo under Orlando's orders, almost getting shot for it.

Orlando lives by the motto that "crisis means opportunity" (Ep. 2, 01:44– 01:47)—a crisis that could be read as racial or class precariousness and/or as a crisis of masculinity. The first time he introduces himself to Áxel, the drug dealer points a gun at him and forces him to grab it, commanding him to "grip it hard, damn it, with both hands, like a man" (Ep. 2, 01:34:01–38). Orlando sells drug trafficking to Áxel as an "opportunity to embark on a startup with infinite possibilities and immediate profitability" (Ep. 2, 03:07–03:13), using blatant neoliberal capitalist corporate jargon. In this sense, Orlando serves as a parody of the effects of what Sayak Valencia calls "gore capitalism," the darker side of globalization that drives hyperconsumerism and predatory exploitation, mobilizing violence as a useful marketing tool for survival.56 Gore capitalism is sustained through "necrovisuality" regimes where the production of images that glorify violent acts operates as a form of social control that normalizes violence.57 This necrovisuality is sustained by a rigid construction of gender and, especially, through the reinforcement of the association between men, masculinity and violence. An example of this is what Valencia calls "endriago subjects," men who "decide to make use of violence as a tool of empowerment and acquisition of capital."58 Endriago subjects embody a form of marginalized masculinity that "is based on obedience to hegemonic, capitalist and heteropatriarchal masculinity, seeking to legitimize itself and reach the rung of hegemony and to construe dissidence in a dystopian way."59

For Áxel, necroempowerment comes from his adoption of a brand of criminal Latinidad over a Spanish identity. After hurling racist insults at him, two Spanish men steal his bike. Later on, Luismi beats up these thieves and, in turn, steals the bike and cap—with the Spanish flag on it—of one of them. At the end of this episode, Áxel proudly rides the stolen bike and throws the Spanish cap on the ground with contempt, thus symbolically rejecting his identification with Spain as he moves toward an "upgraded" endriago masculinity that results from his new Latino alliances.

Áxel's increase in material capital is reinforced by a strategic selection of *Riders*' soundtrack, which oscillates between rap, trap and reggaeton. Luk's desire to be like Spanish trapero Yung Beef is not to be overlooked, considering the Latin, African and Romani influences of the genre, as well as its associations with neoliberal ideology. Trap arrived in Spain after the global crisis of 2008 and has since become one of the

most popular music genres in the country.60 Yung Beef is the artist who initiated and shaped the genre in Spain and is known for his marginal origins and his association with delinquency and substance abuse and trafficking. Despite remaining some- what on the fringes, Beef has gone on to model in underwear campaigns for Calvin Klein and has gained significant celebrity status and, hence, social, and economic capital.

Music in *Riders* promotes a discourse of self-aggrandizement, misogyny and objectification of women, physical and verbal violence, competitiveness and hyperconsumerism. The latter stresses achieving status through the acquisition of certain goods and products, particularly expensive cars. An example of this is the song by H. Roto, Duki & GARZI "Rally," main theme of the series, with lines such as "Voy modo diablo, vestido de Armani / Tu´ p´ısale a fondo y bien rico, mami / Que no' vamo' de Rally" (I'm going devil's mode, dressed in Armani / You step on it hard and rich, mommy / We're going to Rally).61 Similar cases are the songs "Rosas negras," "No me tosas" and "Estilo Ferrari" by KEIBI. The former features lines such as: "Sois los novatos que ahora juegan contra el veterano / Sigo siendo en esto el puto jefe de la guerra / Muerto pero vivo, como las rosas negras" (You're the rookies now playing against the veteran / I'm still the fucking warlord in this / Dead but alive, like black roses). The second is a reggaeton-style parody of the COVID-19 pandemic in which the lines "No me tosas" and "No me toques" are repeated, being decontextualized in the series in a way that seems to refer to a masculinity based on inviolability. Finally, the third one has sexual metaphors such as "Viene el bombero a meter agua por tu agujero" (The fireman is coming to put water down your hole); misogyny and pretentious- ness, "Chulo flipao, me insultan esas guarras / Porque querrían conmigo mojarse ellas las bragas" (Pimp, scumbag, those sluts insult me because they would like to get their panties wet for me), or promotion of physical violence: "A las malas nos partimos las caras" (At the worst, we beat each other up). The image of masculinity that the series largely conveys has a distinctly neoliberal slant rooted in the consumption of goods and bodies. As Volox says: "what has marked my life the most are women and Jordans [sneakers]" (Ep. 5, 13:17–13:20).

