LIFE WITH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE DC METROPOLITAN AREA’S IMMIGRANT BOLIVIAN HOUSEHOLD

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This dissertation titled
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IMMIGRANT BOLIVIAN HOUSEHOLD

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Abstract

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LIFE WITH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE DC METROPOLITAN AREA’S IMMIGRANT BOLIVIAN HOUSEHOLD (254 pp.)

Director of Thesis: Karen E. Riggs

This dissertation explores the intricate articulations of life with Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) inside a group of Bolivian households within the metropolitan area of Washington DC. In this study, I investigate the ways in which ICTs mediate Bolivian immigrants’ lives within the home and in relation to the outside or host culture. Through a qualitative ethnographic analysis, I explore twelve Bolivian families with different compositions and cultural competencies with the intention of unveiling the different ways in which they have used ICTs to learn to live, negotiate, survive and preserve their family, culture, identities and symbolic practices in everyday life in relation to the outside world or host culture.

I present the context in which these households develop a sense of themselves, starting from the appropriation process, through objectification, incorporation and conversion moments of the “technology mediated consumption” process (Silverstone, Hirsh & Morley, 1992) articulated in the “circuit of culture” (Du Gay et al., 1997). In order to do this, I provide an interpretive model that organizes the production of meaning interlaced with a topology of an immigrant Bolivian household resulting in an analysis of the household’s territories. Further, I evaluate how ICTs have structured the immigrant home spaces in the center, margins and periphery, according to the families’ uses of
shared and private places. Two thresholds will connect the home with the outside -- both to the host culture, the Latino realm or the homeland. This conformation constitutes an important identity preservation mode and also a strategic means of survival inside the host culture. These schemes of interpretation of the families’ daily life within the home in relation to ICT consumption as the result of the articulation of main theoretical and methodological frameworks are the main contributions of this study to the field.

I conclude that ICTs, when consumed in the families’ daily life inside the home, are essential instruments in the survival, assimilation and preservation of each family’s particular practices, rituals and values, which in turn conform their identity to the external world and their connections to the homeland.

Approved: ____________________________________________________________

Karen E. Riggs

Professor of Telecommunications
To my husband, Juancarlos,

my mom and dad, Karin and Waldo,

and my precious daughters, Lucía and Lizzie
Acknowledgments

I want to thank the Bolivian families who let me into their private space in order to contribute to the understanding of life with ICTs and agreed to get together so that they could all be there for me to answer questions. I also want to thank Ekklesia Church, whose family members and staff were open to collaborate with this study.

I want to especially thank my husband, who continuously encouraged me and tirelessly collaborated with my mental mappings and my reflections as a Bolivian immigrant. Especially and foremost, I want to thank my mother, without whom this dissertation would not have been at all possible. Her silent labor, helping me with my babies and her delicious meals, were vital for encouraging my body and soul in order to fulfill this goal. In the same way, I acknowledge her and my dear sister Herty’s work in transcribing hours and hours of interviews. Also, my dad’s constant words of encouragement were also a sustaining voice that helped keep track of time and my tasks in my busy schedule as a mother and wife.

I also want to thank my advisor, Karen Riggs, for patiently helping me to persevere through all my obstacles and to focus and ask the important questions in this dissertation. Also, I want to thank all the professors who have contributed to this dissertation through their teachings during my study at Ohio University. Thanks are also due to my former advisor, Joseph Slade, and Norma Pecora for the initial encouragement and my doctoral committee members, Josep Rota, Michael Real and Eugene Ammarell, for their thoughtful insights and recommendations to make this dissertation meaningful and
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# Glossary of terms

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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Compact Disc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Personal Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Digital Video Disc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDTV</td>
<td>High Definition Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iPod</td>
<td>Apple brand portable media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iPhone</td>
<td>Apple brand smart cell phone with media player with wireless Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPTV</td>
<td>Internet Protocol Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP Phone</td>
<td>Internet Protocol Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOD</td>
<td>Video on Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOIP</td>
<td>Voice over Internet Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDA</td>
<td>Personal Digital Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVDR</td>
<td>Digital Video Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System: A worldwide radio-navigation system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xbox</td>
<td>Microsoft’s games console, based on PC architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xbox 360</td>
<td>Microsoft successor of Xbox video-game console</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PlayStation</td>
<td>Handheld video game device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Cube</td>
<td>Nintendo brand home vide game console</td>
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Preface

I was born in a “whiter” mestizo bed in the cold west highlands of Bolivia. I came to be a Bolivian precisely when my country was the center of mass media global attention. At the advent of 1968, Bolivia was witness to an important event that captured the attention of the international media: Ernesto “Che” Guevara was captured by the Bolivian army and photos of his dead body circulated globally. This threw landlocked Bolivia, with its many technological limitations, into a turmoil that influenced the existing social movements within Bolivian society.

While Bolivia was world news, certain social groups began massive migration to the so-called first-world countries. These groups included mainly indigenous people from the high valleys and the highlands. Consequently, the Bolivian social structure was modified, resulting in a new process of modernization of the mass media, therefore opening its doors to other countries.

The 1970s were marked with military coups while I grew up listening to bullets and the radio’s denunciations of violations of human rights and watching dubbed black-and-white foreign television programs that showed me realities that didn’t look at all like mine.

In this same decade, the winds of democracy arrived, and with them color television. Locally produced radio and TV programs started showing our reality and exploring TV as an educational resource. However, this didn’t last long. Coups restarted in the early
1980s and the media were there to help us witness them and register these events and their martyrs for years to come.

I grew up with radio. The best-remembered part of my daily life was how I used to listen to *radionovelas*. Every day at noon the whole family would stop to hear the next chapter of “*Esmeralda*.” In the afternoon it was TV with mainly kids’ foreign cartoons, very artistic, fast-paced and dubbed. My teenage years were spent with Japanese action series and technological innovations; the Walkman appeared and the telephone was being used more widely.

The traditional society in which I grew up was not so traditional anymore; my life changed forever when new information technologies arrived. I started to perceive values that I had taken for granted. I embarked on a road of discovery of values.

When I went back to Bolivia after looking at new technological advancements while in the United States as an exchange student, I looked at the reality with different eyes; I appreciated the fact of having been exposed to other completely different cultures and identities and ways of life. I valued the importance of getting prepared and educated in order to contribute to my country in an effective manner, which I saw and perceived as immersed in poverty and marginalization.

I started to notice how media technologies influenced the development of certain political and socioeconomic factors in Bolivian reality. I had registered to study Communication at the university level knowing that the field was filled with nuances, passions and intensities. This started my journey with ICTs and my interest and
motivation to dig deeply to contribute to the communications field with better understandings of this phenomenon.

Later on, I found myself immersed in the technological boom, wearing some of the technologies and carrying them as part of the necessities inside my purse. This relationship intensified as I got further away from home when I embarked on my next life project: master and doctoral degrees in mass communication.

I arrived in the United States in 1998, privileged by a Fulbright scholarship to pursue my graduate studies. Rapidly I found out that I would not be able to handle the loneliness without continuous interaction with my parents and friends in my home country. On a student budget, that idea seemed unlikely until I learned about chat and asynchronous communications. The best invention ever for me as a migrant woman in a faraway country was chatting. I would stay connected to my $9.99 dial-up connection, available to chat with my mom whenever she was there and would also be able to contact friends from afar who were also in the same situation. I started clinging to my laptop more and more when I found that online banking was available and I was able to prevent insufficient fund fees by managing my finances with the Internet, online banking and money software. This allowed me to learn to control my spending habits, budget and finances.

Information and communication technologies are a big part of my life. I live with them, wear them, use them for my finances, for research, for entertainment, to keep informed about what is happening in my home country and to seek advice on how to treat health problems and raise my growing toddler and baby. I telework and get contracts in
places other than where I live. I have also extended my family links, found my lost roots in Europe and interacted with strangers who have helped me solve my technical problems for free.

Now that the ICT revolution has begun, there is no end in sight.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Main questions and purpose of research

How do families in the Bolivian community of the Washington DC metropolitan area live with Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in daily life? What is the significance and relations between the space and place of ICTs? What are the power dynamics in their daily relationships in regard to space, control and access? These are the main research questions of focus for this study.

My first interest in studying an aspect of the lives of Bolivian immigrants residing in a big metropolitan area such as DC started when becoming aware of how immersed I was in information and communication technologies. As a graduate student, I perceived that it was not only my experience that led me to connect with significant ones in my homeland in a very continuous and affordable way but that ICTs were also an incredible instrument that facilitated my assimilation in all areas to the host culture. I started my journey of observation, which ended with taking a look at some immigrant Bolivian families of different composition and class extractions and their lives with information and communication technologies inside their households. I considered as well how the families facilitated or mediated their relations using ICTs, how the ICTs helped organize the tensions and changes of family life. Cultural transformations inside the Bolivian immigrant home inside the Latino community contributed to an understanding of the daily life of Bolivian families living as immigrants in a dominant host culture.
This study explores these questions in a qualitative account, considering the households’ cultural consumption processes of the different ICTs within the physical spaces and constructed places of the home. The productions, representations, tensions and identity constructions of the immigrant Bolivian home will be unveiled in relation to their gender, age and class specificities.

The significance of this study is based on the difficult exploration of the immigrant Bolivian private, intimate, familiar, and domestic realm. All in all, I seek to understand the ways in which contemporary daily life is being transformed by old and/or new technological artifacts that are making a difference in everyday life choices of space and place, relationships, households’ internal policies, power negotiations and links to the public space or dominant host culture.

**Justification of Study**

The interest to study communication technologies within households came largely from British research done primarily by Roger Silverstone (1992, 1996, 1999) and David Morley (1986, 1992, 1995, 2000, 2001) and work by American researcher James Lull (1980, 1988, 1990, 2000), among others. These scholars provided information to understand the exchanges, interchanges, consumption/production processes, struggles and economic implications inside the home and its communication with the outside world through electronic media. Consequently, these studies of domestic space in other contexts yielded more clues about the ways in which media environments are configured and re-configured as a dynamic process. Silverstone and Haddon (1996) found that there is
nothing “natural” in the placing of, or the practices associated with, media and information technologies in the domestic context.

What these scholars found was that domesticity was a site of research brought to the academic agenda by feminist inquiry. Previously, what the domestic sphere had to bring to the understandings of media culture, power and consumption was either irrelevant or merely invisible. Therefore, ICTs are already widely known to be producing transformations (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996) in the places and spaces of the domestic. In addition, the authors (Morley 2000; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996) detected that these spaces were not neutral. They were socially constructed; hence, they were and are gendered.

Stuart Hall argued that television viewing was an occasion for family interaction and/or to “create space” even when the living room has people other than family members (as cited in Morley, 1986, p. 10). As we will see in the findings of this study, television consumption practices have created a central space in the home, and other electronic media in the household such as the radio, cell phone, computer and the DVD player have also created marginal and peripheral spaces. “Around it, a complex web of customary procedures and rituals, rules and principles develop. It is enveloped by the tensions of negotiations which accompany any form of decision-making in families. Choices about what and when to view, and control of the switch, are allocated along the lines of power and relationship that intersect all families. As we might have predicted, gender turns out to be one of the main principles which structure and shape this field” (Morley, 1986, p. 10). But further in the gender analysis, Morley (1986) and Lull (1990)
found that within any patriarchal society the father will hold the power indicated by his control of the television set. Both researchers detected that women are disempowered within this relationship. Recently, Lull (2007) found that “TV ‘on-demand’ dramatically symbolize how people everywhere are expanding the range and increasing the control of their cultural experiences to accord with their particular needs, wants, and interests” (p. xxii). But is this also true of a group of Bolivians loaded with their own rituals, practices and values? This study challenges this male power pervasiveness and exposes how both males and females exert power as a result of the home’s territorialization. That is, they both exert power in their own domain and negotiate power in the other’s domain through tactics. In other words, this power is exerted by both genders in their own territory and is alternated when crossing each other’s boundaries.

Furthermore, the Bolivian immigrant home belongs within an ethnic context: the Latino community of the metropolitan DC area establishing relations and negotiations through ICTs that will constitute a cultural referent, which will in turn influence their identity and assimilation process. Therefore, understanding the ways in which information and communication technologies are consumed inside immigrant Bolivian homes that belong to the Latino community requires understanding of the complex politics of family life, of the relationships between parents, parents and children/youth and among children/youth, of the politics of control and ownership of space, time and technologies and, of the relations of the home with the outside world. It also involves awareness of the tensions and conflicts that are the product of change as the family moves through its life cycle in everyday life (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996). Moreover, it
implies the interpretations of how ICTs mediate all these dynamics within and outside the home, the relations between these two realms and the implications and consequences as a result of its articulations.

**Why study Bolivian households and information technologies in U.S.**?

In a Bolivian newspaper article published in 2000, Manuel Rocha, then U.S. ambassador to Bolivia, declared to the press that the Bolivian community in the United States was estimated at 600,000 (Rocha, 2000; Farah & Sanchez, 2004). About 150,000 of them lived in Washington DC, and 40 percent (more than 200,000) were undocumented residents.

According to data from the National Statistical Institute from the 2000 Bolivian Census, (INE, Instituto Nacional de Estadística) migrations abroad involved 1.2% of the total population. This figure has increased to 4.1% (CEPAL, 2006). The reasons for migration have remained constant over the years and include: work and better income, a search for better living conditions, to climb the social ladder, prestige and new opportunities, acquisition of new symbolic and cultural elements with differential meanings according to their social strata, differential opportunities for occupational insertion according to qualifications and, economic situations (Farah & Sanchez, 2004).

Bolivian immigrants have settled mainly in big metropolitan areas, contributing to what is now the largest minority group in the United States, the Latino community. Formed by Spanish-speaking cultures of all origins, this Latino community is the result of the available U.S. economic opportunities: “This arrival was not a product of forced
migration, but the result of economic globalization – more specifically, the global economic triumph of the United States” (Zuniga, Hernandez, Shaduccuck & Villareal, 2002, p. 104).

Unlike past generations of immigrants, Bolivians connect to the Latino community, to the host country, and to the homeland through ICTs. Therefore, Bolivian immigrants connect to local organizations and coalitions (for local and public space ties), and to recently formed national organizations such as the Bolivian-American Project, Red Bolivia or others (for home country ties).

As a Bolivian middle class\(^1\) researcher, I was motivated to understand the ways in which the community to which I belong as a female immigrant survives as a cultural group with the mediations of information and communication technologies. My purpose is to open research interest into the study of immigrant Latino households, starting with the case of the Bolivian ones, and the dynamics of their lives with ICTs.

Consequently, research on the ways in which a group of families of the Bolivian community are configuring and reconfiguring their identity inside a host culture in opposition to their constructions of home through ICTs in the United States is relevant. It is also significant to explore how the available access to ICTs is influencing and/or changing the lives of some families of a rapidly growing minority in suburban areas of the United States.

In sum, there are three articulated main aspects that are worth investigating: first, life with ICTs in the private and shared spaces and places inside Bolivian homes; second, an

\(^1\) Middle class is the social group between the upper and working classes composed of professional and business people (Oxford English dictionary) living off their expertise.
interpretation of their strategies and tactics of survival as a family; and third, how ICTs contribute to or hinder families’ connections and links with the host culture and with their homeland.

**What are and why ICTs?**

For the purpose of this study I use William Dutton’s definition of ICTs as “all kinds of electronic systems used for broadcasting, telecommunications and computer-mediated communications” (Dutton, 1996, p. 7) which includes all analog and digital information and communication devices that are available for personal consumption. I use the analog and digital terminology not according to their technical definitions but as referents for identifying traditional and new media respectively according to their capabilities and potential.

Consequently, the dynamic nature of the rapidly changing technologies requires flexibility in their definition -- there are no precise boundaries and they can include traditionally used old information and communication technologies such as radio and television as well as brand new ones such as the iPhone or IPTV, which functions from a digital platform. Information technologies today comprise a diverse array of artifacts designed and/or produced and distributed for the purpose of information streaming or communication interchanges in many shapes and models intended to appeal to different market segments according to age and gender, income capabilities, and aesthetics.
Analog and digital media

Analog media refers to traditional media or the more established media such as print, broadcast and audio-visual; digital media is new media that functions in a different mode of information processing. This study will not focus on the technical aspects of this information processing, but on the characteristics, potentialities and aesthetics that these two kinds of media provide to the home, together with consumption choices according to class, gender and generation.

Here I present a list of what the families were using during my fieldwork research:

- Analog: radio,
  television,
  VCR,
  tape recorder
  telephone
  camera, video

- Digital
  Phone: digital phone, cell phone, VoIP
  TV: HDTV, VOD
  PC: desktop, laptop, PDA or Pocket PC
  CD, DVD, DVR
Video games: Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo, GameCube, Xbox 360,

Digital camera, digital video camera

Digital media artifacts usually refer to electronic media that work on digital codes, which interpret binary digital data as information. All these artifacts contain or are derived from other digital technologies. This study focuses on the information and communication technologies, either analog or digital, that Bolivian immigrant families have appropriated and incorporated inside their everyday life.

**The daily life of the family**

This study situates its inquiry in a specific mediation context: the daily life of the family inside the household. This mediation context was chiefly defined by Jesus Martín-Barbero (1993, 2001b) as “the social place of fundamental interpellations, an ambience of conflicts and strong tensions; ‘the daily life of the family’ is one of the places where individuals confront each other and themselves as people and where they find some possibility of showing their longings and frustrations” (p. 234).

This study centers on everyday family life and their uses of ICTs inscribed inside the household’s domestic space, within the boundaries of the home. Moreover, it explores the boundaries within and movements inward and outward. The home also needs to be understood in its relation to the external world, which defines the home’s very nature (Bourdieu, 1977). Therefore, the main aspects in this study come mostly from
interpretations of the homes’ inside places and spaces without neglecting its relation to the outside world.
Chapter 2: Bolivia, the homeland

In this chapter, I present an overview of the culture, history, sociodemographics and employment issues that configure the origins and significant cultural referents of the participants in this study. I present my interpretations of the issue of identity and power that has structurally shifted, producing new configurations of power clashes, negotiations, new rivalries, and fragmentation of the homeland.

I also discuss the migration process and how Bolivians of different class extractions come to the United States for different purposes and objectives. These migration trends will contribute to the understanding of the different family configurations in correspondence to their ties back home, their new ties here, and their transience or permanency in the host culture. Finally, I show some characteristics of the household in the homeland and the households’ exposure to ICTs.

Overview of the country

Bolivia is a land-locked country located in the Southern Hemisphere. The population of 8.9 million people is composed of a multiethnic and diverse society with a large percentage (62%)\(^2\) of those 15 and older identifying themselves as indigenous Indians. Quechua and Aymara are the two predominant indigenous groups who live largely in the altiplano and highland regions. The Bolivian Census of 2001 reveals that approximately 30% of the Bolivian population are Quechuan, 25% are Aymaran, 30% are mestizo or

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\(^2\) This percentage shows data from the Bolivian Census of 2001.
mixed-race heritage and the remaining 15% are of European origin. (Eigo, 2000; Ribando & Veillete, 2006).

Sixty-five percent of Bolivians live in poverty and 40% of that number live in extreme poverty with 34.3% earning less than $2 a day; the average per capita annual income was $960 in 2004, according to the World Bank (n.d.).

Those known as Spanish are called “Whites,” not simply for their skin color as for their social status, identified by physical characteristics, language, culture, income and social mobility. The blending and intermarriage of races for over 500 years has made Bolivia a heterogeneous society.

**Quick history**

When the Spanish arrived to conquer and subjugate South America in the 1500s, they found a land that had been populated and civilized for at least 3,000 years. Early settlements of Amerindians probably lasted until about 1400 B.C. For another thousand years, an Amerindian culture known as *Chavin* existed in Bolivia and Peru. From 400 B.C. until 900 A.D., the *Tiahuanaco* culture thrived. Its center for ritual and ceremonies was on the shores of Lake Titicaca, the largest navigable lake in the world and a dominant part of Bolivia's geography. The Tiahuanaco culture was highly developed and prosperous. It had superb transportation systems, a road network, irrigation, and striking building techniques (Eigo, 2000; Boero Rojo, 1989).

The Aymara Indians subsequently invaded, probably from Chile. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Peruvian Incas swept into the land. Their rule continued until the arrival of the Spaniards in the 1530s. Spaniard rule was known as the colonial period, and
was marked by the development of cities, the cruel oppression of the Indians, and the missionary work of Catholic priests. The territory now known as Bolivia was called “Upper Peru” or “Charcas” and was under the authority of the Viceroy of Lima. Local government came from the Audiencia of the Charcas located in Chuquisaca. Bolivian silver mines produced much of the Spanish empire’s wealth, served up by the forced labor of enslaved natives. The struggle for independence from Spain began in the seventeenth century, and the most significant rebellion occurred when the Aymara and Quechua united at the end of the eighteenth century. Their leader was eventually captured and executed, but the rebels continued to resist, and for more than 100 days, about 80,000 Indians besieged the city of La Paz. General Antonio Jose de Sucre, who fought alongside Simon Bolivar, finally helped Bolivia gain independence from Spain in 1825. The new nation was a republic with a senate and a house of representatives, an executive branch and a judiciary (Eigo, 2000).

Almost as soon as Bolivia obtained its independence, it lost two disastrous wars to Chile, and in the process, lost its only coastal access. Bolivia lost a third war in 1932, this time with Paraguay, which further reduced the nation’s land holdings. Even at the end of the twentieth century, such setbacks continued to weigh heavily on the Bolivian psyche and affected political actions in the capital city of La Paz. These losses of territory implied loss in this country’s capacity to grow economically through some generous natural resources lost together with the territories.
The Bolivian household

The Bolivian Census in 2001 showed that the heads of household in Bolivia are 80.61% men and 19.39% women. Among male heads of household, 11.49 percent were between 45 and 49, the highest such percentage. Among women, the leading age category was 35 to 39, or 2.44 percent³. Most of the male or female heads of household are married (62.14%), and 13.17% live together, unmarried, 10.89% are widows and 8.58% are singles.

Traditionally, families in Bolivia have been quite large, sometimes containing six or seven children. Sometimes, a household includes more than just the husband, wife and children. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives may also live in the home, and women are responsible for maintaining the household.

Bolivian women have traditionally played an important role in commercial and economic activities. In poorer regions of Bolivia, women are often the breadwinners. Since colonial times, women have contributed to the economy through activities such as farming and weaving.

Educational level inside the household

Only 17.52% of the heads of household have had higher education, in contrast with 47.62% who only completed elementary studies and 20.22% who finished high school. Male heads of household who had higher education only constitute 15.15%, in contrast to

³ Continuous Bolivian Household Survey (ECH) conducted in 1999 by the Bolivian Statistic Institute (INE 2001).
39.96% of male heads of household who only finished elementary studies and 17.43% who only finished high school. In the case of female heads of household, only 2.37% went to university, while 7.66% finished elementary school and 2.79% finished high school (INE, 2001).

The most utilized language in Bolivia by the heads of household is Castilian, spoken by those living mainly in the urban areas. About 41% speak only this language; 22% speak a combination of Castilian and Quechua; 18% speak Castilian and Aymara; and 13% only speak native languages.

Bolivian females tend to be less educated than their male counterparts. Only 81% of girls are sent to school, compared to 89% of boys. It is common practice for parents to send their daughters to government-run schools, while sons receive a better education in private schools.

**New power and identity clashes**

It has been more than two years since Bolivia’s most prominent leader of the rural-based organizations that cultivate coca leaf has been elected as the first indigenous president of the country: Evo Morales. This moment created a huge shift in Bolivia’s cultural politics, transforming the distribution of power and conferring it mainly to members of the indigenous working class.

There is an internal clash of middle class “whites” and working-class indigenous groups, the latter who have taken radical positions in reaction to colonialism and the previous supremacy of the “white” elitist class. “Qharas” is the not-so-friendly definition given by native ethnic majorities to the “white” elite middle-class minorities who have
been displaced in government power, and now constitute the opposition. This struggle has provoked turmoil among people in different regions of the country that do not consider themselves indigenous and are not willing to be ruled by indigenous interests.

**Emigration**

The transfer of Bolivians to other countries (mainly to the United States, Argentina and lately to Spain and Japan) is based on social networks that produce emigrational cycles through many generations, reproducing chains of contacts and liaisons between the social agents and between the departure and arrival country (Zalles Cueto, 2002, p. 91).

The main objective of Bolivian migrants is the search for economic and social well-being stimulated by the demand for labor and for a relatively better lifestyle in the country of arrival (Farah & Sanchez 2004; Zalles Cueto, 2002). In a study of Bolivian migrants to Argentina, Zalles Cueto borrowed the term “in-swarming” from Alfred Crosby to describe this community’s success in producing strong symbolic and cultural representation and affinity-associated and cohesive forms of organization (p. 100).

Moreover, this migrant population that makes significant remittances to Bolivia has seen a sizeable increase over the last ten years. The largest remittance-sending communities reside in the United States and Argentina. According to the Census Bureau, nearly 2000 new Bolivian immigrants settle in the United States each year; therefore, their remittances have become an important source of income for many Bolivian families, totaling more than $94 million in 2003, up from only $2 million in 1996. However, the

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4 “Enjambramiento” is the original Spanish word used by Zalles Cueto.
IADB (Inter American Development Bank) estimates a figure double that amount in 2004 (SELA, 2005, p. 25).

As a consequence, many Bolivian rural towns, especially in the lowland regions, are systematically diminishing their populations because of continuous migration to the Bolivian urban areas and mainly to the United States. Thus, their families are fractured and live apart for many years until they return or get documented status in the United States in order to bring their families to join them.

**Religion and media**

Traditionally a Catholic society, Bolivia started undergoing a profound religious transformation that originated in the 1960s. This transformation was factually observed in the 1980s and was powered by the intensification of the competition of diverse non-Catholic churches in the battle to win more followers (Suarez, 1999). The main factors of this transformation can be observed when analyzing the structural causes of this phenomenon as a result of globalization and transnationalization, entailing the free circulation of religious beliefs, the processes of migration and urbanization. The last published statistical data about religious demographics\(^5\) showed that Catholics were down to 78% and evangelical Christians reached almost 17% of followers. Evangelicals keep growing at a rate of 10% a year\(^6\).

Suarez (1999) explained the belief system of what he terms as the “protestant” religious movement in Bolivia through a world view centered in the opposition God/evil

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\(^6\) Data provided by the 2004 Annual Report of COMIBAM International (Iberoamerican Missions Cooperation).
and their struggles, a battle that will always be won by God. Therefore, this entails “principles relating to good and evil which take the individual to evaluate, with these referents, their daily life, social, political and economic relationships” (p. 49). “The ethics of these religious groups is permeated by the battle against the devil and sin.” (p. 50). This belief system will prove instrumental in their media selection.

Regarding media and religion, Suarez (1999) exposed how evangelical Christian churches empowered themselves through a systematically constructed religious message broadcast through radio and television stations that they eventually acquired, from which they preached their message 24/7 with a totalizing mode, that is, filling all moments of daily life (Archondo, 1999) and producing a wide range of content including evangelical music in all the genres, social assistance, publications, cassettes and videos. Evangelical Christians were and are a captive audience to these radio and TV channels. There are twelve radio stations and four TV channels owned by some of these churches.

The Bolivian household and ICTs

In Bolivia, 61% are nuclear households, meaning that they are constituted of a head of household, a spouse or partner, and children if there are any. Extended households represent 20% and are formed by a nuclear family with additions such as sons- or daughters-in-law, parents, parents-in-law and others. Twelve percent are only one person and seven percent are composed of extended households plus other non-family members such as a maid who lives under the same roof (INE, 2001; UNPFA, n.d.).

According to projections of the Integrated Household Surveys (INE, 2001), there were almost 2 million households in the urban and rural areas of Bolivia, from which
82% of the urban ones owned a radio or sound system, 79% owned a television set, and
36% owned cellular phones. In the rural areas, the majority of the households had radio
or sound systems (65%) and only 14% owned a TV and 1.64% had cellular phones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Radio or sound system</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Telephone or Cell Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,977,665</td>
<td>1,497,362</td>
<td>1,075,340</td>
<td>448,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td>1,210,962</td>
<td>999,672</td>
<td>964,433</td>
<td>436,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td>766,703</td>
<td>497,690</td>
<td>110,907</td>
<td>12,582</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Households with information technologies by area in Bolivia.
Source: Bolivian National Statistic Institute, Integrated Household Surveys projections, 2001

Actually, radio is still a central information technology for urban and rural
households. In rural areas, it still provides information about the agricultural market and
is still being used as an oral mailing system, in which listeners send messages from one
community to another. In addition, nonprofit organizations have utilized radio to teach
new methods of agricultural technology transference.

Television is a communal experience in the rural areas. Even though a great majority
of rural households don’t have a TV set, the store on the plaza or the neighbor does, and
people get together every afternoon to watch old comedies (Mexican production reruns
such as *El Chavo del 8*) that are broadcast from the local channels, followed by news
broadcast by the channels from the capital.

Latest data presented by the World Bank (2006), indicated that in 2004 only 200
persons per 1,000 owned a cell phone and 70 per 1,000 of the lower middle income group
used the Internet.
In sum, increasing levels of emigration from Bolivia to the United States have influenced family life in the homeland and their new homes of destiny in the United States. These new configurations of the Bolivian home will become relevant when establishing connections between its members living overseas and the ones left behind. Information and communication technologies play an important role in the mediation of these connections, which will be presented in the main findings of this inquiry.
Chapter 3: Overview of Bolivians in the United States

In this chapter, I present the context of Bolivians in the United States, their socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics and the information and immigration processes relevant to the Bolivian population in the DC metropolitan area.

Latino population demographics provide information about the context in which Bolivian families live. Also, I present demographics about undocumented Latino populations as a context for these other invisible and unaccounted groups of Bolivians living in the US.

General Latino demographics

The U.S. Census Bureau (2007) reports that the Latino population in the United States reached 42.67 million in 2005 or 14.4% of the total U.S. population and is estimated to grow to 47.7 million by 2010. For 2005, the state of Virginia reported a big number of Hispanics or Latinos: 453,000 in contrast with 47,000 in the District of Columbia, perhaps because of more employment opportunities in the state of Virginia in comparison with DC. Almost half this population comes from Central America and a third come from Mexico. The rest come from South America and the Caribbean. The combined Latino population in the DC metropolitan area, which includes the District of Columbia, Virginia, Maryland and West Virginia, was 581,000 in 2005 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

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7 Table 23 of the 2007 Statistical Abstract of the United States. See reference list for bibliographical information.
Of the total of 21,683\(^8\) million of Latinos 25 years old and over, 23.7% attained less than a ninth-grade education, 16.6% had made it from ninth to twelfth grade but didn’t have a diploma, 26.17% were high school graduates, 8.6% held bachelor’s degrees and 4% held a graduate degree. Consequently, 59.6% of the Latino population has a high school diploma and above (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

The same study reveals that of the total of 8.7 million families, 1.2 million made between $30,000 and $39,000, 1.4 million made between $20,000 and $39,000, 1.3 million made between $10,000 and $19,000 and 771,000 families earned less than $10,000.

According to the same study, the poverty level for the year 2004 was\(^9\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Million</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latinos below poverty level</td>
<td>8,847</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino families below poverty level</td>
<td>1,738</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Statistical Abstract of the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007) shows that Central and South American Latinos are 16.5% of the total population. Also, there are 2.1 million Central and South American households, of which 77.3% are family households; almost 50% are married-couple families. A total of 7.6% of the households were male householders with no spouse present in contrast to 20.2% female householders with no spouse present; 22% where non-family households. Twenty-two percent of the Central

\(^8\) See the (2007) Statistical Abstract of the United States: Table 40.
\(^9\) See the 2007 Statistical Abstract: Table 40 (US Census Bureau (2007))
and South American households had four people, followed closely by households with three people (22%) and two people (21%).

**Latinos and media**

Latinos consume Spanish and English language programming depending on their generation and income level and on the type of media. For example, radio in Spanish is the fastest growth sector and it chiefly attracts lower-income and older Latinos (Carlson as cited in Arreola, 2004, p. 16).

The latest statistical information on access and use of the different information and communication technologies regardless of the place of use but including age, race/ethnicity, education and income is provided by the 2007 U.S. Census report. Based on a study done by Mediamark Research in 2003, from a total of 25,792 Spanish-speaking English capable subjects interviewed, most of them watched television (94%), mainly in prime time. The second-highest activity of Spanish-speaking people was to listen to the radio (85%), followed by watching cable television (70%). Only 47% of the sample accessed the Internet. In addition, television viewing is still a more common activity compared to the others in Hispanic households with incomes up to $19,000 and higher.

However, the consumption of media activity by Latinos is not sharply segmented to Spanish broadcasting networks. A survey directed by Robert Suro (2004) showed that “many more Latinos get at least some of their news in both English and Spanish than in just one language or the other” (p. 1). Suro affirmed that:
The news media powerfully influence the twin processes of cultural change at work in the Hispanic population: the assimilation of American attitudes and the formation of a distinct identity. Even as the English-language media purveys values and cultural expressions drawn primarily from the experience of the native born, the Spanish language media reflects the immigrant experience and reinforces ties to the home country. (p. 1)

Consequently, and as this study will affirm, ICTs contribute to Latinos’ assimilation process to the host culture because they are essential to the process of learning about their new place of residence, especially for the new generations that are U.S. born. They are also critical for foreign-born youths and adults for this same reason. Over time, Suro (2004) affirms, immigrant Latinos steadily migrate from Spanish to English media depending on the subject, be it politics, news from Latin America, or sports.

Exposure to news in English is greatly increased because so many Hispanic households are now bilingual with U.S. born, English-speaking children living with Spanish-speaking, immigrant parents. (Suro, 2004, p. 2)

A very recent report on Latinos Online (Fox & Livingston, 2007) concludes that Hispanics--as the authors identified them, with their lower levels of education and English proficiency, remain largely disconnected from the Internet. More than one in two Latinos (56%) goes online, a lower rate than among non-Hispanic whites (71%) and non-Hispanic blacks (60%). Several socioeconomic characteristics that are often intertwined, including low levels of education and limited English ability, largely explain the gap in Internet use between Latinos and non-Latinos.

Additional key findings from Fox and Livingston (2007) state that 78% of Latinos who are English-dominant and 76% of bilingual Latinos use Internet, compared to 32% of Spanish-dominant Hispanic adults. Moreover, 76% of U.S.-born Latinos go online,
compared to 43% of those born outside the United States. Some of this is related to language, but the analysis shows that being born outside of the fifty states is an independent factor that is associated with a decreased likelihood of going online.

Some Latinos who do not use the Internet are connecting to the communications revolution in a different way – via cell phone. Fully 59% of Latino adults have a cell phone and 49% of Latino cell phone users send and receive text messages on their phone. Looking at the numbers in a different way, 56% of Latino adults go online, 18% of Latino adults have a cell phone but do not go online and 26% of Latino adults have neither a cell phone nor an Internet connection (p. i). Latinos are less likely than whites to have an Internet connection at home, as 29% of them have a broadband Internet connection at home.

**Undocumented Latino demographics**

Based on the Current Population Survey (CPS), the number of unauthorized migrants\(^{10}\) living in the U.S. is 11.5 to 12 million\(^{11}\). Most of these immigrants are from Mexico, according to the study, and most undocumented immigrants live in families in which the adults are undocumented but the children are U.S. born. An estimated 14 million people, including 4.7 million children, live in families in which the head of the household is an unauthorized immigrant; this is what is called “mixed status,” in which

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\(^{10}\) “Unauthorized migrant” is a term used by the Pew Hispanic Center meaning a person who resides in the United States but who is not a U.S. citizen, has not been admitted for permanent residence, and is not in a set of specific authorized temporary statuses permitting longer-term residence and work (Passel i).

\(^{11}\) Analysis made by Pew Hispanic Center based on the CPS and other data sources.
one or more parents are illegal while one or more child is a U.S. citizen by birth (Passel, 2006).

The study also mentions that undocumented immigrants arriving in recent years tend to have more education than those who have been in the country a decade or more. A quarter of them have at least some college education, but as a group the undocumented immigrants are less educated than others. They can be found working in farming occupations (24%), cleaning (17%), construction (14%) and food preparation industries (12%).

About 2.5 million, or 22% of the total, came from Latin American countries other than Mexico, primarily from Central America. Undocumented immigrants from Mexico and the rest of Latin America represented 78% of the unauthorized population in 2005.

**Family characteristics of Latino undocumented immigrants**

As of 2005, there were 6.6 million families in which either the head of the family or the spouse was unauthorized. These unauthorized families contained 14.6 million persons. Among adults, males make up 58% of the unauthorized population, while females make up 42%. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of the children living in unauthorized families are U.S. citizens by birth, an estimated 3.1 million children in 2005 (Passel, 2006, p. ii).

Passel maintains that the undocumented immigrant is commonly thought of as a young, male worker usually accompanied by a wife or children, maybe because unauthorized migration is driven primarily by the search for better wages (Kochhar, 2007; Passel 2006). The same study argues that unauthorized migrants also live as
couples (sometimes with a spouse who is a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant), some with children. Some children in the same family are U.S. citizens and some are not.

The unauthorized population included about 5.4 million adult males and 3.9 million adult women, representing 42% of the adults in the March 2005 estimate.

The bulk (3.9 million) of the 6.6 million unauthorized families does not have children. These families are composed of single adults, couples and some other combination of adult relatives.

**Bolivian migration to the U.S.**

A good number of Bolivians travel to the United States seeking greater economic and educational opportunities because the home country did not have acceptable opportunities. Therefore, some middle-class college-educated “white” Bolivians come with professional aspirations and are accompanied by their families. A large group of these middle- and working-class Bolivians can’t afford college education in the United States and therefore enter the country as tourists in order to explore other possibilities to improve their economic situation.

Bolivians who want to move outside the country and who can’t afford to travel to North America sometimes emigrate to Argentina, where they face xenophobia, labor exploitation and discrimination. Those who can get more money pay thousands of dollars to enter the United States with no authorization and encounter the typical challenges of undocumented workers: low-paying and insecure jobs, the constant threat of deportation and separation from family.
The only close-to-reliable source for the number of Bolivians in America is the former U.S. ambassador to Bolivia, Manuel Rocha, who declared back in 2000 to the press that the Bolivian community in the United States is scattered throughout the Union with an estimated 600,000, of which about 150,000 live in Washington DC. Forty percent (more than 200,000) are undocumented (Rocha, 2000). I believe that this number has increased over the years, especially after the new indigenous president was elected.

The official numbers (without taking in account undocumented population) used by the U.S. Census Bureau provide statistics for the Bolivian population in large metropolitan areas. The inaccuracy of the statistical data about Bolivians in the United States can be graphically seen in the reports of two relevant statistical institutions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2000</th>
<th>rank</th>
<th>MSANAME</th>
<th>Mumford&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt; 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Census 2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV</td>
<td>22432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>New York, NY PMSA</td>
<td>4858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA</td>
<td>4323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Miami, FL PMSA</td>
<td>3527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Orange County, CA PMSA</td>
<td>2058</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Bolivian population in five main metropolitan areas in US according to two institutions (in thousands).*

*Source: Lewis Mumford Center for Urban Comparative Research at University of Albany 2001*

<sup>12</sup> Lewis Mumford Center for Urban Studies of University of Albany in New York.
Within the metropolitan area of Washington DC, the city of Arlington, Virginia, is “home to a higher proportion of immigrants than any other Washington DC area jurisdiction” (Arlington County, 2000) and is also well known for hosting a large number of Bolivians. In their report on the foreign-born population (2000), “There were 52,693 foreign-born persons living in Arlington County in 2000. (…) No one country is the main origin of immigrants living in Arlington County. The largest immigrant group is from El Salvador (…). Two other Latin American countries--Bolivia and Guatemala--are the second and third most frequent countries of origin, accounting for 10 and 4 percent respectively” (p. 4).

It was formerly a middle-class migration from one of the poorest nations in the world, but now it has become a higher working-class, including indigenous, migration from the rural and urban regions.