In contrast to violent, frustrated, incompetent, infantilized or grotesque male characters, Nancy and Clau are portrayed as strong and agentic women. Nancy is an overqualified immigrant who works in a precarious position but manages to have several side jobs that allow her to make ends meet. However, she remains a secondary character. Clau has a more relevant role in the series as the romantic/sexual interest of Áxel and Luk and, especially, because she actively confronts them when they engage in misogynistic or homophobic attitudes and is ashamed to engage in (micro-)racism herself. She fights for riders' rights and dreams of becoming a professional rapper. Her songs are politicized and feature a fierce feminist tone. Indeed, the series, produced after the #MeToo movement, encourages speaking up against male-inflected abuse. This is highlighted in a scene in which Clau, invited by a famous rapper to sing at his concert, sees a man harassing a woman and decides to stand up to him and leave (Ep. 5, 14:01–14:18).

Clau is the only character who manages to escape precariousness and achieve her professional goals by the end of the season. However, it should be noted that she is Spanish and white. In this way, the series seems to promote the discourse of "empowered women, failed patriarchs" that typifies numerous contemporary fiction narratives.62 Such discourse could be said to be characterized by the depiction of "a

distinctly unheroic masculinity" that is "fallible, self-deprecating and liable to fail at any moment."63

At the end of the season, Áxel finds the means to report the drug dealing scheme to the police without getting himself caught. However, the last scene shows that Orlando and Luismi were just pawns of an old woman who is the real mastermind behind the plot and who traps Áxel, once again, in a web that will seemingly force him to continue working as a drug dealer. In this sense, the ending brings back Nancy's aforementioned quote: "for us [Latinxs], there is no other choice." In fact, out of the four riders, Nancy is the only one whose situation remains unchanged, while Áxel literally ends up in a cage. Still, it becomes clear to the viewer that such a situation is neither a purely personal matter nor the product of Áxel's own decisions; rather, his dead end is presented as a structural problem that has to do with social inequalities traversed by class, gender and race. Thus, Riders arguably succeeds in transcending cliche´, rendering racial discrimination organically visible despite—or perhaps aided by—its lighthearted comic-thriller tone.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our aim in this essay was to analyze the representation of Latinidad in *Riders,* a series produced by RTVE Playz. We investigated how the series is traversed by racialization, migration and (heteronormative) masculinity and how it responds to current social, political and cultural citizenship challenges.

In the context of the dynamics of racialization in Spain and of how Latinidad has been represented in Spanish audiovisual artifacts around stereotypes of criminalization, precariousness, and hypersexualization, *Riders* stands out for its complex and novel answers to all three aspects. By close reading this television series to interrogate its representation of race and masculinity, especially regarding its comedic tone, we sought to provide an answer to the following questions: What does *Riders* tell us about the intersections between racialization and the (de)construction of masculinity? How does this fit in with the theme of precariousness, which is the focus of the series?

Riders features a racialized main character of Latino descent with a well- developed arc and its exposure of racial microaggressions, which are not only showcased but also criticized and deconstructed within the diegesis of the story. While the leit motiv of the Latino criminal is certainly at its core, the series goes beyond cliche. Áxel, the protagonist, is surely not an impoverished racialized man who is frustrated and emasculated and uses violence to pursue social mobility. Despite being homohysterical at times and ending up involved in drug trafficking activities, he rejects the use of violence and simply struggles to protect his family. He is also respectful toward consent and expresses affection towards other men.64 Besides, many of the scenes do pass the Chávez-Pérez test, with conversations dealing mostly with social conditions, relationships and feelings. In all these respects and within the Spanish audiovisual landscape, it can be argued that Riders is innovative in its representation of Latinidad and, especially, of Latino men.

Particularly interesting in the series is the choice of intra- and extradiegetic music, with songs that function as a kind of narrative epilogue and parallel commentary to the rest of the audiovisual discourse. The main themes of the series, which speak of a toxic male

culture of self-aggrandizement, misogyny and objectification of women, physical and verbal violence, com- petitiveness and hyperconsumerism, contrast with the scenes in which Clau uses heartfelt rap lyrics to vindicate feminism. Her social climbing, far removed from the precariousness of the rest of the characters, projects a feminist message of empowerment even though, after all, she is Spanish and white.