It was the construction boom that attracted the first Cochabamban population to Arlington, back in the 1980s; the ones who settled were calling others reaching to the point in which some say that half of Tarata and Aiquile (Bolivian rural impoverished rural valleys) are there. Seventy members from a family from Tiataco, nearby Arani, arrived one by one entering the country at Mexico’s borderline, and sometimes utilizing false passports” (Paz-Soldán, 2000, p. 36).
Eduardo Avila, a longtime U.S. resident from Cochabamba published this comment about Arlington in his own weblog, called BarrioFlores:

Jokingly they refer to Arlington, VA as “Arlibamba” in reference to the huge number of Bolivian immigrants, especially those from Cochabamba who headed the first wave of mass movement twenty years ago. In spite of the differences of hometown, length of stay in the country or whether or not they were in the country legally, most of the people who came out on a cold Thursday night had something in common: they were all looking for a better life for themselves and their families within the context of a lingering cloud of uncertainty that weighs heavily. No one knows what the future holds, especially for the tens of thousands of undocumented Bolivian immigrants living in the immediate area. (Avila, 2005)
The “in-swarming” (Zalles Cueto, 2002) of the Bolivian community in the DC metropolitan area has produced a strong cultural and symbolic representation, together with organizations that are very unified and cohesive. Examples of this cohesive collectivity can be found in the formation of barrios or population concentrations in Arlington, Manassas and Falls Church. There are cultural festivals in downtown DC, and Arlington’s Mayor has declared a Bolivian day. There is also a major Spanish language newspaper called Los Tiempos with news from Bolivia mixed with local news.

**Indigenous immigrants: transient Bolivians**

“Bolivians from the countryside find outside of our frontiers a space to survive”

Genevieve Cortez

A good number of Bolivians who are smuggled across the Mexican border come from very poor rural areas; they are peasants leaving rural towns with few habitants, mainly in the high valleys of Central Bolivia: Cochabamba. A study done by the French geographer Genevieve Cortez (1998) about Bolivian peasants emigrating to Argentina and the United States, explained that “the transnational migration in certain rural regions of Bolivia is an integral part of the life strategies of the peasant, not only to satisfy his daily subsistence needs, but also to stay in their land of origin” (p. 28).

These Bolivians do not interrupt their links with their communities; men especially “depend on the foreign life in order to maintain the rest of their family in the community or to reinforce their socioeconomic position and prestige within their community” (Paz-Soldán, 2000, p. 35).
Migrant peasant women usually stay in foreign lands less than a year and two-thirds of migrant men are away for one to five years. It is very normal that the heads of household with official documents spend the majority of their life overseas “sometimes more than 20 years, that is to say 80% of their married life” (Cortez, 1998, p. 33).

The nontraditional families that this transient population belongs to are never static; they hold a double permanent residency “and they organize their life in a series of comings and goings with a 6 month to 1 year frequency” (Cortez, 1998, p. 30). Bolivian rural peasants rent places with other migrants (either Bolivian or other Latinos) and move when it is necessary or when they find something cheaper and with no fixed-time obligations.

**Ethnicity, class and identity**

University-educated middle-class and skilled working-class people in Bolivia find themselves working in servile jobs in the DC metropolitan area. “Bolivians are also one of the oldest and most successful Hispanic communities in the area. Most came here for economic reasons rather than fleeing conflict, and on average they have higher income and education levels than U.S. born Americans. Although some Bolivians toil at menial jobs, many are professionals or own small businesses” (Constable & Brulliard, 2007, p. A01).

Many come to the United States in search of economic stability in order to satisfy a very strong financial need in their home country. In addition, middle-class university-educated Bolivians have migrated to attain and expand their education, but the final and most important goal is to reach economic stability.
Bolivians’ tactics to perpetuate their cultural identity among their children encourage a strong sense of their culture by motivating them to learn native languages and dances of the country from which they emigrated. It is for this reason that a Bolivian organization called Escuela Bolivia was founded in 2000 in order to educate their children in Bolivian history, traditional dances and music. Moreover, in order to facilitate the foreign-born adults’ assimilation and adaptation process, this Escuela offers English classes for adults.

“We teach Spanish for children PK-12 and mathematics for children in grades 3-5; We offer classes in English, Spanish, Quechua and computer classes for adults; We integrate cultural activities such as Latin American dance lessons and Bolivian movies,” reads the outreach flyer published to invite attendance to their Saturday morning school. Its mission is “to provide and strengthen linguistic and cultural values and to improve the academic achievement of its students (children, youth, and adults), so they may gain better opportunities to improve their lives and their communities” (escuelabolivia.org).
Bolivian immigrants continue to sustain their links with their communities of origin by organizing themselves. So far, there are more than twenty Bolivian organizations whose objectives are to reinforce the cultural identity of Bolivians in the United States and also to assist with the development of a policy toward Bolivia. The Bolivian American Cultural Union, Medical Bolivian American Association, Bolivian Cultural Committee, Artistic and Cultural Bolivian Fraternity, and many others are sustained mostly by contributions from the community itself. In addition, there is a strong soccer league in Arlington called the *Arlington Bolivian Soccer League* comprising twenty teams that collect funds from the games to send to their rural towns back in Cochabamba, Bolivia (Paz-Soldán, 2002).

**Music, dance and language as identity markers**

Bolivians participate actively in the reproduction of traditional dances. In Arlington, folk dancers participated in about ninety cultural events, nine major parades (including the Bolivian National Day Festival) and twenty-two smaller parades and festivals in 1996 and have kept on doing it since then. The dancers also participated in almost forty presentations in schools, theaters, churches and other venues. Sponsored by the Pro-Bolivia Committee, an umbrella organization of arts and dance groups, these Bolivian folk dancers performed before thousands of spectators. Millions more watched the performances on television. Held every year on the first Sunday of August, the Bolivian National Day Festival is sponsored by the Arlington Department of Parks and Recreation and attracts about 10,000 visitors.
Working-class Bolivians usually speak only Spanish; however, new generations speak more and more English and less Spanish or their native language. Lately, there has been a cultural movement promoting bilingualism as a way of safeguarding identity among the Latino community.

Bolivian-American schoolchildren new to the United States, for whom English is a second language, have experienced increased difficulties becoming proficient at English as support and funding for bilingual education shrinks in the United States.

**Employment and economic traditions**

Like legal immigrants from most Central and South American countries, Bolivian Americans have relatively high levels of income and education. Their median income is
higher than that of other Hispanic groups such as Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Mexicans. The proportion of Central and South Americans who have completed the twelfth grade is twice as large as the same proportion of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. Also, a higher percentage of Central and South Americans work in managerial, professional and other white-collar occupations than members of other Hispanic groups. Many Bolivian Americans highly value education, which has allowed them to do well economically. Upon arrival in the United States, they are often employed as clerical and administrative workers. By pursuing more education, Bolivian Americans often advance into managerial positions. A large percentage of Bolivian Americans have held government jobs or positions in American corporations. Multinational companies often benefit from their skills and facility with foreign languages. Bolivian Americans have begun working at universities, and many teach about issues related to their former homeland (Eigo, 2000).

Bolivian immigrants are employed in a variety of jobs in the United States. Among those immigrants who provided occupation information to the former U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, the largest single occupation category in 1993 was professional specialty and technical workers. The next largest group of Bolivian Americans identified themselves as operators, fabricators and laborers. About two-thirds of Bolivian immigrants in 1993 chose not to identify their occupation, a percentage that is consistent with immigrants from most countries (Eigo, 2000).

**The Bolivian household in the metropolitan area**

Studies about immigrant households from Bolivia are not easily found, and the number of Bolivian residents fluctuates greatly. However, the stories of Latino immigrant
households are similar and a parallel can be drawn with some particularities. In a study about Central American families, Ceres Artico (2003) displayed their brokenness due to separation:

A common pattern of immigration among Central American families is that the mother, father, or both parents will come to the United States by themselves, leaving their children in the care of extended family in the country of origin. Usually it is not until a few years later that the parents are able to bring the children to the U.S. (p. 1)

This process of settlement can take as long as ten or twelve years; this is what is called a piecemeal pattern of migration, and it influences the child’s perception of the family and has created unique dynamics and needs in the family as a whole (Artico, 2003, p. 4). “As race/ethnicity is increasingly viewed as a social construction, not only for Latinos, but for all our American racial/ethnic groupings, the family acquires a central role as the primary socializing agent for those core values that make up this constructed culture and race” (Contreras et al., 2002, p. 5).

Over the last several decades, some of the most dramatic changes in family structure and composition have been for Latinas. Compared to their white counterparts, they are less likely to be married, more likely to be heads of household, and more likely to have younger children at younger ages, outside of marriage (Contreras et al. 2002, p. 8). Also, 24%, Bolivian females were heads of household including single, widowed or divorced; these conditions forced more of them into the labor market (Farah & Sanchez, 2004). In the opinion of a Bolivian evangelical leader in the DC metropolitan area, the family structure of Bolivians who attend his church has changed as a result of immigration.
“They come from broken families, separations, divorces”\textsuperscript{13}. Also, a large number of the families experience a low quality of life:

“These families lack privacy in their daily life because they share their home with extended family and others because of economical issues. Also, their work affects their daily life in a dramatic way because they have to work in more than two jobs to maintain a worthy lifestyle for their children; therefore they abandon them in their homes leaving them as sons and daughters of MTV” (Carlos Peñaloza, pastor).

\textbf{Immigrants, Christianity and media}

In a study about Bolivian migrants, Amalia Prado (1997) found that migration was a fertile soil for new religious searches because church was a secure place in which to take refuge from the hostile and aggressive outside world. In this place, the immigrant finds a way to reconstruct his or her sense of life.

Evangelical churches, both Spanish- and English-speaking ones in the DC area have committed to pursue the promotion of appropriate messages that are aligned with the teachings of the Bible through mass media, using what they call Christian television and radio because, in their opinion, non-religious media does not contain appropriate content. Peñaloza strongly criticized Hispanic television because it exalts sensuality and uses the body of the Latino woman as a sexual symbol. In his opinion, “media has a powerful and negative influence.” The leader was convinced that mainstream media has a satanic influence over the audiences and that “it is an instrument of the devil to promote values

\textsuperscript{13} Personal interview with Carlos Peñaloza, President of the Association of Pastors in the DC metropolitan area and Senior Pastor of the Bolivian church Ekklesia.
that are against God’s principles such as witchcraft, new age God-less thoughts, liberal concepts against the Bible’s doctrines, sensuality, violence and terror”.

Actually, in the DC area there are five FM and one AM religious English-speaking radio stations (WAVA, WFXA, Spirit 1340 WYCB, Heaven 1580 WPGC, WGTS) and two AM religious Spanish-speaking radio stations (Viva 900, WWGB). For faith-based television channels in English, there is a large religious network called TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network). “This channel offers 24 hours of commercial-free inspirational programming that appeal to people in a wide variety of Protestant, Catholic and Messianic Jewish denominations,” the network says. It is sustained by mega churches’ donations, airs diverse content ranging from music shows, movies and talk shows to news and religious teachings. Spanish programs are less resourceful; some teachings are taped from live Sunday meetings and broadcast through the community channels at non-published hours.

As I will show through this study, the TV offerings of religious content have not appealed to the participants in this research. In contrast, radio has been widely accepted, and it is an essential part of the evangelical Christian family’s daily life.

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14 TBN’s home site in the About Us section. www.tbn.org
Chapter 4: Theoretical framework

In this chapter I elaborate on the Circuit of Culture model (Du Gay et al., 1997) and how it contributes to explanations of culture mediated by cultural objects or artifacts that circulate in moments interrelated to each other and with no hierarchical order. In addition, I define the Technology Mediated Consumption model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996) and articulate both of these models, which together constitute an interpretation scheme that will structure the organization of the data collected through this ethnographic media approach.

Studies of Consumption of Technologies inside the Home

Pierre Bourdieu’s (1977) study of an African rural house’s internal organization of space motivated British scholar David Morley (2000) to initiate a wide variety of approaches to the British home’s internal organization space in relation to the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Bourdieu found two systems of oppositions: the world of women inside the home and of men in the city. He categorized these oppositions with metaphors of light/day and darkness/night relating them to men and women correspondingly; thus, he related these oppositions with the external world according to movements of men out of the home and women into the home (see figure 4). Therefore, he interpreted the world of men as being essentially public and women’s as the world of intimacy and privacy connected by a threshold. Through his study of their movements in the spaces and with the objects inside of what he termed a “twofold orientation” of the house, Bourdieu unveiled a set of symbolic values, rituals and
hierarchies inside this rural house. He concluded that the house as the world of women remains subordinate to men and that its orientation “is fundamentally defined from the outside, from the point of view of men and, if one may say so, by men and for men, as the place from which men come out … it remains a reversed world, an inverted reflection” (p. 110).


Silverstone, Morley and Hirsch (1992) stated that “information and communication technologies are crucially implicated in the work of social reproduction as mediators of the social knowledge and cultural pleasures which facilitate the activities of consumption as well as being consumables in their own right” (p. 19). Also, these scholars pointed out that the involvement of ICTs in the production and exchange of commodities and meanings is not a passive one: the capacity of the household or the family to create and sustain its autonomy and identity, including their individual members, as an economic, social and cultural unit was at stake. In addition, they attached great importance to the
mesh of class position, ethnicity and geography in the value creation process in its various daily practices. Silverstone also explained the relevance of objects and meanings in their objectification and incorporation within the spaces and practices of domestic life, which “define a particular semantic universe for the household through an evaluative--moral--project which results in the creation of a spatial sense of security and trust, a sense of security and trust without which domestic life would become impossible” (p. 20).

In the same way, Stuart Hall argued that television viewing was an occasion for family interaction and/or to “create space” even when the living room has people other than family members. As we will see in the findings of this study, television and all the other electronic media in the household such as the telephone, the computer and the DVD/VCR have become integrated into the everyday processes and codes of family interaction of the particular community where this research was done. In his introduction to Morley’s *Family Television* (1986), Hall discussed how television had “a complex web of customary procedures and rituals, rules and principles (...) It is enveloped by the tensions of negotiations which accompany any form of decision-making in families. Choices about what and when to view, and control of the switch, are allocated along the lines of power and relationships, which intersect all families” (p. 8).

Reporting on the gender of the home, Morley (2000) argued that “the domestic remains a site of specifically gendered anxieties: however much the masculine-coded perspective of modernism attempts to present itself as universal, it can never quite banish its own shadows, especially in this domestic realm” (p. 59). Morley also commented on how most British married women “notwithstanding their far greater presence in the
workforce outside the home, are still much more subsumed in the home than are men” (p. 63).

There is a level of symbolic structuring of gender, for which Doreen Massey (1994) writes that from a masculine perspective, woman still “often stands as a symbol both for Nature and for all that has been lost or left behind”, so “that place called home is frequently personified by and partakes of the same characteristics as those assigned to Woman/Mother” (p. 10). As she also observes, “the identities of the woman and of the home-place are frequently blurred: the home is where the heart is (if you happen to have the spatial mobility to have left) and where the woman (mother, lover-to-whom-you-will-one-day-return) is also” (Massey, 1994; Morley, 2000). When referring to migrant and displaced groups, Morley (2000) emphasized the importance of the woman as the main preserver of cultural continuity through many resources such as oral traditions conveyed through the mother tongue, Spanish in this case, to the next generations.

In parallel with Bourdieu’s (1977) classical analysis of the gendering of space in rural homes, Morley (2000) stresses the continuing importance of gendered divisions in the domestic life of the affluent urban world, in which a gender-coding of space and domesticity was identified (e.g., the home as women’s space and the farm and/or outside workplace is the men’s space). He continues arguing that “there is historical evidence of the extent to which, in UK, the design of the Victorian town house reflected the internal hierarchy of the bourgeois family with the public ‘masculine’ domain at the front of the house and the private ‘feminine’ domain confined to the rear” (Morley, 2000, p. 74; Madigan & Munro, 1990, p. 27).
Cultural competencies were also an important issue researched by British scholars when exploring ICT consumption practices by active audiences in the home. Morley (as cited in Gray, 1992, p. 10) pointed out that “individuals who constitute sub-groups of the television audience cannot be seen simply as bearers of deep structures (class, for example) which can somehow be read off or matched up with their decoding strategies, but must be seen as subjects crossed by a number of different, and often contradictory, discourses … we require to ‘see the person actively producing meanings from the restricted range of cultural resources which his or her structural position has allowed them access to.’” Likewise, British cultural scholar Ann Gray (1992) stated that the cultural resources available to individuals from whom their particular cultural competencies were gained were determining factors when it was time to choose any popular genres. These “resources” and “competencies” are unevenly distributed in our society depending on education and socialization levels (p. 10). Gray found that gender has a major influence on domestic practices and must be prominent in any attempt to address the social constitution of the audience. Class and gender, in particular, intersect significantly in a complex interrelation (p. 11). Morley (2000) emphasized that “communication technologies inevitably transgress the boundaries of the household” (p. 101). The project HICT, in which Morley and his fellow scholars participated, was designed to unveil how different types of households regulated this transgression.

In addition, Spigel (1992) introduced nuances to the issue of space and place when stating that the creation of new spaces was a product of the introduction of the television in the household. She affirmed that the introduction of television provoked profound re-
arrangements in the family’s spaces, even creating new ones: “The emergence of the term ‘family room’ in the postwar period is a perfect example of the importance attached to organizing household spaces around ideals of family togetherness.

In Postwar America, Spigel remarked that “harmony gave way to a system of differences in which domestic space and family members in domestic space were divided along sexual and social lines. The ideal of family togetherness was achieved through the seemingly contradictory principle of separation; private rooms devoted to individual family members ensured peaceful relationships among residents. Thus, the social division of space was not simply the inverse of family unity; rather, it was a point on a continuum that stressed ideals of domestic cohesion. Even the family room itself was conceived in these terms. … This ideology of divided space was based on Victorian aesthetics of housing design and corresponding social distinctions entailed by family life” (p. 67).

Spigel specified the issue of space introducing public space in relation to domestic space. Therefore, she stated that the division between public/work and domestic/leisure has developed and changed over the decades. “Feminist critics and historians now agree that the home is a site of labor which includes physical chores done by women, childrearing labor and now the concept of home-office has permeated our daily lives. Therefore, the housewife presents a very pronounced example of the integration of work and leisure in everyday life” (Spigel, 1992, p. 74). Moreover, even though her study was conducted more than a decade ago, her explanations of the dynamics of domestic labor done by women in its relation to consumption has not changed much in present times:
The spatial condensation of labor and viewing was part of a well-entrenched functionalist discourse. The home had to provide rooms that would allow for a practical orchestration of ‘modern living activities’ that now included watching television. These spatial condensations of labor and leisure helped to soothe tensions about television’s obstruction of household chores. However, they also produced increasing workloads with another spatial remedy: Lots of sets after a few months were moved into dens and recreation rooms. (Spigel, 1992, p. 89).

**Latin American Cultural Studies, consumption and family**

Latin American scholar Jesus Martín-Barbero responded to the functionalist paradigm that theorized the communication process as linear and with the receptor’s passivity at the end of message transmission. Martín-Barbero theorized semiotic structuralism and Latin American-focused diffusion of media innovations. He proposed focusing on cultural mediation as the unit of analysis for his research and as the site of negotiated meaning of discourse and identity. Moving away from media-centric viewpoints, he argued that the processes of communication be addressed from the standpoint of social movements rather than beginning with assumptions about media power. Therefore, he commanded attention to the *mediations* and not the media or the text as a way of focusing on how the popular classes interpret symbolic products away from the intentions of the dominant culture.

In consumption research, Martín-Barbero’s and other Latin American scholars’ perspectives differ from British viewpoints when introducing consumption practices within culture inside a hegemonic system. Therefore, daily practices do not entail a total liberty on the side of the consumer because they are inscribed within this dominant realm, from which the users contest and try to dispute the established order. From this

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15 The “mediations” category refers to the “places” from which it is possible to perceive and understand the interaction between the space of production and reception.
standpoint, consumption will be an invisible production practice, made with tactics and astuteness from which popular masses will signify and resignify the dominant order (De Certeau, 1984; Martín-Barbero, 1987). Moreover, Néstor García Canclini emphasizes that with the introduction of the transnational question it is “necessary to abandon the old concept of the struggle against ‘dependency,’ for the struggle for independence from a colonialist country in a direct confrontation with a geographically defined power” (as cited by Martin-Barbero, p. 207).

García Canclini (1999) identified diverse models to clarify the consumption process: the ones who define consumption as a place where the classes and groups compete for the appropriation of the cultural product, as a place of social differentiation and symbolic distinction among groups, as a system of integration and communication, as an analysis of the process of desire or as a ritual process. All of these models can be used to explain the consumption process, but they are not enough by themselves. The author concluded that the consumed goods have a double role; they have social significance because material possessions have practical uses, but mainly, the essential function of consumption is its capacity to make sense. Thus, the consumer will build an intelligible universe with the goods he or she chooses (García Canclini, 1991; Douglas & Isherwood, 1979). García Canclini defined cultural consumption as the set of social processes of products’ appropriations, as “the space of reflection of the daily practices in relation to the body, of the uses of time, habitat, of the conscience of the possible in each life, of the reachable and unreachable … it is the place of sense production, of a battle that is not exhausted in the possession because it is in its use that the products are given a social
form when it is inscribed in them the demands and action devices which mobilize the
different cultural competencies” (1999, p. 34). “It is the set of processes of
appropriations and uses of the products in which the symbolic value prevails over the use
and exchange value, or in which at least these configure subordinated to the symbolic
dimension” (1999, p. 42). This is the operational definition that has guided a big part of
consumption research in Latin America in the 1990s, and it is the most influential
contribution of García Canclini to the development of research in this field (Sunkel,
2002).

Martín-Barbero (1993, 2001b) contributes with a critical look at media-centric
approaches and, through his elaboration of the mediations category, his consumption
conceptualizations are linked closely to those of García Canclini (Sunkel, 2002). There
are four aspects to Martín-Barbero’s conceptualizations.

First, consumption as a sense-making production activity:

Consumption is not just the reproduction of forces. It is a production of meanings
and the site of a struggle that does not end with the possession of the object but
extends to the uses, giving objects a social form in which the demands and forms
of action of different cultural competencies are registered. (Martín-Barbero, 1993,
p. 231)

Second, consumption with a constitutive dimension, understanding the
communication processes as spaces of constitution of identities and of communities’
conformations. In other words, media consumption is a cultural phenomenon through
which more and more people experience the constitution of the meaning of their life
(Martín-Barbero, 1995, p. 183). For example, evangelical radio conforms the religious
community giving sense to the daily life of the followers through the religious programming (Martín-Barbero, 1995, p.184). This affirmation is essential to this study because radio has been detected in a central space of the evangelical homes, as I will explain in the main findings.

Third, the strategic dimension of consumption research in a context in which market globalization is directly linked to the fragmentation of consumption. This is relevant because it suggests new ways of social grouping and the changes in the ways of people being together (Sunkel, 2002).

Finally, consumption implies an epistemological and methodological shift in the place from which the communication process is thought of; therefore, from the culture and its struggles for hegemonic power.

This permanent reminder of a change in the place where media users look or question the communication process is a key aspect of Martín-Barbero’s contributions to consumption research (Sunkel, 2002). Therefore, he proposes the previously mentioned category of mediations understood as the “place” from which it is possible to perceive and understand the interaction between the space of production and reception, that is, the logic of the productive system and the logics of the social uses of the communicative products (Martín-Barbero, 1987, 2001b). From this “place” it is possible to observe the interaction between these two logics. These “places” would be those in which everyday life take place, structuring the social uses of communication: the daily life of the family, social temporality and cultural competence (2001b, pp. 230-242; 1993, p. 216).

Technologies, says Martín-Barbero (2001b), “are not mere transparent tools, and they
don’t let themselves be used in just any way, they are, ultimately, the materialization of the rationality of one culture and of one ‘global model of organization of power’” (p. 201).

Relevant to this study is Martín-Barbero’s importance given to the daily life of the family as one of the essential mediation places of ICTs’ social uses. Therefore, the home and family is the key place of reading, resignification and appropriation of ICTs. Moreover, these daily practices inside the home are the ones that structure the modalities of ICT consumption. Hence, mediation is a category of analysis of a specific place, from which the appropriation processes and social uses of communicational artifacts constitute the basis of this study. It is from this place that profound transformations are produced in ICTs’ content production and specific and alternative uses.

**The Technology Mediated Consumption model**

Consequently, all these researchers’ findings were significant in their contributions within the different contexts to enrich research in the domestic space in relation to ICT consumption. However, it was Silverstone, Hirsch and Morley (1992) who proposed a Technology Mediated Consumption model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley 1992; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996) that centered on specific dimensions of the ways media and information and communication technologies were accepted, (and by extension resisted or rejected), introduced and displayed. Therefore, this model constitutes an essential theoretical foundation for this study, which will provide the categories of analysis needed in order to unveil the ways in which Bolivian immigrant families have accepted, resisted
or rejected, introduced and displayed ICTs as meaningful strategies in order to survive as a culture within a dominant host culture.

These essential categories of analysis will be later articulated through an interpretation scheme that structured the results of this research inquiry:

**Appropriation.** “An object—a technology, a message—is appropriated at the point at which it is sold, at the point at which it leaves the world of the commodity and the generalized system of equivalence and exchange, and is taken possession of by an individual or household and *owned*” (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992, p. 21). They argued that “it is through their appropriation that artifacts become authentic (commodities become objects) and achieve significance” (p. 22). Central to our definitions is the importance of this process as the household’s efforts to build their own identity as “acts of appropriation the transactions involved in the passage of artifacts from commodity to object— are, or can be central to an individual’s or a household’s efforts at self-creation: defining and distinguishing themselves from, and allying themselves to, each other” (p. 22).

Further, Silverstone and Haddon (1996) explained that appropriation is a process in which individuals distinguished by class, age, gender, ethnicity, and as members of families or households accept sufficient relevance of the publicly defined meaning of a cultural artifact to their own circumstances to buy and then accept the new object or product into their own domestic environment.

**Objectification.** Silverstone uses the word *display* to characterize this moment of the process. Therefore, when this happens, the classificatory principles that inform a
household’s sense of itself and its place in the world are revealed. “Objectification is expressed in usage but also in the physical dispositions of objects in the spatial environment of the home” (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992, p. 22). “Clearly it is possible to see how physical artifacts, in their arrangement and display, as well as in their construction and in the creation of the environment for their display, provide an objectification of the values, the aesthetic and the cognitive universe, of those who feel comfortable or identify with them” (p. 23). “For an object or technology to be accepted it has to be made to fit into a pre-existing culture. It has to be found a space, literally, in the home” (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996, p. 64). This process, Silverstone and Haddon affirm, “is fundamentally reflexive, since it is possible to suggest that material and symbolic artifacts of all kinds, in their physical and discursive arrangement and display, provide an objectification of the values of those who feel comfortable, or identify, with them. An understanding of the dynamics of objectification of commodities within the household will also throw into strong relief the pattern of spatial and symbolic differentiation (male/female, adult/child, shared/contested, public/private) which provides the basis for a given domestic geography” (p. 64).

**Incorporation.** Media and information and communication technologies also have to have a function. “They have to be fitted into a pattern of domestic use in domestic time” (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992, p. 24). These functions may change or disappear (home computers were for education and eventually were converted to game machines); they may facilitate control over time. Here, Silverstone centers on
the place and location of the ICTs at home; he argues that to become functional an ICT has to find a place within the moral economy of the household, specifically in terms of its incorporation into the routines of daily life. Gray (1997) stated that technologies are incorporated into the household as articulations of gender and age differentiation, as well as reinforcements or assertions of status. Where a technology is located and when and how is used and by whom become crucial elements in analysis of the household.

**Conversion.** This concept signifies closure, where the household and the outside world meet. Members of the households will display and accept the meanings they provided to their commodities to go beyond the private space and become accessible to the public realm, and to have significance outside the home. Are the meanings private, personal, therefore inaccessible and irrelevant in the public realm? Or are these meanings negotiated and transformed by means of displaying them so they can be accepted outside the home?

This entire process could be schematized as follows in order to observe the focus of each category and its moments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology mediated consumption process</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>ownership/definition/identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectification</td>
<td>material display</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>spatiality/differentiation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shared, private;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male, female;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adult, child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporation</td>
<td>temporalities (control over time)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As explained earlier, the Technology Mediated Consumption model in articulation with the Circuit of Culture model is the basis of the analysis of this study’s fieldwork.

**The Circuit of Culture model**

A group of scholars together with Stuart Hall (Du Gay et al., 1997) proposed the identification of five major cultural processes identified as representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation, which taken together complete a circuit they termed the Circuit of Culture. Through this model “any analysis of a cultural text or artifact must pass if it is to be adequately studied” (p. 3). The scholars argue that in order to study an artifact culturally “one should at least explore how it is represented, what social identities are associated with it, how it is reproduced and consumed, and what mechanisms regulate its distribution and use” (p. 3).

As a circuit, the scholars emphasize that it doesn’t have a beginning or end point, but it is important to pass through the whole in order to have a complete study. Moreover, each part of the circuit is needed in order to understand the others. For example, “having started with Representation, representations become an element in the next part, that is, of how identities are constructed and so on.” The authors acknowledge that the separation of the parts of the circuit into distinct sections is for the purpose of doing a “cultural study”
of a particular object, but “in the real world they continually overlap and intertwine in complex and contingent ways” (Du Gay et al., 1997, p. 4).

This study uses this model’s definitions of the sections included in the circuit in order to explain the meaning that ICTs come to possess in the immigrant home. These definitions are based on the application of the five major processes that these scholars provided for the study of the Sony Walkman (Du Gay et al., 1997):

**Representation:** involves understanding how language and systems of knowledge production work together to produce and circulate meanings. Representation becomes the process or channel or medium through which these meanings are both created and reified. Also, these meanings can be unveiled through marking the artifact’s *similarity to* and *difference from* other objects to make sense of it. To complement this concept, this study also explores the representations of place (Mackay, 1997) inside the immigrant home, which will convey the special qualities of place according to the meanings that household members have assigned to them through their consumption practices.

**Identity:** These meanings produced through representation or from ideas about similarity and difference connect with, and help constitute, the meaningful identities of the users. For this study, I will focus on an approach to identity analysis explained by Mackay (1997) as a “situational sense of identity which is differentially developed according to the context” (p. 68): the home. The family, class, gender, national origin, age and place factors termed as a “multifaceted and relative sense of identity” by Mackay (1997) will also be taken in account.
**Production:** An artifact is “encoded” with particular meanings during the production process. Analyzing the production of a cultural artifact involves understanding how it is produced technically and how it is produced culturally. Therefore, scholars wanted to know how the object is made meaningful during the design and production process. Scholars studied the “social shaping” of technology, how can it be understood as a “text,” encoded in its design and decoded in its appropriation (Mackay, 1997). This study will focus on the appropriation moment of this process.

**Consumption:** More than purchasing, consumption is a struggle in which consumers do not just passively buy goods, they take the meanings created by the producers and struggle with them, criticize them, apply their own experience to them and make their own consumption of these meanings, their appropriating and using these forms for their own purposes becoming their active contribution. Therefore, “production and consumption are better understood as linked in the circuit” (Miller, 1997). In other words, meanings are not just “sent” by producers and “received” passively by consumers; rather, meanings are actively made in consumption, through the use to which people put these products in their everyday lives (Du Gay et al., 1997, p. 5).

**Regulation:** Some artifacts cause effects in society’s cultural life, so institutions make attempts to regulate their usage. This cultural regulation also impacts the design and production of any artifact. This study will take into account the regulation dynamics that are produced in an attempt to regulate the usage of ICTs inside the home. This entails the analysis of power relations between members inside their created household places and spaces.
The articulation of all these moments completes the Circuit of Culture. This model shows that cultural meaning is produced and embedded at each level of the circuit whose meaningful work is necessary, but not sufficient for or determining of, the next moment of the circuit (Barker, 2000).

Figure 4: The Circuit of Culture  
Source: Du Gay et al.

The Circuit of Culture model is useful for the categorization of the different artifacts in relation to each other and in understanding the meanings arising from the different sections in the circuit from a general viewpoint. However, it doesn’t contemplate analysis referents for explanations about how a certain user or group of users appropriate, objectify, incorporate and converse about these ICTs in relation to themselves, the others
and the outside world. Consequently, my attempt is to integrate and articulate the Circuit of Culture’s theoretical mainframe (Du Gay et al., 1997) with the Technology Mediated Consumption model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992) studied widely by European scholars through particular and specific ethnographical applications to the different contexts of the domestic culture in different countries.

Away from media-centric notions and media determinism, I searched for relations among these frameworks in order to gain more understandings inside this study’s main mediation context of ICTs: the family’s everyday life inside the home, looking for new ways of communication, interaction, negotiations, resistances and creativities.

The circuit of technology-mediated domestic culture

As previously explained, the Circuit of Culture model (Du Gay et al., 1997) and the Technology Mediated Consumption model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley 1992) were articulated in this study. The Circuit of Culture was useful to interpret the circulation of ICTs in the domestic realm. Its articulation to the latter model offered more specificity and provided supplementary ways to categorize the diverse moments of this circulation inside the household. This articulation contributed to the construction of a specific and systematized interpretation of the consumption of ICTs in the domestic realm in relation to the different mediation places: family daily life, social temporality and cultural competencies (Martín-Barbero, 1993, 2001b) and contexts of interpretation such as gender, age and class.

The articulations between both models provided categories of analysis that are not mutually exclusive; hence, all moments are necessary for the others and one can’t be
explained without the other. These are not polarized categories, and they are intended to be seen as a dualistic complementary process embedding values and cultural meaning.

Each moment of the “domestic circuit” as termed in this study, is seen through the lens of appropriation, objectification, incorporation, and conversion processes and vice versa; therefore, each process of technology mediation can be read at any level of the Circuit of Culture. There are main themes arising from each relationship and articulation (see table 6).

Enriched by the analytical categories proposed by Latin American cultural researchers Martín-Barbero (2001b, 1993, 1999), and García Canclini (1995, 1999, 1001, 2005), this scheme contributes to deepen the analysis of consumption and audiences from the Latin American point of view, therefore situating the starting point of analysis: communication from the cultural mediation of the home and family daily life. The contexts of analysis were defined as age and gender, primarily; and in some cases the context of class needs not to be ignored in the cases when the analysis is pertinent to identity and power, to give this study more specificity and focus.

Centrally and concurring with Silverstone et al.’s model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992), I define the position of ICTs as sites of mediation of social knowledge and cultural practices which produce the activities of consumption that are crucially implicated in the work of social reproduction. The involvement of families using ICTs in the public world of the production and exchange of commodities and meanings is not a passive one (Morley 2000, 2001; García Canclini 1999, 2001). The capacity of the
household or the family to create and sustain its autonomy and identity (including their individual members) has economic, social and cultural implications.
## Scheme for the Circuit of Technology-mediated Domestic Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Appropriation</th>
<th>Objectification</th>
<th>Incorporation</th>
<th>Conversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Context of the household</td>
<td>Space (Physical and electronic)</td>
<td>Place (central/marginal/virtual)</td>
<td>Private/Public boundaries/transformations/transgressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family biographies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumption</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Electronic landscapes</th>
<th>Social form (defined by its use)</th>
<th>Cultural competencies and class:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class/Gender differentiations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dominant or contested/alternative functions</td>
<td>Cultural capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stratifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Symbolic capital</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulation</th>
<th>Control/Conflict</th>
<th>Power/space tensions</th>
<th>Time/place tensions</th>
<th>Social norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Appropriation**
- **Objectification**
- **Incorporation**
- **Conversion**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power relations</th>
<th>Social temporalities</th>
<th>Internal/external policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation</strong></td>
<td>Rituals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant/host culture or own uses</td>
<td>Territorialization</td>
<td>Visibility/invisibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spatial &amp; Symbolic differentiation: male/female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult/child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intimate/public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Symbolic display of competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of desired goods as lifestyle projections/class Reinforcement and assertion of status</td>
<td>Dominant/host culture or ethnic culture aesthetics</td>
<td>Homeland/host culture places/ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Belonging/Exclusion to ethnic or host culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservation of home/community boundaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Scheme for Circuit of Technology-mediated Domestic Culture
Through this scheme, every moment and process is articulated with each other, providing categories of analysis that contribute to the examination of the moments of consumption and circulation of ICTs inside the home. In the methodology chapter I explicate how this scheme works for analysis and how it was applied to this study’s fieldwork.

In sum, in order to generate meanings and interpretations about how a group of Bolivian families live with ICTs, their consumption practices (Morley, 2000; García Canclini, 2001; Martín-Barbero, 1993, 2001b), their motivations, their tactics and negotiations (De Certeau, 1984), the home’s transformations and the home’s identity and relation to the public realm, I articulated these main theoretical frameworks.
Chapter 5: Methodology

In this chapter I state the central methodological implications entailed in this qualitative approach to the study of ICTs inside some immigrant Bolivian homes in the Washington DC metropolitan area. I explain the challenges that I faced using this method and the significance of self-reflexivity along the articulations of the theoretical frameworks of this study.

In the same way, I explicate the ways in which twelve families were studied through unstructured interviews, informal dialogues, mental mappings and focus groups and reflect on the implications of the use of an ethnographic method for the study of a communication phenomenon.

Mainly, I present, explicate and define the elaboration of an interpretive scheme, constructed to answer the research questions presented at the beginning of this study.

Ethnographic approach to the household

It was Pierre Bourdieu’s (1977) ethnographic look at The Berber House\textsuperscript{16} that spurred interest in the ethnographic study of a household’s internal organization of space with meticulous descriptions through the detection of two systems of oppositions: the worlds of women inside the home and of men in the city. He categorized these oppositions with metaphors of light/day and darkness/night relating them to men and women correspondingly; thus, he related these oppositions with the external world according to

\textsuperscript{16} Based on previous approaches done by E. Laoust (1912, 1920), R. Maunier (1930) and H. Genevois (1955) about Kabyle House, an ethnographic study of interior organization of space inside a North African rural house.
the movement of men out of the home and women into the home (see figure 4). Therefore, he interpreted the world of men as being essentially public, with women inhabiting the world of intimacy and privacy connected by a threshold. Through his study of their movement in the spaces and with the objects of what he termed a “twofold orientation” of the house, Bourdieu unveiled a set of symbolic values, rituals and hierarchies inside this rural house. He concluded that the house as the world of women remains subordinate to men and that its orientation “is fundamentally defined from the outside, from the point of view of men and, if one may say so, by men and for men, as the place from which men come out … it remains a reversed world, an inverted reflection” (p. 110). Bourdieu’s house scheme is essential for this study. I draw upon his considerations and reinterpret his model, inferring a new set of oppositions, which will prove instrumental in the interpretation of the lives of the immigrant homes of this study in the context of a dominant/host culture.

Figure 5: Bourdieu's double space orientation of the house
(The right-angle arrows indicate the person's position)
However, ethnography and cultural studies established a relationship some years after when researchers from the British Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies wrote about “Ethnography” in order to “indicate the presence within Cultural Studies of a method—through shifting theoretical and substantive focuses—which continues to offer … an important mode of the production of concrete studies of the cultural level” (Hall et al., 1980). Ann Gray (1992) describes how the development of an ethnographic method was seen by the Center “as a growing interest in methods capable of delivering qualitative knowledge of social relations, with all the rich distinctions and tones of living societies. This search for a method was important for the centre, given its emphasis on the significance of ‘lived cultures’ as a politically necessary area for study, particularly those of working-class youth” (p. 30).

Within this framework, in his study about families and television viewing, David Morley (1992), inspired by Bourdieu’s approach, embarked on a study of the home using extended unstructured interviews and a qualitative methodology, finding it useful but not as meticulous and descriptive as the descriptions of the Berber House, and taking into account gender divisions as an important principle.

Regarding the use of instruments for a qualitative ethnographic approach, Gray (1992) stressed that if scholars want to examine the ways in which people live their culture, they must locate subjects in their social and historical contexts and develop ways of researching the real participants, before the study can be described as having ethnographic intentions. She chose to use “a loosely structured but open-ended
conversational interview” (p. 32), recorded in the women’s homes for a minimum of one and a half hours.

The instruments

Searching for a method to study the private realm of the household was not easy. I was confronted by the fact that in order to do a full-blown ethnography I needed to live inside the family culture for some time in order to unveil meanings and reasons for particular attitudes and choices. I embarked on a pilot study visiting a Mexican family who volunteered for the experience. This highlighted some concerns about the population in this study: the available Bolivian families didn’t volunteer for this and I later confirmed that they would hardly open their homes for many reasons that range from little affordable time (some of them had jobs with long hours) to distrust about the real intentions of the research. I was still determined to find voluntary Bolivian families in the DC area in the hope that they would be more open to collaborate with this study, since they live in a place where the Bolivian community is larger.