Within Clark's model, representations of Latinidad in Spanish fiction oscillate between the first two stages of nonrecognition and ridicule. The progressive linearity of Clark's model, however, overlooks that various representation models can coexist and that comedy can both subvert and rein- force stereotypes.65 Such a thin line between reproduction and subversion is what we focus on in our close reading of *Riders*. Dark humor in the series works in both directions, as our problematization of the caricatured drug dealer proves. Crime, violence, poverty and discrimination are depicted in a comedic tone that operates as a double-edged sword by exposing oppressions while simultaneously trivializing them. The humor deployed to depict Áxel's demise, for instance, serves to subvert the classic "damsel in distress" narrative. The scenes exposing machismo or mansplaining are set against the fact that Áxel is more often than not rescued by Nancy and Clau, portrayed as strong and agentic women. The characterization of white characters like Luk and Carlos as hypersexualized, rather than Latinxs, is also subversive. Equally different is the fetishization of Latino men by a white female char- acter. Nevertheless, the double-edged sword of comedy works here in such a way that the feminist potential for dissidence of such a role reversal is ultimately unfulfilled through the partial reinforcement of a patriarchal sexual script in which female desire and the objectification of a Latino man are "unthinkable" and therefore mockable.

In sum, *Riders* arguably succeeds in transcending cliche, rendering racial discrimination organically visible. All in all, it represents a certain compromise, or at least a step forward in the representation of Latinx characters as complex and multifaceted in Spanish state-owned television. Considering our results, we can say that comedy has indeed a subversive potential that can render visible, criticize and even transcend stereotypes. It is disturbing, how- ever, that comedy can also end up reinforcing the stereotypes it aims to dismantle by trivializing their toxicity, as the examples of the gore- capitalist treatment of narcoviolence in the series evince. Since comedy renders these representations simultaneously subversive and ideologically suspect, we wonder, at this closing stage, whether we should call for a revisiting of the genre in future Spanish TV series. Perhaps only then will we be able to aspire to respectful, diverse and nuanced representations of Latinidad in all different kinds of genres and outlets.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was funded by the project DIGISCREENS. DIGISCREENS is supported by the Research Council of Norway; Research Council of Lithuania; FORTE: Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life, and Welfare; la Agencia Nacional de Investigacio´n del Ministerio de Ciencia e Investigacio´n, under CHANSE ERA-NET Co-fund programme, which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under Grant Agreement no. 101004509.

NOTES

1. RTVE (Corporacion de Radio y Television Espanola) is a state-owned company that organizes the indirect management of Spain's public radio and television services. Its public service role involves the production of content and the editing and broadcasting of generalist and thematic channels, both free-to-air and encrypted, at the national and international level.

2. For more information on "Latin American Spain," see David Roll, Camilo Camacho, and Jessika Gomez, *La diaspora latinoamericana a Espana, 1997–2007: Incognitas y realidades* (Bogota: Universidad del Rosario, 2014).

3. Alberto Capote and Carolina Del Valle, "Introduccion al numero especial 'nuevas movilidades entre Espana y America Latina: Retorno versus arraigo y vuelta a la emigracion,'" *Cuadernos Geograficos* 59, no. 3 (2020): 6–13, at 7.

4. Eurostat, "Migration and Migrant Population Statistics," March 2023. Accessed on January 31, 2024. https://shorturl.at/aHVZ8.

5. INE, "Notas de prensa," November 18, 2022. Accessed on December 28, 2023. www.ine.es/prensa/cp_j2 0 2 2 _p.pdf.

6. Antonia Olmos, "Racismo, racializacion e inmigracion: Aportaciones desde el enfoque de(s)colonial para el analisis del caso espanol," *Revista de Antropologıa* 63, no. 2 (2020): 1–23, at 4.

7. Olmos, "Racismo, racializacion e inmigracion," 4.

8. Bernarda Jimenez, "Multiculturalidad e integracion social de los inmigrantes latino-americanos en Espana," in *I Seminario Iberoamericano sobre Polıticas Migratorias, Cooperacion al Desarrollo, Interculturalidad e Integracion Social de los Emigrantes Latinoamericanos en Espana*, ed. Vicente Benito Gil (Alicante: ECU, 2013), 92.