In spring 2006, I published an ad in The Washington Hispanic, a very popular Latino newspaper in the DC area that read:

COLABORE CON UN ESTUDIO SOBRE FAMILIAS BOLIVIANAS EN DC CONTESTANDO ALGUNAS
PREGUNTAS SOBRE EL USO DE TECNOLOGÍAS DE COMUNICACIÓN EN SU HOGar. SU TIEMPO SERÁ
COMPENSADO CON $40. LLAME AL 703-880-3067.

[COLLABORATE WITH A STUDY ABOUT BOLIVIAN FAMILIES IN DC ANSWERING SOME QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE USE OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AT HOME. YOUR TIME WILL BE COMPENSATED
WITH $40. CALL 703-880-3067]
I was bombarded with phone calls. I told the first batch of callers that they would have to meet with me at least twice a week for a period of four weeks, and none of them accepted the challenge. On the second day, the second batch of callers was told that they would have to meet the researcher for at least once a week for a period of four weeks. Again, no one wanted to give that kind of time. The third batch of callers, on the third day, was told that they would have to meet the researcher twice in a period of two weeks and answer some phone calls to clarify any information. This seemed more acceptable, and I immediately got the first four families to start the study. The following challenge was to establish contact with this group of families and to explain the study so they would be more open to provide information about their home life. I found the other four families through the same ad in a Bolivian church newsletter and the remaining ones were relatives or friends from the first groups I interviewed that referred me to them through the snowball sampling technique.

The present study is a qualitative approach with ethnographic instruments. For this reason, qualitative instruments with an ethnographic approach were chosen based on their flexibility and ease of information gathering without perturbing the participants.

a) Exploratory questionnaire

This was the first instrumental approach I used with each family. They were asked to fill out an exploratory questionnaire to gather some basic facts about the family (age, members, hobbies, technologies they owned, they liked, they used, why, why not, etc). For an example of the questions asked in the explorative questionnaire refer to appendix E.
b) Mental mapping

Ethnographers use this technique to better understand social and spatial relationships inside a place or space. This instrument proved useful as a complement to my other approaches to the family members, so I could detect if the technologies were part of their representations of home and which ones were significant. Therefore, it was helpful for gaining a greater understanding of how families appropriated and incorporated such devices into their daily lives, i.e., how present and visible ICTs were in their representations of place. For that reason, this instrument is only useful when seen together with the others, which allow more nuances to the understandings of presence of ICTs in the interviewees’ representations of home (appendix E part g).

c) Unstructured interviews

Another technique used was the unstructured interview in which usually one, sometimes two persons are interviewed at a time, following a guide to help the researcher focus on the important issues. The advantage of this technique is that it helped me to investigate personal, sensitive information, which wouldn’t have been available if I had interviewed the whole family. The disadvantage of this method is that the interviewees might feel under scrutiny and less willing to open up. I found that men were less relaxed when interviewed alone than when interviewed with their spouses, which could have limited some of their responses. This is why I decided to interview both together on the many occasions when I sensed that men were not going to open up. This was not true of women, who tended to be more open, maybe because of the trust I could have projected, being a woman like them (see appendix F for content guide).
d) Focus groups

Centrally, I aimed to generate insights into the criteria used by family members from the divisions of gender in using the technologies, their motivations and how they influenced, modified and informed their lives and relations within the household. This technique was relevant to my study because it helped me to gain deeper insights on specific issues such as gender and power. However, some respondents can be influenced in their answers while in a group setting, that is, they could repeat the responses of the others.

Finally, as Morley (1986) and Gray (1992) did in their studies of domestic environments, I used extensive verbatim quotes from my interviewees so the readers can independently examine how the interviewees framed (in their own words) their experience with ICTs in the household. This qualitative approach with ethnographic intentions was the most appropriate way to reach the families (Bourdieu, 1997; Gray, 1992; Seiter, 1999; Haddon, 2004) given the fact they were willing to talk about their lives in a planned and appointed time that had to be agreed upon well in advance and was subject to many reschedulings as a result of the family’s ever-changing dynamics and schedules. This included the head of the household’s and/or his/her spouse’s needs to respond to work calls, or the unavailability of the teenagers because of their multiple activities outside the household. This method will not answer questions about the details of consumption content or any patterns or frequencies of use, map patterns of communication, attitudes and values or any activity outside the household.
Working definitions

For this study, I consider a household any physically or symbolically bounded family-living unit composed of members who live under the same roof, without regard to their composition and assuming all the different kinds of family articulations that are considered in today’s hybrid society (nuclear, extended family and so on). I consider this concept as a unit of analysis, recognizing that the household is porous, with people coming and going, changing this reality in a dynamic way.

Class is informed by the household’s purchasing power; therefore, for the purpose of this study I define two types of households in the Bolivian community:

- A working-class household is one in which the members are mainly Spanish-speaking hourly laborers, without regard to their education level\textsuperscript{17} but earning a low-wage income (around minimum wage or less hourly income). Generally, they are undocumented and are not permanent residents.

- A middle-class household is one in which the members are Spanish/English speaking, with formal or more schooling and higher-wage income (well above the minimum wage). They are mainly permanent residents and can be legal immigrants or first-generation Bolivian-Americans.

This typology was the most appropriate for my sample because it is simple and mostly everyone fits in it.

I acknowledge the cultural complexities of the District of Columbia metropolitan area and its ethnic diversity. This is why this study will focus on the Bolivian community but

\textsuperscript{17} Formally educated, middle-class Bolivians who migrate from Bolivia to the United States and who can’t obtain legal status generally end up working for low-wage jobs. In most cases they become working class.
will not ignore the interracial ethnic relations with the American culture participants who are directly related to these families by way of marriage or kinship.

Also, for the purpose of this study, in order to understand the household members’ cultural competencies, I use Bourdieu’s (1986) basic definitions of the forms of capital. These basic and straightforward definitions are relevant to my study because they include the different kinds of competencies that will contribute to understand the explanations about the member’s capacities and characteristics, therefore:

- **Economic capital** is the command over economic resources meaning cash and assets.

- **Cultural capital** refers to the forms of knowledge, skill, education and any advantages a person has that brings higher status in society, including high expectations.

- **Linguistic capital** is defined as the mastery of and relation to language (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 114), in the sense that it represents ways of speaking.

- **Symbolic capital** can be referred to as the amount of honor and prestige possessed by a person with regard to acting structures. It is the value of distinction achieved through superior aesthetic taste (Bourdieu, 1984).

- **Social capital** refers to the resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support from “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.” (Bourdieu, 1984).
**Inside the homes: ethnographic fieldwork and self-reflexivity**

Twelve Bolivian families, eight working class and four middle class, were interviewed in their own homes during the spring of 2006 and winter of 2007 in the northern Virginia area. Some families responded to an ad in a Latino newspaper, others responded to an ad in an Arlington-based Bolivian church newsletter and the rest were referred to me by some of the respondents. All the respondents voluntarily accepted to be interviewed and I visited them in their own homes in Alexandria, Woodbridge, Arlington, Centreville, Fairfax and Gainesville.

The limitations in my budget meant that it was possible only to have a small sample, all recruited within one mid-size, geographical area. I offered to pay $40 in order to motivate them to participate based on other studies being done in the area asking for the same contribution. Half of the interviewed families came to me through this approach. The rest were referred to me by them and by friends. Most of my sample is traditional nuclear families. The unreached are the indigenous transient population that generally comes and goes to their home country and never completely establishes themselves here. Omitting this group means that this study will not contribute to understanding the dynamics of this other sector of working-class Bolivians who have different cultural competencies (e.g., they speak little Spanish and most of them haven’t completed high school), and I informally observed different household compositions and dynamics (i.e., heads of household live together in one apartment and one of the female siblings manages the home or more than one family share the same house).
Initially, I administered an exploratory questionnaire to gain insight into the homes and the technologies they owned, in addition to some aspects of their ownership and use. Then, I asked them to draw a map or floor plan of their home, including each room with all items they remember in each one, and to use the back of the page if there were more floors on their home.

In a second opportunity, I conducted the unstructured interviews with nuclear and extended families, in which I interviewed the two parents first, and then the children. In the case of extended families, I followed the same routine and complemented this with group interviews of all women alone and all men alone for the purpose of replicating a focus group-like experience in order to detect gender differences in their life with ICTs. The advantage of using extended family focus groups was that I could probe the men’s responses against the women’s, which helped me clarify incomplete or non-detailed answers. The interviews, which lasted between one and two hours, were tape recorded and then transcribed in full for analysis. I conducted interviews in English when respondents were bilingual and in Spanish where no English was spoken; the children especially liked to be interviewed in English because that was the language with which they were most proficient. The interviews were transcribed word for word and translated completely for accuracy. In addition, I took some pictures of their electronic landscape.

Also, for the focus groups and due to time and distance constraints, I found it very difficult to combine everybody’s schedule to gather participants. Finally, I could put together two groups, one of five men living in neighborhoods close by and another one of six women who belong to a Bolivian church. The topic of discussion focused on their
perceptions of the other gender’s capabilities and motivations to use, consume, choose, contest, share or display the use of ICTs in their own households. Children’s points of view were registered in the unstructured interviews. My purpose was mainly to clarify some of the questions arising from the family interviews with regard to gender specifically, with the intention of getting more input on how men and women dealt with the appropriations and relations that were being generated by the incorporation of ICTs into their daily lives. The questions asked were mainly to encourage them to reflect on whether there were conflicts arising from the use and placement of ICTs, impacts on their relationships, power relations and what their perceptions of the other gender’s skills on the use of ICTs were. In addition, I also let them discuss the ways in which ICTs influence or don’t influence their relations and also their management of the household.

As a mixed “whiter” middle-class female researcher, I felt unqualified to establish the appropriate subject-to-subject relationship with families whose ethnic background and/or social class I did not always share. For example, working-class “mestizo” interviewees tended to hide their consumption habits, which I detected after they started giving some hints at the very end of the interview (Seiter, 1990, 1994). Also, when interviewing another working-class family, I felt very frustrated when I couldn’t get the wife to speak for herself and had difficulty restraining the dominant husband from answering my questions to her. Likewise, I experienced antipathy from a male member when interviewing only the wife in one of the working-class families, because the

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18 “Whiter” or “Blancona” is an ethnically nuanced term used to identify people who are neither “pure white” nor an even mix of indigenous and white: leaning more toward the white than toward the indigenous.
husband was drunk and preferred to stay inside watching his big-screen TV and listening to the questions and answers from afar. There was another example of male hostility when he purposely distanced himself from the exercise, quickly escaping to the basement computer, thus providing no chance to ask him any questions.

One challenge in my study was to willingly distance myself from the other “whiter” middle-class researched subjects in order to reject any assumptions made because of my technology use habits. Even though it was not easy to surrender to bias from my own experience, I waited for them to narrate their own accounts and made notes that helped me to focus and be aware of my own thoughts or preconceptions.

Another challenge was to get close to the working-class interviewees in order to get the most information from them, which I believe I was nearly successful in most of the cases because they finally opened up after the first cold thirty minutes of the interviews.

**The interpretive scheme**

This scheme was constructed as an interpretive instrument for detecting meanings in a systematic way inside the immigrant home. Every moment and process is articulated with each other, facilitating categories of analysis. The logic that orders the sequence of analysis is provided by the processes identified within the Circuit of Culture and their micro moments within of appropriation, objectification, incorporation and conversion. Therefore, each process of the Circuit of Culture integrates all moments of Technology Mediated culture. Next, I will explicate how these articulations were constructed and what questions were asked in order to analyze the gathered data.
Production

Consumption is a scene of disputes for what society produces and the ways of using, says Néstor García Canclini (2005). Therefore, he is undoubtedly talking about an audience that is active, producing their own meanings deriving from the represented/encoded meanings when the technology was produced/designed. Then, individuals, members of a community or society, share and make sense together of ICTs in the appropriation process, when planning to purchase a new technology. Therefore, to begin this process of analysis, the first category is production/appropriation. Questions to answer here are about the meaning-sharing context: the household. What type of household is it? Family composition? Ethnic belonging? Daily activities and tasks? ICT compositions?

Going further when analyzing the production process, we can observe in this process of production of meaning, which spaces technologies occupy inside the home. Although it is clear that we can observe and register this data directly, the technical properties of ICTs allow the analysis of nonmaterial spaces. Therefore, in the relationship production/objectification, the challenge of the researcher is to report the spaces that have been produced inside the home to position this or that technology, but also, the spaces that these technologies have produced for the members of the home that are nonmaterial but electronic ones. Therefore a generating question is, from direct observation what spaces do technologies occupy inside the home? What electronic spaces have been produced by the users after their appropriation, knowledge of its potentialities and the needs to be satisfied?
Deeper in the production process of meanings of technologies inside the home and after creating a space, family members and technology users produce places. This is different from a produced space because at this level, technologies have acquired a meaningful functionality to their members and users, a place with a technology that has been incorporated to the routines of everyday life. Therefore, to understand **production/incorporation** meanings, the questions to answer could be: What places have been produced according to the functions that the members have given to one or a group of technologies? Are these places central, marginal or virtual? Why? Are there any differences within the gender and age divisions?

One other moment in the process of producing meanings inside the immigrant home is when after appropriating, choosing a space and converting it to a place of the ICTs, a set of boundaries is produced by the family members. These boundaries provide for the first instance of divisions of public/private, intimate/shared and mine/ours productions of meanings and the transformations and transgressions resulting from these relationships. Therefore, for the process of **production/conversion** we would need to answer questions about the private/public notions produced when using the technologies; what transformations are observed from these relationships, are there any transgressions to these boundaries? By whom?

**Consumption**

Cultural consumption is the “set of processes of appropriation and uses of products in which symbolic value prevails over the use and exchange values, or where at least the latter are configured subordinated to the symbolic dimension” (García Canclini, 2002).
Appropriation at the level of consumption will render a differentiated type of ICT ownership according to the gender, age and class of the family members achieving distinct meanings to them. The question to answer in the category consumption/appropriation will be: What differences can be detected in the ownership of certain ICTs according to gender and age? How is this ownership giving a sense of class status?

“Objectification is expressed in usage but also in the physical dispositions of objects in the spatial environment of the home” (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992, p. 22). “Clearly it is possible to see how physical artifacts, in their arrangement and display, as well as in their construction and in the creation of the environment for their display, provide an objectification of the values, the aesthetic and the cognitive universe, of those who feel comfortable or identify with them” (p. 23). Consumption/objectification then will help us configure a map of the immigrant home’s electronic landscapes, that is, the material and nonmaterial images of the ICTs inside the home. How are the families displaying ICTs? What electronic environments do the home members project? What are the hierarchies within the home spaces given to these landscapes?

The new forms of use configured from the production of meanings that consumption give to the active audiences are called social forms (Martín-Barbero, 2001b, p. 231), which are those uses that are given by a user or group according to their gender, age, needs and competencies. Therefore, these social forms are ways of reproducing the dominant or host culture or reconstituting and recoding them in new uses. Therefore, when analyzing consumption/incorporation we should answer the following questions:
What are the identified social forms that migrant members of the household are giving to ICTs? Are they reproducing the encoded meanings of the host cultures? Are they subverting these codes? (Are ICTs mediating the Latino experience inside the United States?)

Lastly, ICT consumption needs to be looked at in relation to the cultural competencies that these devices might be reinforcing or generating as a tactic of assimilation or clinging to their own ethnic culture. That is, how are ICTs building up or hindering the growth of the cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital of the family members of the immigrant home? Are ICTs producing any differences in cultural competencies according to class?

**Regulation**

As a result of ownership, ICTs brought inside the home enter an already working system. Hence, in order not to subvert that order, the owner of certain technology controls it and defines or regulate its use if it were to be shared by all the members. Conflict may arise from this process and, therefore, spaces of power may appear in the household scene. Thus, in the *regulation/appropriation* category, the question to answer is: What are the issues of control and conflict generated by ICT ownership?

Further, as a result of ICT objectification, the household members might or might not generate special rules for the use and placement of certain ICTs in certain spaces depending on age, gender and class. Therefore to ask questions about *regulation/objectification* might be to find if there are any rules within the home for the use of ICTs in determined spaces and which ones and for what reason?
Daily life is made up of a concept of time as repetitive, made of no measurable unities, therefore of fragments of time (Martín-Barbero, 2001b). This is not the productive measurable time; this is the daily time maybe organized by ICTs and their use with specific sequentialities and repetitions at different days of the week. Therefore, when trying to understand regulation/incorporation we should wonder: are ICTs organizing or disorganizing time in daily life? How? Are there new rituals as a result of living with ICTs?

As a result of regulation, the household in its relation to the public world comes up with social norms that are a set of rules in order to regulate the relationship between the home and the public realm. There are internal and external policies arising from this tension that are prescribed by the dominant individuals inside the home, (e.g., owners, adults). When analyzing regulation/conversion we need to ask ourselves what social norms are being produced inside the home for the household to relate with the public realm. How are these norms preparing the home to belong to external networks, associations or like groups?

**Representation**

The uses that the dominant culture (the host country) represents when advertising the technology are not always the uses that could be accepted by the audiences when ICTs are owned and appropriated. Family members will reproduce these uses or perform new ones in concordance to their culture, age and class. In this case, pertaining to representation/appropriation the question to answer can be: Are members of the immigrant home surrendering to the dominant proposed meanings of this or that ICT or
are they using these technologies concurring with their specific cultural rituals and traditions? How are they doing this? How is this affecting their assimilation process?

The representations arising from the display of ICTs inside the home, and in this case the immigrant home, can give us hints of territories formed inside the home. Now, these territories are not only material spaces but also virtual and are defined by uses exercised according to age and gender. In the category of representation/objectification, we should try to answer questions such as: what symbolic differentiations are ICTs producing through territories inside the home? How are physical and/or virtual territories affecting the male/female, adult/child and intimate/public differentiations?

When ICTs are incorporated into the routines of daily life, the representation process can be detected in the visibility or invisibility of the ICTs for the member/users of the household. A way of detecting this is through the technique of mental mapping, in which family members identify inside their different places the things they most remember. **Representation/incorporation** will give hints on how visible or invisible ICTs are in the mental representations of family members. Are there any differences according to age and gender?

In order to reconnect the household into the public world, the household members may or may not participate in the consumer culture where all meanings are shared. The question to answer in the **representation/conversion** category will be: how are immigrant household members legitimating their participation in the dominant/mainstream/host consumer culture through their ICTs? What competences will they be displaying?
Identity

As Anthony Giddens (1991) explains, “To a greater or lesser degree, the project of the self becomes translated into one of the possession of desired goods and the pursuit of artificially framed styles of life. … The consumption of ever-novel goods becomes in some part a substitute for the genuine development of self; appearance replaces essence as the visible signs of successful consumption come actually to outweigh the use-value of the goods and services in questions themselves” (p. 198). The modern design of ICTs is of sleek appearance (i.e., Plasma TV, latest wide laptop computers, flat-screen desktop computers and so on) can give the household an image of a better lifestyle or perhaps affluence. In the category of analysis identity/appropriation, can we observe identity markers that showcase a desired lifestyle? Are there any differences according to class? Are ICTs reinforcing or asserting a certain status?

Identity/objectification. We can also look for identity markers for ethnic culture when observing a household. Are immigrant families asserting and/or reinforcing this ethnic background or are they hiding it when looking at their physical and/or virtual spaces? How are ICTs contributing to the dominant or ethnic aesthetics?

When talking about the identity/incorporation articulation, there are places that are generated that contribute to the construction of identities in opposition to the homeland and the dominant culture. How do ICTs provide these places of encounter? Do ICTs contribute to build ties to the homeland and/or the host culture?

Finally, the identity/conversion articulation can help us detect: how are ICTs contributing or hindering families from belonging to or being excluded from the host culture or the ethnic culture within the Latino community? Are ICTs mediating the
preservation of the household’s identity? Are ICTs mediating the assimilation process of the migrant home? How?

The answer to some of the suggested questions according to each articulating category of the proposed applied scheme structures some of the content of the rest of this dissertation.
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Table 5: Applied Circuit of Technology-mediated Domestic Culture
Chapter 6: Geography of a Bolivian household

In this chapter I explore the ways in which ICTs have contributed to new spatial configurations according to the immigrant home’s gendered consumption practices. The places and spaces that Bolivians in this research constructed to display their ICTs inside their households reveal a sense of themselves and a representation of their lifestyle: “This display creates a specific environment providing objectification of the values, the aesthetic, and the cognitive universe of those who feel comfortable or identify with their ICTs” (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992, pp. 22-23).

Electronic landscapes (Mackay, 1997; Moores, 1997) are interpretations of these spatial configurations together with their ICT-specific appropriations presented through the families’ accounts, representations through mental maps and techno biographies (appendix G). These contexts expose the particular electronic surroundings of the homes I studied and the ways in which the members have incorporated them in their lives with differential characteristics and territorialization. This chapter concludes with my visual interpretations on their use of space and place as central, marginal or periphery inside both shared and private spaces in relation to the North or host culture and the South or the Latino community and/or the homeland.

The contexts: electronic landscapes

ICT surroundings or electronic landscapes (Mackay, 1997; Moores, 1997) provide a physical context for the consumption practices in these homes’ spaces and places. Therefore, the particularities of each of the homes’ display and spatial arrangements of
technologies are then articulated with the member’s accounts and key affirmations about their rituals and uses. In addition, these electronic contexts are the basis for understandings about gendered territories and their boundaries (Gray, 1992; Morley, 2000; Rakow, 1988; Spigel, 1992), connections and relations to the private and public worlds.

Consequently, the electronic landscape context is a relevant referent to interpret the process of consumption (Du Gay et al., 1997; García Canclini, 1995, 1999, 2001, 2005) in its objectification stage (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992), that is, the reasons why families display or hide certain technologies. Moreover, these landscapes give the reader a visual encounter with the subjects of study and the different spaces in which their activities happen. It is only a way of identifying and inferring issues of style and aesthetics as well as newness or oldness of ICTs used in these Bolivian homes.

**Do not disturb the baby: The Solareses’ electronic landscape**

The Solares family is composed of dad (25 years of age), mom (29) and a 2-year-old. The chief of the household is clearly the father, the only breadwinner, who earns around $40,000 a year working as a construction project manager.

Notable about this family is that they do not watch TV. They are not subscribed to cable nor do they watch the local channels because “there is no gain from it,” the father said, alluding to religious values and beliefs. This was also true about other religiously affiliated families interviewed in this study. Most of them displaced TV viewing for radio listening. Actually, the Solareses just use TV to watch movies they rent or baby videos for their daughter to watch.
Their consumption rituals are in relation to the objectification of their technologies, which are characterized by the ways they displayed them trying to make up for the lack of space and the diminishment of disturbance of their daughter. First, the plasma TV was hung on the living-room wall with a DVD player fixed in below it. Second, the digital telephone was placed in the walk-in closet together with their laptop’s printer.

The reason for the telephone to be placed inside the closet was a result of their need to isolate the noise from their toddler in her sleep and nap hours. Also, they stated that they don’t really use the digital phone since they bought cell phones. In addition, the wall-located plasma TV and DVD player didn’t occupy living space because of the thin profiles and light weight of these technologies. The neat display of these technologies in the living room can be interpreted as an aesthetic class identifier. The Solareses might be showing the visiting public what can be named as “modernness” of their media appropriations. What is curious is the fact that this plasma TV and the DVD player are never used; therefore, the plasma TV really functions as a class and modern lifestyle marker articulated with ethnic identification represented in a picture of the Bolivian city of La Paz hanging just above the TV (see figure 5).

In fact, life with their toddler was among this couple’s priorities. My encounters with them were done in a soft voice in the living-room area. Also, I was instructed not to ring the bell when arriving at the home, so their toddler would not be disturbed. Also, there was a CD/radio in the kitchen, a technology that is daily used in this space, maybe

Figure 6: Plasma TV and DVD player
because of all the activities inside the kitchen, where the woman performs most of her
domestic activities. The radio occupies a central place inside this home, whose members
strongly identified themselves with religious values permeating their ICT use.

**Put them all in the bigger room: The Andrades’ electronic landscape**

The Andrades, a working-class family, live in a small two-bedroom apartment in the
city of Arlington. A small living room together with the dining room contains ICTs all
around it; some in active use and others just sitting there collecting dust. The big-screen
TV is at the beginning of the row of technologies. It was always on during my visits and
was connected with basic cable (only the local channels) and a DVD player. This meant
that their living room and dining room/family room was their electronic hub sustaining a
multiple media-using activity as the identifier of their media consumption practices,
which are intertwined with each other. Therefore, TV watching, Internet surfing, chatting,
e-mailing, eating, stereo listening, and cooking activities were part of this family’s
dynamics in one widely used room in which negotiations, tensions and bargaining were
part of their daily life rituals.

Having most of their ICTs placed in a central space meant that different members
used different technologies, giving them specific social uses according to their age and
gender. Therefore, TV was reported as central in their consumption practices. Sharing the
living-room space of TV with the computer encouraged the others to use these
technologies in a more frequent manner; otherwise they might have not chosen to do so.
Hence, the mother, who was less likely to use the computer, was encouraged to do so
more.
I like the Internet, any question I have, it is more accessible than going to the library, even with food, when I don’t know what to cook, many other things. … I also like music, e-mail with my family, some friends, I don’t really chat. (Mrs. Andrade, age 37)

The teenager daughter monopolized the use of the computer and the telephone. They waited on its availability whenever she would stop using these technologies either after doing her homework and e-mailing and chatting with friends in the case of the computer or when she finished talking with all her friends on the phone. This produced tensions between her and her parents, who would constantly argue with her, is a sign of this household’s struggles and fractured relations as a result of ICT consumption practices.

**Keep me safe: The Locklins’ electronic landscape**

Dad, age 36, originally an American citizen; mom, 35, a Bolivian naturalized American; a three-and-a-half-year-old girl and a 3-month-old baby, both born in the United States, are a middle-class family with college education who self-identified themselves as following a religious (evangelical) lifestyle.

The Locklins’ electronic landscape was quite conservative for a middle-class household. Their ICTs were fairly old (five years or more), and they expressed that their usage was mostly marginal to their everyday life, with the exception of the radio.

That has been going down, we’ve actually detechnologized in that sense. When we came here, we enjoyed full cable package without paying for it [because of a technical issue] for a long time so we were watching television more than we should have and we decided to get rid of everything and now we don’t have anything, not even basic. We don’t have television … we just have an apparatus to watch videos, DVDs and stuff. (Mr. Locklin, age 36)

This family used to consume cable television but not anymore for two main reasons: they were not willing to pay for content that wasn’t healthy for their Christian lifestyle;
plus, it wasn’t contemplated in their budget. That is why they owned only one TV set and they resignified its use so it is a tool to reinforce their principles and values. Content in mainstream media tempts them to sin through what they perceive as immodest clothing, extramarital relationships and improper language; and it supports behavior that their belief system suggests them to avoid such as violence, drug use or practice of the occult. Therefore, these evils of “secular” ICTs are clearly something to avoid in its entirety.

Radio was the central technology in this family’s landscape. This wasn’t easy to infer just from observation or mental mappings when they represented their homes to me. This centrality came about when asking questions relevant to the articulations of consumption (Du Gay, et al., 1997) and appropriation (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992).

I mean, most of the time I’m home with the kids and they need their breakfast, so there is time, but if I need to go out, run errands, go shopping that doesn’t stand in my way because I can turn on the radio. (Mrs. Locklin, age 35)

However, their radio consumption was also strongly selective. They listened to radio with evangelical Christian-oriented content. This activity was done during many moments of the day. This meant that they were actively pursuing content that would be “edifying” to their belief and value system. Through radio’s biblical teachings they were taking steps toward their pursuit of holiness. In addition, they felt safe listening to content that was always going to be appropriate for them and their children.

Consequently, electronic landscapes as articulations of appropriation (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992), consumption and representations (Du Gay et al., 1997) of ICTs in this home’s surroundings contribute to knowledge about the meanings of the spaces and places of ICTs in relation to their lifestyle. Radio with evangelical-oriented content
was the main motivator for their consumption activities, which provided teachings, music and other resources to keep up with their religious lifestyle.

**Daddy’s newer devices: The Arces’ technology landscape**

The Arce family is composed of mom, age 30, dad, 38, a 9-year-old son, 5- and 4-year-old daughters and a nanny in a traditional single house in Alexandria. Both parents have reached high school education. He is an American citizen, and she is a legal resident alien. Their children were born in the United States. Their combined income is $31,000 to $40,000 a year; she is a manager, and he works in landscaping.

The Arces’ electronic landscape looked traditional at first glance. What caught my attention the most was that a good number of their ICTs around the house were fairly old, excluding the ones in dad’s home office and in the basement room. Mr. Arce’s home office had newer technology with all the equipment and peripherals, while the rest of the household had a very old and outdated computer and TV. The old computer was placed under the basement stairs, and right beside this hallway was Mr. Arce’s locked state-of-the-art home office.

The Arces placed the TV at the center of their ICT consumption practices, which they used both together and in isolation. During most of the day, their daughters monopolized the TV, watching cartoons to keep entertained and happy. Later in the day, mom began her watching ritual starting with *telenovelas*, and anything interesting after that. Dad is mostly a sports fan. Therefore, he limited his TV consumption activities to watch games together with friends on the big-screen TV.
Their central and marginal placement of ICTs showed how important each particular device was to their daily life. Therefore, in the case of TV, it was in a central place for mom and the children: “Without TV there is nothing,” Mrs. Arce said. The computer was central to the work of the father, and it was placed in his territory, the basement. Moreover, relevant to this study was finding how hierarchies were configured in this family’s relationship dynamics, which came from the appropriations of ICTs from different members’ territories: newer technology is establishing hierarchies among family members.

**Give it all to the men of the house: The Veizagas’ technology landscape**

The Veizaga family is a working-class family composed of mom, age 55 dad, 59, a 9-year-old son and a 20-year-old daughter of Mrs. Veizaga from her previous marriage. They have lived in the United States for fifteen years. They were the most difficult family to access in terms of getting the whole family to participate in the interview; the only ones who answered the questions were the mother and the son. She is self-employed cleaning houses, and her husband works in construction.

Mrs. Veizaga stated her distant relation to TV. She didn’t like it too much because it took too much of her time, so she decided to reduce her viewing activity to the minimum, that is, maybe once a week or even once a month; but when she does watch TV she does so for five to six hours. This family displayed a very sleek big screen placed in their living room.

Most of the technologies were located in the boy’s bedroom; he had a complete entertainment center, DVD player and video games and could use them at his discretion.
He also had other mobile technologies such as a Discman and a Gameboy. Therefore, this family’s ICT consumption appropriation gravitated around the boy. The mother’s accounts stressed the boy’s safety, happiness, contentment, and educational needs as reasons to purchase ICTs.

However, the newest technology of the house, the big-screen TV, was placed in the living room, in the center of the home. The living room was the gathering place of the family, where all the members got together at certain hours, mainly close to dinner time, to practice a communal activity. The computer was marginal and was outdated and ultimately unplugged. It was seldom used, and then by the boy only.

The Solares-Ortiz electronic landscape: a mission to accomplish

The Solares-Ortiz family is composed of a working-class mom, age 46, and daughter, age 20, living in an old single house in Fairfax, with extended family, that is, a married daughter and her husband, both age 22, and a 6-month-old baby living in the basement room. They all have been in the United States almost fourteen years. Mom is self-employed, and her daughter is a health assistant.

The newest computer was owned by Gloria, the mother, and the daughter sneaked in and used it at every opportunity until mom arrived and asked her politely to move so she could work on a special assignment:

I like her computer. I have the one upstairs and I can use it for Internet, but hers is a lot nicer and faster and everything, so. We have never had a conflict but she kicks me out. I’m not authorized because it’s her computer. She kicks me out when I’m on. I completely respect it because it’s her computer so, I just say, you know, one more minute and I’m off. (Andrea, age 20)
This family is also religiously affiliated to the evangelical Christian faith. All the bedrooms had a radio; they all used it to listen to music with Christian faith values and doctrines and teachings. In addition, Gloria used the computer for religiously motivated purposes. She declared that she was writing a book on this new computer because God had entrusted her with this task. This meant that the computer was an essential tool to accomplish divine assignments, which is why her daughter bought her a new computer even though she already had one.

The cell phone was central to accomplish the family’s unity. They decided as a group to disconnect their landline and now relied mainly on these devices for their communication needs.

To tell you the truth I have very much got used to my cell phone. I use it for everything; it is like my little computer. (Angie, age 23)

The cell phone plan we have has been wonderful because we don’t pay to talk with family members, a great technologic advancement and a lot of help to support our lifestyle. (Gloria, age 46)

Because of the daughter’s full schedule, without the cell phone it would be difficult to maintain a relationship with her mom and sister. She worked all day and relied on it to maintain familial relationships and to coordinate life (e.g., meetings to eat out together, church meeting attendance coordination, last-minute grocery shopping). Also, the daughter relied on the phone completely in order to keep in touch with her husband and to know were he is at all times and vice versa. This family declared that the cell phone was indispensable.
Let them all be satisfied: the Cortez electronic landscape

The Cortezes are a middle-class family who live in a single home in Woodbridge. Dad, age 38, mom, age 33, 11-year-old Andre and 8-year-old Micaela have lived in the United States for eight years. Dad owns a small business selling cell phones, and mom is in graduate school.

The dining room, which is beside the kitchen, had a full computer workstation with a printer and a fax. The whole family gravitated to this room at different times of the day for different needs according to age and gender: searching news, recipes, school closings, homework, Internet games, online banking, bill payment, and so on. Both mom and dad owned laptops; she used hers in their bedroom, in doing so demarking her private territory. Dad didn’t mind using it anywhere in the shared spaces of the house.

This household was one of the most complete and diverse electronic landscapes across gender and age. The technology appropriations by age and gender were comfortably displayed; most technologies were up to date (not more than one year old) showing this family as savvy users. The indicators of technology renewal and updates mean that there is increased enhancement of their cultural capital. With their accrued skills they seemed to need more by way of new releases or versions of software and technology. Also, the placement in the home showed their need to monitor this availability to the young ones, who were eager to consume more and more, defying the boundaries set by their parents.

This family’s representations of home through their display and placement of ICTs around the household gave a sense of equality and ICT access. However, the formation of
hierarchies was unveiled through the interviews. Members with greater cultural competencies in ICT use exerted dominance in use and access. In other words, the boy, who knew more about the Xbox and Nintendo games, monopolized this gaming activity and didn’t allow his sister free access.

**Let’s hear it for the radio: The Serranos’ electronic landscape**

The middle-class Serrano family consisted of mom, age 31, dad, age 30, 12-year-old Junior, 3-year-old Rizzie, their year-old baby and their nanny. Dad is an attorney, and mom works with him as his office manager. Both of them have college degrees and have been legal permanent immigrants in the United States for more than thirteen years. Their income is in the high $80,000 range, which makes them more affluent than the other interviewed families.

Incongruent with their acquisition capacity, this family owned one old TV placed in the family room. They also owned an old desktop computer bought in 2004, which was mainly used for surfing the Internet, for banking, for e-mail and for their business.

They were conservative in their display of ICTs around the home. Wishing for a big-screen TV, they displayed a very small and older TV and DVD entertainment center. The technology that was more prevalent around their electronic landscape was the radio.

This religiously affiliated home placed the radio in the central structure of their media appropriation practices and used it consistently at all times of the day in different rooms, for diverse Christian content: music, teachings and non-secular news.

On the marginal side, their home office displayed their tools for work including a computer, printers and fax in order to work from home whenever necessary. Even though
the radio was located in their private space, they didn’t talk too much about this technology during the interviews; I had to come back to them to ask about it after I observed it in their visual landscape.

On the contrary, their cell phones were very up to date, modern and sleek looking. This was the only technology that displayed more of their cultural and social capital and skills. Also, as a marker of their cultural competencies and connections to the outside world, their smart phones and organizer PDAs were used in the marginal places, only when the outside job required it.

Bringing the office home is an indicator of the father’s mobility from the outside world to the domestic world. In other words, the father will allow himself to stay home because of the capabilities that ICTs provided him, meaning they mediated times of family togetherness because of their interconnection and mobility, which can be taken advantage of by those with the necessary skills and cultural capital.

**Private, shared and contested territories**

The analysis of the families’ electronic landscapes (Moores, 1997; Mackay, 1997) in this study contributed to the detection of particular spatial configurations and territories, categorized as private and shared spaces. I delineate a standardized house plan with the intention of situating the territories and visualizing them more clearly, in order to have a snapshot of place and territory. However, it would be naïve to believe that this visual snapshot works as the main and only truth. I acknowledge that this visual encounter with the home’s territories is insufficient by itself and cannot be representative of all the homes because the differences in social class didn’t even allow space. This suggested
plan of territories in these immigrant homes gives a snapshot of families who live in houses with basements and second floors with bedrooms where private life unfolds. Nobody can know for certain when and how family members dwell in these territories and spaces because of the nature of life itself (Seiter et al., 1989), the inaccessibility to secret and private culture and the configurations and reconfigurations of space that ICTs allow in homes where identities and power relationships are perhaps contested and constantly undergoing redefinition.

Interviewees who used many of the newer ICT technical attributes or features commented on how these technologies provided them with an idea of stability and security. Therefore, their organizing tools such as calendars, contacts, electronic note pads, sleep controls, alarms, and remotes assisted them to organize their life in a more efficient way. However, reality seems to be less ordered. Instant communications, one-time broadcasting of real content (one moment it is there, the next it is gone), a lost important call, and discontinuity that is introduced by the permanent fragmentation (i.e., TV ads, music videos and others) would keep the family’s members far from living up to the pace of today’s fast life (Haddon, 2004; Mackay, 1997).

In addition, media convergence (a portable computer with TV, phone and DVD or a phone with video, MP3 and camera) has transformed the understandings of space and place inside these physical households. Private places for intercommunication and information consumption can now be anywhere where ICTs are used. Wireless technology has facilitated this phenomenon, and technical advances will keep modifying these ever-changing places and moments.
Physical private places are never completely private. Physical shared places are always changing depending on the purpose and nature of power relations and interests inside a given household. Gender relations are dynamic, and power is always shifting from one place to another (Huerta Wong, 2004; Giddens, 1991; De Certeau, 1984), from one gender to the other, from one generation to the other, aided mostly by access to power loaded with cultural competencies (Bourdieu, 1986; Martín-Barbero, 1993) in the household’s intertwining of information within the circuit (Du Gay et al., 1993) and the multiplicity of senses that sustain human relations and communication.

Also, I reiterate that given the dynamic quality of diasporic identities, this house plan should be not considered static. Members may enhance their cultural, social and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986), giving more nuances to their already acquired knowledge. In addition, the model includes children’s rooms that were very common with my interviewees. However, I acknowledge that households with single parents, couples with no children (Passel, 2006) and multiple-family households are not contemplated in this house plan.

According to the application of the mental mapping technique, discussed in the methodology section, in which members drew the places where some ICTs were placed, I elaborated the following ICT positioning which is emblematic of some of the middle-class homes in this study.
Figure 7: Example of detected territories for a Bolivian immigrant middle-class home.
Basement location.
Figure 8: Example of detected territories for a Bolivian immigrant middle-class home. First-floor location
The bedroom generally located on the second floor was observed as a marginal place, as the hideaway place of many of the interviewed Bolivian moms/wives; this is where they take refuge to watch television, talk on the phone or read. The computer is mainly placed in a home-office room mostly located in the peripheral space of the immigrant home: the basement. Most middle-class adult women stated that their favorite place to use their laptop computers was mainly the bedroom because they could use and then fold
the computer away in their effort to maintain household orderliness. A couple of the male interviewees had their desktop computers in their bedrooms despite it not being a favorite place for their wives because it hindered their private moments together, therefore being the cause of distanced marital relationships. Also, the desktop computers occupied space in their not-so-big bedroom that didn’t look neat, either.

Also, some finished basement rooms have been converted into a home theater with a big-screen TV in many cases or into home offices equipped with a computer and all accessories. Also, two of the families I interviewed who had children had assigned a separate room for their kids so they could watch TV or play their games.

What does this all mean? How can we observe and detect spaces, place and territories without risking the idea of one-dimensional meaning? This examples of detected territories in some of the middle-class Bolivian homes in this study is just one more side in a multidimensional approach that this study brings to the field.