9. Observatorio de la Diversidad en los Medios Audiovisuales ODA, Informe ODA 2023: Analisis sobre la representacion de la diversidad en la ficcion espanola del 2022 en cine y television (Madrid: Prime, 2023).

10. To pass this test, the audiovisual product must have: (1) Two nonwhite char- acters with names, (2) Talking to each other, (3) About something besides crime. European Audiovisual Observatory, IRIS Plus 2021-1, Diversity and inclusion in the European audiovisual sector (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2021), 83.

11. Luis Alemany. "Las cineastas protestan: 'La Ley Audiovisual atiende las cuotas linguısticas pero no las de genero," *El Mundo*, Accessed on July 19, 2023. www. elmundo.es/cultura/cine/2022/05/23/628b5e67e4d4d8c91a8b45d4.html.

12. Ester Pinheiro, "¿Y todavıa decimos que no somos racistas?," *Pikara Magazine*, June 28, 2023. Accessed on July 21, 2023. www.pikaramagazine.com/2023/06/y-todavia-decimos-que-no-somos-racistas/.

13. Olmos, "Racismo, racializacion e inmigracion," 8.

14. Olmos, “Racismo, racializacion e inmigracion,” 10.

15. Olmos, “Racismo, racializacion e inmigracion,” 10.

16. SOS Racismo, *Report on Racism in the Spanish State 2023* (Madrid: Ministerio de Derechos Sociales, 2023), 26.

17. Rosa de la Fuente, “Inmigrantes latinoamericanos en Madrid: Identidad y sujeto polıtico colectivo,” in *Migracion y polıtica: Latinoamericanos en la comunidad de Madrid*, ed. Heriberto Cairo et Al. (Madrid: Trama, 2009), 86.

18. Geoconda Benıtez, *De condicion femenina, inmigrante y excluida: La mujer latinoamericana en Espana* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2015), 9.

19. Inmaculada Gordillo, Sergio Toledo, and Marıa Toscano, “Otherness and Marginalisation: Characters from the Other Side in Spanish Cinema (1999–2012),” *FOTOCINEMA* 23 (2021): 75–96.

20. Charo Lacalle, *El discurso televisivo sobre la inmigracion: Ficcion y construccion de identidad (*Barcelona: Ediciones Omega, 2008); Elena Galan, “La representacion de los inmigrantes en la ficcion televisiva en Espana: Propuesta para un analisis de contenido, El Comisario y Hospital Central,” *Revista Latina de Comunicacion Social* 61 (2006).

21. Xavier Ruiz, Matilde Obradors, Eva Pujadas, Joan Ferres, and Oliver Perez, “Qualitative-Quantitative Analysis of Narrative Structures: The Narrative Roles of Immigrants in Spanish Television Series,” *Semiotica* 184, no. 1/4 (2011): 99–121.

22. Laetitia Biscarrat and Natalia Melendez Malave, “De la exclusion a la heteronomıa: Inmigrantes en la ficcion televisiva *Aıda*,” *ICONO 14, Revista de comunicacion y tecnologıas emergentes* 12, no. 1 (2014): 319–46.

23. Marıa Marcos, Juan Jose Igartua, Francisco Frutos, Isabel Barrios, Felix Ortega, and Valeriano Pineiro, “La representacion de los personajes inmigrantes en los programas de ficcion,” *Vivat Academia* 127 (2014): 43–72.

24. Marcos, Gonzalez, and Portillo, “La representacion de la inmigracion en la ficcion serial espanola contemporanea de prime time”; Marıa Marcos, Ariadna Angulo, and Beatriz Gonzalez, “Immigrant Characters in Spanish Audiovisual Broadcast on Platforms,” *International Journal of Communication* 17 (2023): 2367–93.

25. Biscarrat and Melendez, “De la exclusion a la heteronomıa,” 319–46; Ana Abad and Cayetano Fernandez, “Inmigrantes en las series de television *Aıda* y *La que se avecina*: Entre la parodia y los prejuicios,” *Ambitos: Revista Internacional de Comunicacion* 40 (2018).