Next, I explore non-physical territories that are contained in ICTs, in order to provide more nuances to this holistic approach and to understand more about life with ICTs inside the immigrant household.

**Virtual territories and the place of the ‘no place’**

The virtual space was found to be an important place of connection of these immigrant homes with both the outside world and the homeland. More specifically, children and women used these virtual spaces with different motivations, which I will analyze in the power and identity chapters. However, to focus more on the display of
these spaces we need to articulate them with the competencies that these users have according to gender, age and class in order to create specific uses.

Therefore, new generations are constantly acquiring new tools for their subsistence in the new temporalities and spaces that today’s virtual worlds offer, appropriating new territories where they control, author, produce and design, opine, contest, and challenge adults or others’ ideas.

The physical world … is a place where the identity and position of the people you communicate with are well known, fixed, and highly visual. In cyberspace, everybody is in the dark. … On top of the technology-imposed constraints, we who populate cyberspace deliberately experiment with fracturing traditional notions of identity by living as multiple simultaneous personae in different virtual neighborhoods. (Rheingold, 1993, p. 61)

Teens in this study have turned to the private side of the home, and deterritorialized in the home to reterritorialize (Martín-Barbero, 2002) on the Internet and in their video games, where they are the protagonists, the heroes and the winners (sometimes the losers). New and alternative uses have allowed the flexibility and potentialities of virtual space.

For example, a young adult woman in the focus group proudly displayed her cultural competencies and skills in order to get a group of teen girls’ attention through this new territory in order to approach, talk and encourage them through a virtual support group she created (see figure 9). She communicates with them through myspace.com. Her religious affiliation compelled her to use tactics (De Certeau, 1984) in the virtual world in order to connect with this group of shy and quiet teen girls: this method proved successful because it facilitated privacy and the use of their own moments to talk with secrecy and interactivity. Through this virtual space (McLaughlin, 1998), which has been
appropriated by them with a sense of belonging and complicity, the mechanisms for the formation and cultivation of interpersonal, inter-household relationships are set in place mediated by virtual place inside ICTs.

**Figure 10: A middle-class woman’s representation of her family on myspace.com**

Domestic territories (Morley 2000, Cassidy 2000, Cockburn, 1992) today transcend the physical boundaries inside the household and they are being systematically established in virtual spaces with no sense of permanency, order or centrality of content. No-places also have places (Meyrowitz, 1985). ICTs contain screen spaces (Turkle, 1995) that are adapted and constructed by the users in different manners and moments according to needs, skills and interests that cross with age, class and gender. These skilled uses are performed mainly by younger males and also females who have gained the appropriate cultural and linguistic competencies (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986) in order to be able to “enter” and “exit” this world at will.
In other words, the interviewed, young middle-class Bolivians in this study dwell in these no-places, actively and nonsystematically, with different levels and motivations; and they are teaching the older generations to make good use of these spaces, which in turn results in connections with ethnic identity or the South orientation, thus, the homeland (Morley, 2000).

These older generations are many times timid guests in these spaces but are very slowly gaining territory as they discover how they can make good use of them according to their purposes, which are mainly to be able to connect with their cultural ethnic referents while still using these devices in a peripheral space. This means that their competencies are not yet enough. Therefore, they feel dependent on what those more advantaged in knowledge and competency can do for them.

Maybe I don’t understand the computer that good, it has so many things like go and research. I don’t know how to make maps. I always tell my husband to teach me. I know those little things are simple and easy, but he never has the time, always busy. (Teresa Mansilla, age 59)

Consequently, the use of these peripheral spaces going out through the virtual threshold is conditioned on the level of cultural competencies. Screen space is a virtual place where only the knowledge-advantaged can dominate, and the disadvantaged can only enter as guests. This study found dual characteristics of ICTs, which are: first, they mediate cultural practices; and second, they provide spaces of mediation within themselves. Therefore, not all members of the home will be able to take advantage of them within the spaces of mediation without the appropriate information; hence, inequality is discerned in this process. The potentialities of screen space within ICTs are established according to their motivations of use: play (video games), interact with others
(chatting, video phone chatting) or display/observe/invade other’s spaces (myspace.com, worlds.com and others) and are functions only privy to the knowledgeable and the skilled, which produces, in turn, more inequalities and information and communication gaps within these immigrant homes.

**An immigrant home topology: its triple-fold double space orientation**

The articulation of the Circuit of Culture (Du Gay et al., 1993) with the ICT Mediated Consumption model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992) through the interpretive scheme explained in the methodology chapter afforded the construction of the triple-fold double space orientation of an immigrant house. Inspired by Bourdieu’s (1977) accounts of a household’s internal organization and orientation according to the placement of meaningful objects and the activities caused as a result of the family’s symbolic system inside Kabyle house (see figure 4), I elaborated the triple-fold double space orientation diagram. It derived from the fieldwork analysis after answering questions about the meaning of life with ICTs of these homes, starting from the mentioned models. As a result, a map of relations and orientations provided an interpretation system of analysis of the appropriations, objectification and incorporation through their consumption, representation and production practices (see figure 10).

My fieldwork contributed to the identification of the opposition systems that contributed to the explanations and interpretations within the dynamic articulations of these homes, and as a result, the relations that are structured inside places and spaces according to gender and age. ICTs mediate this intertwining of categories, and this
The diagram will prove instrumentally meaningful in the unveiling of the relation of the members of the home within themselves, the others and the outside world.

For the construction of this topology, I drew on the explained theory and methodology orientations in its application to the fieldwork. In addition, it was complemented by the interviewees’ oral accounts and mental mappings for the identification of territories inside the home. There were three levels of organization detected:
a) central, where most of the ICT consumption activity of the home happens;

b) marginal, where members go about their consumption of ICTs in an alternate manner, perhaps in isolation;

c) periphery, where consumption is scarce and done when it is really needed; that is, it is not part of a daily routine, however that doesn’t mean it is irrelevant or frivolous as we will see in the next paragraphs.

There are two sets of main oppositions articulated in these three levels: The world of men inside/outside the shared place with an open threshold to the North; and, the world of women within the private territory with a virtual threshold to the South. Thus, the opposition between the private/shared life and the public life has a boundary. This opposition between the external world and the house, between the Shared side and the North outside or between the private side and the South expresses the relations of the home with itself and to the outside world.

The North means the host culture and the dominant meanings coming from global media, which enter the household through ICTs; in contrast, the South means the Latino homeland, to which part of the home is always oriented, always looking at it and in connection with it.

Concurring with Bourdieu (1977), I discuss in the following chapters how men are always orientating their actions from the inside to the outside and women from the inside toward the inside (see arrows). In addition, the two worlds that crisscross most of the immigrant homes in this research are also differentiated by the English/Spanish oppositions, which are tightly related to their ICT consumption practices.
Throughout this symbolic system of oppositions the reader will be presented with how, when and by whom these boundaries are crossed within the family’s everyday life home mediation space. As I argue later, one of the two systems of oppositions will take primary importance according to whether the house is run from the male point of view or the female point of view.

For the man, the house is less of a place one goes into than a place from which one goes out; the woman can only confer upon these two movements and the different definitions of the house which form an integral part with them. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 106)

One of the main parts of this system of oppositions is to understand the value attached to the threshold, a frontier where survival begins, the daily battle inside a dominant culture that is not easy, and it has been left predominantly in the hands of the man. Therefore, the movement from the threshold to the North is encompassed with cultural and social competencies with the facilitation of ICTs, which allows the men (and women can also go out to the battle) to play the dominant system with their same cards.

The movement toward the inside of the home, toward the central part, should bring a set of rituals performed and led mainly by the woman and involving ICTs in the process. This twofold movement in the space of the house means it is possible both to go in an out from two types of thresholds. First, the one that mainly men (and also women) step out to survive as a family inside the host or dominant culture; and second, the one that mainly women (and also men) use from the inside to the inside through the virtual threshold to other homes, the community or the homeland in order to survive as a culture and identity. These two movements occur with ICT mediation.
In sum, the geography of these Bolivian households was composed of places and spaces constructed in the physical and virtual realms by its members in different ways according to the different family configurations and conformations and their permanence or transient character in the particular household. Consequently, electronic landscapes that configure territories inside these homes, embedded with their physical and virtual places, embody specific consumption dynamics related to the place/space dichotomy. Thus, central, marginal and peripheral use of ICTs constitutes the main articulator of the next contexts of interpretation according to the Circuit of Culture (Du Gay et al., 1997) and the Technology Mediated Consumption model (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992). Even though each landscape is characteristic and peculiar, territory formations respond to relations within the boundaries of these interactions, promoting the conformation of new rituals and practices according to gender and class. In turn, this will provide more understandings about the collectiveness or isolation characteristics of the movements inside these homes, and therefore, their social forms (Martín-Barbero, 1993). Also, the use of the virtual threshold will produce inequality with the knowledge-challenged members, again provoking hierarchies articulated by these consumption practices.
Chapter 7: Space, time and power

This chapter investigates the ways in which ICTs have been incorporated (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992) and regulated inside the family’s daily routines (Du Gay et al., 1997). As a result of time constraints inside the home, ICTs acquired certain functions, which are articulated with domestic time because “they have to be fitted into a pattern of domestic use in domestic time” (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992, p. 24). How are technologies incorporated into the routines of daily life and how does that influence their time management? How do the time members of the family reserve for other activities limit or shape their consumption of ICTs?

In addition, I reflect on the different associations, articulations and tensions inside these Bolivian households as a result of regulation at the appropriation, objectification, incorporation and conversion moments of consumption. I analyze the relations and implications of ICTs with gender and generation relations and derive the imbrications introducing the class factor. In addition, I work toward a detection of the tactics (De Certeau, 1984) that develop in their everyday life with relation to ICTs.

More than a decade ago, David Morley (1992) found that the control device of the set is the symbolic possession of the father (or of the son, in the father’s absence) with no influence of women in the selection of programming or technical installing aspects of the technologies. He observed that women watched television in a distracted manner by way of fulfilling other important responsibilities in the household while watching and were forced to construct other times to watch it, for example during the day. However, he also found that those economical roles were a direct reason to change this relation; therefore,
when women were the breadwinners and men were unemployed, the roles were the opposite and these roles were equitable when both men and women were working outside the home. In order to analyze whether this remains true today, I detected power logics that portrayed battles, strategies and negotiations that derived from relations between adults and children according to gender, class and race.

**Functions of ICTs: families’ new ‘relationships’ and relations**

The data I gathered shows the moments that occurred after the technology was brought inside the home, therefore appropriated (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992). Social class informed this process of appropriation, which was loaded with different levels of cultural and linguistic competencies (Bourdieu, 1986) of the different members of the household regarding their gender and age. Hence, they exercised differentiated rituals (Real, 1996) as they became acquainted with the technology. For example, reading instructions, which were mostly in English, then putting the device together (inserting the memory card in their phone or attaching the peripherals together in a computer) and, after that, looking for a good place for it if it required one. In the case of plasma TV, big-screen TVs, DVD players and new flat-panel desktop computers, the chosen spaces were preponderantly visible, showing off the member’s aesthetic values and also class identifications. Afterward, capable members of the household started a set of practices with meanings of their own. These sets of practices shifted constantly, that is, they developed different ways of sharing, using and living with the technology in a certain time and place according to class specificities.
Therefore, middle-class and working-class members developed different kinds of ritual relationships between themselves and their technologies either as a group or in an individual manner (in isolation or collectively) through consumption practices related to their appropriation dynamics. These relationship shifts started when the technologies were newly acquired and kept changing when they got easier to manage (if all instructions were understood or if their use was intuitively easy) and their use was integrated in their daily routines as the members got increasingly savvy or acquired new cultural competencies (Bourdieu, 1986) as a result of this consumption activity. For many of the middle-class interviewed members of the Bolivian household, this relationship grew very close, though for some working-class members it was not such a close relationship. For example, a first-time mom and middle-class Bolivian young adult female said:

If my computer breaks down? Yes, I will be very annoyed. Because what do I do without the computer? All my baby pictures are there, and I play it all day long. I play pictures, and that will be a problem for me. (Angie Solares, age 23).

Also, there is the case of this middle-class man, whose connection with his computer grew so close that a relationship of dependency resulted from his appropriation process. My observation was that he didn’t want to disclose this dependency and was in denial about this relationship. I corroborated this information when interviewing the women alone, which showed the usefulness of interviewing big extended families by gender:

When my husband arrives from work he goes straight to his computer. He is there a long time. We fight a lot about that. He can be there all day; he loves it. He even takes his laptop to our bedroom, and when we go shopping he takes the mobile computer. He is crazy about technologies. (Silvia Montero, age 25)
Have technologies improved my life? Mmm no, for me life is the same with technologies or without technologies ... the Internet is a temptation for spending more time on the computer, you know, I guess that is a little bad for me. It is affecting my relationship. (Mario Montero, age 27)

I also detected working-class members’ “guilty relationships” with certain technologies inside these households. One of my respondents confirmed what Ann Gray (1997) found about stay-at-home mothers, who had obvious opportunities to watch television alone but felt that it was kind of a drug to them about which they felt guilty. This relationship seemed19 to be terminated by this member of the household:

Everything I do becomes a vice. TV is one of those things I had to stop doing it, so I did; now I don’t watch it anymore. (Carmen Veizaga, age 51).

This comment brings us back to the issue that the home is not always a sphere of leisure for women; therefore, the consumption practices are connected with work or simply contaminated with guilt and obligation (Gray 1992, Rakow 1988).

Group relationships with certain technologies such as the TV and DVD player also developed in some of the Bolivian households whose members were interviewed. They set up rituals of watching popular TV programs or a rented movie, in order to experience togetherness as a familiar activity.

On Sundays we get together to watch some programs, we make agreements, there is a dancing contest, we all come here, we make a meal and come together to watch it. Some of the guys want to watch soccer, but we don’t let them, they can go and watch somewhere else. (Teresa Arauz, age 53)

19 My notes on this interview expressed some doubts about the truthful remarks of my interviewee since later on the interview she expressed that she watched certain types of programs, voiding her blatant declarations on her null relationship to TV.
We rent movies once a week. My wife had a collection of movies and old TV series and things like that, so we kind of watched all those together. We did run out of them and started renting more movies. (Laurence Locklin, age 36)

For some of my interviewees, ICTs did intrude in relationships and togetherness, helping to isolate some of the members for certain periods of time. Therefore, “solo” practices of TV viewing or surfing the Internet were detected as new rituals inside the middle-class interviewed households. These “solo” practices meant time away from family reality right inside the home boundaries, an escape within.

It is just us in our household (me and my wife) and we have three TVs. Normally I go to the basement when I want to watch something in particular, and she stays upstairs watching, so I watch on one TV and my wife on another one. (Osman Lazarte, age 29)

There are lots of TV sets in my home, but my wife wants to watch “Ugly Betty,” my other daughter watches something else, the little one wants to watch cartoons, there is conflict in the family, therefore, I watch on one TV set, my wife on the other one and my daughter on the other one. (Gabriel Fernandez, age 39)

These “solo,” couple and group relationships to ICTs and their mediations to relationships between the different members constitute the new relationship dynamics that the middle- and working-class households live in different ways. Since working-class acquiring capacities didn’t let them own more than one kind of technology, members could not escape in a physical way; however, teens and young adults got away in their own private, virtual worlds. In addition, the cell phone’s mobility allowed women to shift their private places wherever they chose (in case they decided not to use their own bedrooms).
Place and timing of ICT use

Leslie Haddon (2001, 2004) analyzed the ways in which some technologies are promoted, not so much for saving time as for being able to time-shift activities such as VCRs, answering machines and voicemail. He asserted that these technologies offer temporal flexibility so people can use them when they want to; therefore, they can communicate when they choose without pressure or time schedules: Video-On-Demand, remote banking and shopping, and (answering) asynchronous communication media such as e-mails and text messages. “Of course, by offering users more flexibility in organizing their lives, this may in turn allow them to combine activities in such a way so as to save time. That is the technological promise” (2004, p. 89).

Consequently, this technological promise is also a benefit for some of the Bolivian working- and middle-class male members of the investigated homes. Most of them incorporated cell phones and used them for communicating between family members, mediating family moments that were not always inside the household but providing for togetherness through these ICTs at any time and within the immediacy characteristics of these modern times. Domestic networks between family and household members have been established through cell phones. Moreover, cell phones functioned as relationship extenders with friends and/or for work.

The time flexibility that ICTs provided in the researched households supplied constructed moments in time of togetherness across gender and age. In an informal conversation with a Bolivian mother, she mentioned how they created a ritual from *American Idol* and the *Ellen* show, the family’s favorite programs, and they started to
tape them and replay them as a familiar routine at agreed times during the weekends
and/or holidays:

My husband loves the *Ellen* show and makes me tape it every morning for him; when he gets back from work he watches it. Also we taped “*American Idol*.” It had all these celebrities singing along with the finalists; it was awesome, our kids and us like to watch it every time. (Amira Moncada, age 30)

Young members seem to be common users of Video-On-Demand as a flexible and
content-manageable ICT within time boundaries. Children mentioned using this feature at
their own discretion, and it can be considered a marker of assimilation to the dominant
uses prescribed by the host culture’s media providers, all this as a result of their English
proficiency and their integral assimilation to the host culture and rules of play.

I watch Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, and Disney Channel. After dinner I do TV a little bit, but sometimes before I go to sleep I play with my Game Boy. I play down here or on my bed. Can I say some more of my favorite channels? 299 HBO on demand. (Micaela, age 8)

After school I do my chores, do my homework, help my mom around the house (she giggles), and I just watch TV sometimes or I play in my room with my Game Boy (she giggles). I play on my bed. After I read, I do, I really do, sometimes I have to practice basketball, and before I go to sleep I read for like an hour. After dinner I watch TV a little more and go upstairs and do stuff. My favorite programs on TV, I like *Sponge Bob*. And I watch movies on demand, and any movies. (Andre, age 11)

This influence of time and timing on ICT consumption raises the question of how
people structure their time for ICT use: e.g., in time blocks or slots confirming the
fragmented use of ICTs in consonance with postmodern life.

Silverstone and Haddon (1996) discussed the issue of blocks of time for using ICTs
and wondered if this use was fragmented in relation to gender, where women, “who still
have more responsibility for domestic labor, experience relatively more fragmented
television viewing than men. They often fit TV viewing in between other activities” (p. 91). Middle-class males interviewed for this study organized their daily routines in what we will call “blocks of time” for illustrative purposes. This “blocks of time” organization was done so as to facilitate periods of concentration in order to carry out their tasks. This was reflected in the timing of their use of ICTs, mainly computers and/or cell phones. This activity was primarily done from their jobs, as we stated in the previous chapter, both working- and middle-class men are mainly from the outside world; hence most ICTs were invisible in their household mental mappings (see figure 11) with the exception of the TV.

I use the computer at work all day. When I get home I really don’t go to my computer, I just relax watching some TV.” (Juan Carlos Bedregal, age 47)

In contrast and concurring with Silverstone and Haddon (1996), middle-class and working-class females who can also participate in the outside world as a workplace, have more fragmented and less use of the ICTs at home because they have the technology available at their workplace and also because they have to alternate their work among small tasks, domestic chores and child rearing:

I mostly don’t need to use the computer at home. Generally, if I really need to do something it is mostly at the office. My personal e-mail, I check it a little in the morning at the office. At home I don’t use it anymore. I have other chores, cook, clean. I mostly don’t have much time to watch TV, only before going to sleep I turn it on, so it provokes me to sleep. (Silvia Torres, age 56)

Me at home practically I turn on the computer just for emergencies, let’s say work for at the last minute, last-minute information that I need. But who is more at the computer at night is my husband. Conversely, I am at work all day so I use all of it, squeezing the computer as much as I can during the day. (Cindy Peñaloza, age 31)
Next, I present a table created through the integration of my interviews as well as the focus groups conducted in fieldwork. It is not intended to be a map of use or a list of activities. The only purpose is to observe and infer an array of choices that have been accessed by these Bolivian adults and their children out of order while they go about their daily living with technologies with no regard to class and cultural competencies. These tables simply summarize the findings of my study and are limited to my very small sample which does not allow me to make inferences to a larger population.