26. Luis Romero-Rodrıguez, Patricia de-Casas-Moreno, Pablo Maraver-Lopez, and Amor Perez-Rodrıguez, “Latin American Representations and Stereotypes in Spain Prime Time Series (2014–2017),” *Convergencia* 25, no. 78 (2018).

27. In *Sky Rojo* a group of sex workers decide to escape from a prostitution network.

28. Charles Ramirez-Berg, *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, and Resistance* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002); Toby Miller, Marta Barrios, and Jesus Arroyave, "Prime-Time Narcos: The Mafia and Gender in Colombian Television," *Feminist Media Studies* 19, no. 3 (2018): 348–63.

29. See Gary Keller, *Hispanics and United States Film: An Overview and Handbook* (Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Review/Press, 1994), and Clara Rodrıguez in Yajaira Padilla, "Domesticating Rosario: Conflicting Representations of the Latina Maid in U.S. Media," *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies* 13 (2009): 41–59, at 41.

30. A Mexican crime family affiliated with the cartel with ruthless and psychopathic male members who support the doctrine that "family is everything" and believe in "blood for blood."

31. Ramirez-Berg, *Latino Images in Film*.

32. For a discussion Sofia Vergara's role for Latinx representation, see Frances Negron-Muntaner, "What to Do with All This Beauty? The Political Economy of Latina Stardom in the Twenty-First Century," 287–305; and Isabel Porras, "'Sofıa Vergara Made Me Do It': On Beauty, Costenismo, and Transnational Colombian Identity," in *The Routledge Companion to Latino/a Media*, ed. Marıa Cepeda and Dolores Casillas (New York: Routledge, 2017), 306–19.

33. Jose Limon, "Stereotyping and Chicano Resistance: An Historical Dimension," Aztlan 4, no. 2 (1973): 257–70, at 257.

34. See Marıa-Jose Higueras-Ruiz, Jordi Alberich-Pascual, and Enrique Herrera-Viedma, "The Importance of Latinx Showrunners in Getting Authentic Latino TV Series in English-Language American Television: The Case of Tanya Saracho and Vida (Starz, 2018–2020)," *International Journal of Communication* 15 (2021): 4774–94.

35. Fitria Afrianty Sudirman, "Representation of Latinas as Maids on Devious Maids (2013)," *Paradigma: Jurnal Kajian Budaya* 4, no. 1 (2013): 42–58.

36. Higueras-Ruiz, Alberich-Pascual, and Herrera-Viedma, "Importance of Latinx Showrunners," 4786.

37. Esteban del Rıo and Kristin Moran, "Remaking Television: One Day at a Time's Digital Delivery and Latina/o Cultural Specificity," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 44, no. 1 (2020): 5–25, at 21.

38. Summit Osur, "#WokeTV beyond the Hashtag: One Day at a Time and The Baby-Sitters Club as Woke Classic Television," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 50, no. 2 (2022): 69–79.

39. Fien Adriaens and Daniel Biltereyst, "Glocalized Telenovelas and National Identities: A 'Textual Cum Production' Analysis of the 'Telenovelle' *Sara*, the Flemish Adaptation of *Yo soy Betty, la* fea," *Television and New Media* 13, no. 6 (2012): 551–

67, at 554–55. See also Roland Robertson, "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity- Heterogeneity," in *Global Modernities*, ed. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson (London: Sage, 1995), 25–44.

40. Ato Quayson, "Incessant Particularities: Calibrations as Close Reading," *Research in African Literatures* 36, no. 2 (2005): 122–31, at 122.

41. Jasmina Lukic and Adelina Sanchez Espinosa, "Feminist Approaches to Perspectives on Close Reading," in *Theories and Methodologies in Postgraduate Feminist Research: Researching Differently*, ed. Rosemarie Buikema, Gabriele Griffin, and Nina Lykke (New York: Routledge, 2011), 106.

42. Y. Joel Wond, Tao Liu, and Elyssa M. Klann, "The Intersection of Race, Ethnicity, and Masculinities: Progress, Problems, and Prospects," in *The Psychology of Men and Masculinities*, ed. Ronald F. Levant and Y. Joel Wong (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2017), 261–88.

43. Aıda Hurtado and Mrinal Sinha, Beyond Machismo: Intersectional Latino Masculinities (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016). As examples of the increased interest in studying men and masculinities from an intersectional perspective, see Aıda Hurtado and Mrinal Sinha, "More Than Men: Latino Feminist Masculinities and Intersectionality," *Sex Roles* 59 (2008): 337–49; Lisa Bowleg, "'Once You've Blended the Cake, You Can't Take the Parts Back to the Main Ingredients': Black Gay and Bisexual Men's Descriptions and Experiences of Intersectionality," *Sex Roles* 68 (2013): 754–67; Ann-Dorte Christensen and Sune Qvotrup Jensen, "Combining Hegemonic Masculinity and Intersectionality," *NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity* Studies 9, no. 1 (2014): 60–75.

44. Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (1995; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Karla Elliott, "Caring Masculinities," *Men and Masculinities* 19, no. 3 (2015): 240–59; Niall Hanlon, *Masculinities, Care, and Equality: Identity and Nurture in Men's Lives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Anne Jordan, "Masculinizing Care? Gender, Ethics of Care, and Fathers' Rights Groups," *Men and Masculinities* 23, no. 1 (2020): 20–41; Margarita Sayak Valencia, *Capitalismo Gore* (Barcelona: Melusina, 2010

45. Cedric Clark, "Television and Social Controls: Some Observations of the Portrayal of Ethnic Minorities," *Television Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (1969): 18–22; Cedric Clark, "The Concept of Legitimacy in Black Psychology," in *Race Relations: Current Perspectives*, ed. E. G. Epps (Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, 1973), 332–54.

46. Ana Abad and Cayetano Fernandez, "Inmigrantes en las series de television Aıda y La que se avecina: Entre la parodia y los prejuicios," *Ambitos: Revista Internacional de Comunicacion* 40 (2018): 114–21.

47. Elliott, "Caring Masculinities," 252, 254.

48. Jordan, "Masculinizing Care?," 23.

49. *Riders*, 2021, episode 4, "Pedido 004." Directed by Beatriz Abad, RTVE Play,

min. 12:00 and min. 15:59. We have translated all the quotes from the series.

50. Sedgwick, *Between Men.*

51. Connell, *Masculinities*. Connell describes "hegemonic masculinity" as "the configuration of a gender practice . . . which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women," 77. This is exercised by the subordination of other forms of masculinity, including homosexuals, working- class men, or ethnic minorities.

52. Although the series may reflect a stereotyping of the LGTBIQþ community, it also fights their stigma by rendering visible on screen certain consensual queer sexual practices. This way they can also potentially warn about risks and broaden conceptions of desire. This said, *Riders* is another example of how queerness tends to be reduced to white, male bodies and phallic/phallus fetishism, potentially avowing the deep-seated masculinism that queer discourses on sex purportedly repudiate.

53. *Riders*, episode 5, "Pedido 005," min. 8:41.

54. Dayana Contreras in Marcos and Gonzalez, *Mujeres migrantes y/o Racializadas en el Audiovisual Espanol*, 50.

55. *Riders*, episode 1, "Pedido 001," in. 16:28.

56. Margarita Sayak Valencia, *Gore Capitalism* (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2018). All translations are ours.

57. Margarita Sayak Valencia and Katia Sepulveda, "Del Fascinante fascismo a la fascinante violencia," *Mitologıas hoy* 14 (2016): 75–91, at 80. All translations are ours.

58. Margarita Sayak Valencia, *Capitalismo Gore*, 90.

59. Margarita Sayak Valencia, *Capitalismo Gore*, 173.

60. Ernesto Castro Cordoba, *El Trap: Filosofıa millennial para la crisis en Espana.* (Madrid: Errata Naturae, 2019), 36.

61. All translations are ours.

62. Smitha Radhakrishnan and Solari Cinzia, "Empowered Women, Failed Patriarchs: Neoliberalism and Global Gender Anxieties," *Sociology Compass* 9 (2015): 784–802.

63. Rosalind Gill, "Lad Lit as Mediated Intimacy: A Postfeminist Tale of Female Power, Male Vulnerability, and Toast," *Working Papers on the Web*, 2009: n.p. Accessed on September 7, 2023. http://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html.

64. Regarding consent, in episode 4, "Pedido 004," min. 21:06, Áxel asks Clau for permission before kissing her.

65. Clark, “Television and Social Controls,” 18–22; Clark, “Concept of Legitimacy in Black Psychology,” 332–54.