**Child females (girls, teens)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
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<td>School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Game boy</td>
<td>Games</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Chat, email, gaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Afternoon</td>
<td>TV Video-On-Demand</td>
<td>Cartoons/Series Movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Game Boy</td>
<td>Games</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Young adult females 25-35 years old**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Check e-mails, surf Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Communication friends/family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Afternoon</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Watch <em>Telenovelas</em>, Sitcoms, News in Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Phone Computer</td>
<td>Communication friends/family Internet, e-mail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Older females 35-55 years old**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time slot</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Check e-mails, surf Internet</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
<td>TV/Phone</td>
<td>Watch <em>Telenovelas</em>/ News in Spanish and English Communication with family</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
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**Old females 60+**

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<th>Technology</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>E-mail, Chat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
<td>TV/Phone</td>
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**Child males (boys, teens)**

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<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
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<td>School</td>
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<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
<td>TV / Computer</td>
<td>Games</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Late Afternoon</strong></td>
<td>TV/ Xbox/PSP</td>
<td>Video games / Movies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Video-On-Demand</td>
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<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
<td>Game Boy</td>
<td>Video games</td>
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</table>

**Young adult males 25-35 years old**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Check e-mails, surf Internet for news</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cell Phone</td>
<td>Check messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
<td>Cell Phone</td>
<td>Communication family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Check e-mails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Late Afternoon</strong></td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>News</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Sports/Movies</td>
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</table>
Girls and teen females spent time using technologies mainly after school. They tended to use it in the afternoon alternating between TV programs and their own personal video game device: the Game Boy. What is interesting about the Game Boy is that it gives them full control over when and where to use it and its use doesn’t have to be negotiated like other nonmobile video games. Another characteristic was their unplanned access, whenever they felt like it, and alternated between all the other ICT options available to girls, including VOD and TV.
Young adult females distributed their time checking e-mails and surfing the Internet either in the morning or evening. When they relaxed at lunch time, they sometimes grabbed the phone to chat with family, but this was not a rule. The phone could be grabbed any time, especially to multitask between their chores, and later in the evening when they are done with the chores. For TV, whenever they find the time to do it, they stopped and watched their favorite sitcom or *telenovela* at early evening:

> When I have time I watch whatever is showing in prime time. I have favorite programs, *Fiesta en Miami* or *Friends*. If it is on great, if not I missed it, there is nothing I can do. (Vivian Novillo, age 29)

Older females seemed to be busier, with even more fragmented use of ICTs. Later afternoon seems to be their preferred time, when doing other activities in the home, to watch TV and/or talk on the phone. *Telenovela* seemed to grab this slot of their time, where most of them stopped to do what they were doing or did other tasks around the TV set. It was common to hear that older women watch TV at night just to help them fall asleep.

Both middle- and working-class interviewed males professed more activity in ICT use during their day, however not inside the household. According to their age and needs of contact with the home, ICTs mediated their relationships and ties to the home. The older the member the more available time he had to use TV and the Internet. One of these males even confessed to watching “*La fea mas bella*” *Telenovela* (the Latin American version of “*Ugly Betty*”), thought of as an activity preferred by women:

> We watch *Telenovelas*, news we don’t watch that much, a lot of crime, violence. News are degrading some times. We watch only one *telenovela*, they aren’t that good, then we watch the news, again the computer, then the soap, then the meditation programs, also *Don Francisco, Aquí y Ahora*, and *Believe it or not.*” (Nelson Lopez, age 69)
This was an unusual program choice for an elder man since most men do not like to be identified as *telenovela* watchers because it is considered a womanly activity. This finding concurred with that of Karen Riggs (1998) among Hmong elders, who “exercised their particular passions for television in ways that could assist them in defining themselves as they traversed the blurred boundaries of double cultures” (p. 161).

**Time consumers or time freers: family perceptions of time**

In *Time and ICTs*, Haddon (2001) argues that we can measure usage of ICTs with time aggregates (amounts of consumption) put in the context of more general measures of time distribution devoted to different activities. In research done over the years, he found changes in working hours, changes in “leisure” time (in quotes because of its different meanings across genders), changes in hours spent on domestic labor and trends such as people spending less time regenerating themselves in terms of less sleep and less time for meals (p. 2). The purpose of this study is not to present the amounts of use of each ICT in a measurable manner, rather the ways in which the ICT use within time has affected the users’ lives and influenced their activities.

ICTs occupied a significant part of the members’ time by way of being an activity so internalized that it became an essential part of their daily rituals. Their relationships have been influenced by the amount of time they used ICTs. These perceptions have influenced their strategies to use more and more ICTs under the impression that it helped them to organize their time better.

In this regard, ICTs meant saving time for middle-class families, while some working-class women stated that it helped them to be in touch with each other anytime.
ICTs have helped middle- and working-class women economize time to perform household duties and to have more leisure time; at least that was their impression. To the contrary, they have also consumed some of the members’ free time, generating dependency and frustration. Therefore, family members have learned tactics to deal with this dependency in an efficient manner. For example, Cindy expressed that in the past, ICTs used to dominate her time:

I have gained control back, not too long ago, the computer did what it wanted with my life, chatting dominated my time, but now I have learned to manage it without it overtaking my schedule. It requires some effort. (Cindy Penaloza, age 31)

Also, the use of e-mail has produced some dependency; a middle-class older woman narrated her anxiousness about checking her multiple e-mail accounts:

I arrive to the office and the first thing I do is check my e-mails. I have three accounts: one is personal and two are my work ones, so I check all of them, I check the personal more frequently. Then I start to work, so if I have too much work I don’t check it all the time. I force myself to check it first thing in the morning and then, if I’m expecting an urgent reply, I check again at noon. If there is nothing urgent I check again at the end of the business day before going home. technology doesn’t dominate me, I use it when I please. (Silvia Torres, age 56)

Both statements about ICTs as time freers and time consumers are true and false at the same time. First, ICTs are perceived as time savers, facilitating the freeing up of working time that could be used otherwise in familial activities. In this example, Mr. and Mrs. Serrano, a middle-class couple, argue that the technologies gave them some freedom of time, freedom that allowed him to spend more time with his family some days, when he could work from home; therefore, he encountered more flexibility and better use of time on certain occasions:
There are sometimes when I don’t go to the office so I can stay here and work from home because it allows me to log in through software as if I was sitting or standing in front of my computer at the office, so then it allows me to access all my files and spend more time at the house … (Federico Serrano, age 30)

Same here, I still do some consulting for my previous job, instead of driving to DC, which takes a very long time. I am able to log in from here and stay at home and work from home. I am very happy about that because I can stay at home and take care of my children and other things as well. (Antonia Serrano, age 31)

Second, ICTs are perceived as time consumers. In other words, ICTs intrude on family time. Because of its novelty and variety of content; users tend to get enticed by it and leave everyday life real relations behind or in a marginal place. This could also be a result of not having adequate cultural competencies in some working-class families, which also entails time usage in order to make this or that technology work according to their needs.

An example of ICTs as time consumers and intruders into husband/wife relationships is this housewife’s complaints about how the computer has impacted negatively on her relationship with her husband, Mario, with him helping less around the house and spending long hours in front of the TV, resulting in arguments and conflict. She said that the laptop computer went with him to the bedroom, grocery shopping and everywhere:

Q. Did any of these Technologies cause any inconvenience?
A. Yes. Because it occupies much of his time. When we need something, like a tool, or something for the baby, he uses it. We fight about this. He likes it too much, he could be all day; he is enchanted by it. He takes it [the computer] to our room, we go grocery shopping and he takes the laptop and he can be like that all day. He is crazy about technology. Any new gadget, he wants to purchase. (Silvia Montero Arauz, age 25)

Third, some ICTs such as the TV and the phone mediated shared moments, that is, through either planned or improvised ICT rituals such as getting together to watch a live
show, a movie or a special event. Also, shared time was created when getting in touch either with the outside world of the North or host culture, or of the South or ethnic culture or homeland, depending on the motivation of the process: phone talk created shared time spaces with the dominant culture, therefore producing links and relations with it increasing or improving the assimilation process; and phone talk with members of the South, same as or close to the culture members, was shared time that enhanced the links with the homeland and ethnic belonging.

Consequently, ICTs have facilitated family time in its relations with the members within either inside-to-inside or inside-to-outside and vice versa and to the outside world or public realm. They have created mediation spaces in time in which the family members are provided with new forms of sociality such as presence-less and multiplace shared relationships through the mobile or cordless phone.

**The visible and invisible ICTs**

The level of incorporation of ICTs into the families’ daily routines was read from the users’ mental representations of their homes. When using the mental map technique to detect ways of representing their household places and spaces, the interviewees’ quick and rough representations provided some valuable pieces of information that helped to understand more ways in which ICTs are present or absent; that is, if they were part of the interviewees’ surroundings in their mental representations through their drawings of home.

Mainly, the most visible technology was the TV in the living room and, in some cases, the desktop computer in their basements or offices. Consequently, corroborating
their place in the diagram of the triple-fold orientation of the immigrant home, TV occupies a central space, and the computer is in a marginal place.

The most invisible devices in the mental map are the cell phones. They were never drawn on any of the maps, maybe suggesting an apparent disregard for them as part of their home’s surroundings but it may also be that they carry the cell phone with them. However, we can’t arrive at this conclusion so lightly. Their oral accounts close the gaps that the drawings left. Therefore, a technology or apparatus that occupied a physical space was most likely to be drawn through this technique. In other words, technologies that did not occupy physical space, such as the cell phone, Game Boy, laptops and so on were not represented in a house mental map.

Figures 11 to 13 are typical examples of how ICTs were represented by some household members in the display of the most important objects inside the household. Both males and females tended to under-represent the technologies with the exception of the TV, which seemed to have been integrated more solidly into the daily representations of their homes. To some extent, these representations helped us clarify the levels of integration and incorporation of the ICTs into the home and life inside the household.
Figure 12: Working-class adult female mental map, age 45

Figure 13: Working-class male mental map, age 28
It is worth mentioning that men were more aware of the technologies’ presence inside their mental representations of their home than women. Anthony Giddens affirmed that “it is the quality of the achievement of ‘home-ness’—that which turns space into place, that which supports the temporal routines of daily life” (Giddens as cited in Silverstone & Haddon, 1996, p. 19). This may be why women were more detailed in representing their furniture, walls, and distribution of the households’ ambiences other than ICTs. This may mean that ICTs were not yet a part of their accounts of “home-ness.”

There were no differences in the display of ICT appropriations through their mental maps according to class. In terms of age, children were more oriented to identify the ICTs they had in their rooms (they were only asked to draw their own rooms) (see figure 14).
Planning and managing time: internal policies

Social order had particular dynamics inside these households in regard to ICTs. In order to maintain the family as an entity so it holds together, ICT use had to be regulated (Du Gay et al., 1997). Organizing, ordering and managing time (Haddon, 2004) is a tactic of internal regulation, deriving from the division of domestic labor. The organization of spare and busy time in the domestic realm is closely articulated with technology consumption and the gendered division of labor, which result in a set of policies within the household on regulation of time/activity.

It wasn’t a surprise for me to find dynamics and set times mainly prescribed by the parents, who provided a mechanism of self-regulation of the household activities and times of use according to the different needs and pursuits of the household members. Therefore, children were allowed to use the computer after school and before/after dinner according to the rules negotiations made by them in order to accomplish their chores.
Managing and planning time helps the household to belong to networks and social circles, and that requires coordination and planning, which are mediated chiefly by ICTs. Haddon (2001) argues that the phone--and lately e-mail--is more and more essential for arranging meetings and to confirm them after negotiations with the other peers (p. 9). My research concurs with this and his other findings, such as the one in which “children experience a more intense time economy, often having to say they had ‘no time’ and finding themselves under more pressures to ‘save time’” (p. 9). Here is an example:

I have (technologies) at my grandma’s house, a Game Boy and PSP, a PlayStation 2 and an iPod; we are going to sell that to buy the newest XBox. I don’t have it here because I don’t have time. (Junior Serrano, age 12)

This development acted as part of their socialization for later adult roles as they learned to manage their time, schedule activities, make appointments, and make commitments to others.

A very interesting aspect of managing and organizing time was learned from this study when acknowledging these households’ strategies of internal regulation, that is, a set of given rules or house policies dictated by the adults. Women in these households seemed to be entitled to use the computer whenever the male was not present or if present but using another technology (e.g., the TV) or dedicated to another activity that doesn’t involve the use of the computer.

We never had any problem with that (when I’m home) because I think it’s something where we all know that I’m using the computer … (she interrupts) and no one has the right to take over (laughs). (Federico and Antonia Serrano, ages 30 and 31)
The male parent of this same house set the rule of not answering the phone at dinner time, because it takes time from their sharing and enjoying dinner:

Father: It’s not that I control or anything, but when I assume that when it is time to eat or I want the house to be quiet, we turn off the TV and … (Federico Serrano, age 30)

Mother: When we are eating, we don’t answer the phone. That’s our rule because we think it’s rude. (Antonia Serrano, age 31)

In conclusion, regulation of ICT use occurs because these families need to regain control of time. This phenomenon happens mainly as an authoritarian act, which comes from the dominant members within the home; therefore, other members must agree and conform to these regulations. Internal policies were not a characteristic of all the homes I interviewed; it was a characteristic where males were openly dominant in their homes. Here ICTs were not as prevalent; hence choice of access was not as readily available as in working-class households. Therefore, consumption habits might be related to the availability of choices when using ICTs observed in the strictness of their internal policies. Internal regulation seems to be an indicator of a set of hierarchical dynamics in the homes displaying them.

**Women and men’s tactics of ICT consumption**

The topology of an immigrant home (see figure 6) is useful when interpreting the orientation of the home and movement inward and outward mediated by daily life with ICTs. It is also useful to detect the territories and boundaries constructed in a specific location from which to exert power (De Certeau, 1984). Thus, women gravitate toward
the inside and mostly private areas, where they dominate, and men gravitate toward the outside mostly shared spaces, which is where they exert the most power.

Power tactics occur when each of them want power on the other side, depending on time, where opportunities appear and in propitious moments (De Certeau, 1984). Therefore, when the adult male is not home, the young members seize the opportunity to dominate an ICT space. This is why, in one of the households, the young child (11 years old) reproduced this dominance and exerted it over his female sibling (8 years old):

Q. Micaela, who’s the boss here?  
M. Andre. 
Q. Do you have a place in the house where you are the boss Micaela?  
M. Not really.

Also, when the husband stayed home, in a home where there is only one computer and it is positioned in a shared space inside the man’s territory, his wife surrendered the computer to him and accepted it as given rule of power, as a statement that is taken for granted:

Q. Do you have only one computer? How do you negotiate who is going to use it, when?  
Him: During the day she is here, so there are some days she’s here so she uses it, and when I come home we spend time with the kids and I sneak in and check my e-mail. We really are not …  
Her: (she interrupts) He’s at work most of the time, so whenever he decides to stay and work from home and I want to use the computer, that’s when I want to create conflict but at the same time I don’t.  
Him: We never had any problem with that because I think it’s something where we all know that I’m using the computer …  
Her: (she interrupts) and no one has the right to take over (laughs).

In a particular household, a teen demanded access with manipulation over the computer, which was in a shared male territory. Here, it was the adult male negotiating
his ICT consumption practices with his teen daughter in exchange for good grades and her contesting by using it for other purposes such as chatting, e-mail and surfing away.

That relationship was troublesome and contested by both sides:

My dad tells me not to use the phone every day, yells at me every day and there is nothing I can do. He controls me when I watch TV, surf on the Internet when he arrives home, everything. (Hareth Andrade, age 13)

I allow her to use the computer when I’m home and she has to do homework. At the beginning I let her chat, but it has not been convenient and she has also realized that she chats too much. Also her grades had lowered, so now she doesn’t use it. I always watch her. If I’m not home, the computer is turned off. (Mario Andrade, age 41)

The detected visible symbols of condensed power relations when exercised by the male in relation to ICTs can be observed in the size of the television set, which is placed in the shared area dominated by the father, and in a high-end personal laptop that is locked up or password-protected and is used when he pleases, whereby all the family must conform to share the leftover, outdated computer when he is home.

He controls all of them (technologies). If we are here (in the living room), I have to watch what he wants. (Teresa Mansilla, age 59)

My son is the one deciding because he knows more about electric stuff (sic), things that are more electric, he goes online and checks things out, finds out about their qualities, their duration. (Grandma Lanchipa, age 62)

Even though most of the women in all the families seemed to have surrendered the automatic control of the living-room television to their husbands and/or brothers or children, their tactics permitted them to access this remote control in front of him. This happened because the male agreed to let them use his territory to maintain harmony in the
home. This constitutes a tactic of alterity, a practice that shows that the feminine gender doesn’t always construct itself as a subordinate, at least not in an unconscious way (Huerta Wong, 2004; De Certeau, 1984). Therefore, as active players, women’s practices of resistance to male domination allow the existence of domestic social control as a negotiated issue, therefore allowed by the subordinated subject (De Certeau, 1984, p. 163).

Looking at this point from the context of class, working-class women felt comfortable consuming technologies on their South/private side, where they felt empowered and many times restricted from going after the other’s ICTs in his territory because of the brittle control gained. Class affected their not-so-successful tactical manipulations in that there is certain passivity or feeling of inadequacy with gaining knowledge that is enhancing their cultural capital in order to have more elements to contest. Conversely, middle-class women were more effective on their boundary crossings over the other’s territory, again, because of their accrued knowledge and skilled cultural competencies.

For example, working-class families I interviewed exposed other ways of crossing these symbolic boundaries by negotiating television consumption and program selection choices, alternating programming in the same TV, going after free slots of time to consume alone or surrendering it altogether:

If it is important I watch. If it is a show, we watch two shows at the same time, we change channels, we alternate. (Cecilia Arce, age 30)

20 Alterity is the state of quality of being other, the feeling of otherness.
21 Women’s private side is defined in opposition to the men’s shared side or front of the house in the immigrant home. This side is dominated by women and it looks at the South, meaning the Latino community and/or the homeland (See figure 6).
We take turns sometimes. For example, at news time, I watch the newscasts. Nobody watches at that time. After that I don’t care about the other programs. The others watch them; there is no conflict. (Silvio Arauz, age 53)

He likes sci fi and I don’t like sci fi, but we had no problems, I don’t even want to watch anyway, it doesn’t matter to me. (Angie Solares, age 23)

Consequently, power shifts occur as tactics that are exerted in each other’s territories according to many elements occurring at the moment it happens: opportunity, type of ICT seized, gender and age of the inquirer and cultural competencies. Hence, dominance is no longer only on one side or person in an uninterrupted manner; it shifts according to pressures of gender, race and class interlaced with the goals and interests they have at a specified moment in time and space.

As a result, when in a subordinate position, working-class females and/or girls and boys’ hindered access to ICTs can be overturned depending on certain abilities and competencies (good knowledge of ICT use, levels of English proficiency) for amounts of time, especially when men are not home. Children’s subordination tends to diminish with age, especially for boys, who also hold a hierarchical position in relation to girls. Nevertheless, girls and boys acquire more and more cultural competencies and many times supersede their parents, especially in working-class households, resulting in higher levels of assimilation to the North side or host culture with a sustained ICT consumption activity in complement with other agents of socialization, especially school.
**Language spaces of power**

English proficiency or English linguistic capital\(^{22}\) (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 114) is part of the game of tactics, which can also be detected by their position in the home’s topology (see figure 5). The English language-competent members pervaded in the shared space toward the North side of the house; Spanish speakers tended to be inward, toward the inside of the home, hence toward the South side. All the immigrant homes in this study had different degrees of linguistic competencies, either toward the North or the South inward.

English-proficient members in their movement toward the outside or North (host culture), according to class cultural competencies, dominated ICT use to the detriment of the members not so competent in English. Therefore, when the movement or action was toward the North, that is, to communicate with the host culture, males and children with these cultural competencies were powerful. On the contrary, when the movement was with communicational intentions toward the South or the homeland, females were powerful; hence, the other was his/her willing subordinate. For example, the Slones, a Bolivian-American couple composed of an American man married to a Bolivian woman, present a good case to demonstrate this. They engaged in constant power interplays and interchanges about who wins the battle for the use of the nicest ICT in the house (e.g., the big-screen TV) and the language of the content. They reached an agreement and surrendered to a dynamic permitting how to put each other in the position of

\(^{22}\) Linguistic capital, defined as the mastery of and relation to language, in the sense that it represents ways of speaking.
winner/loser. Alejandra speaks little English and Kevin no Spanish at all. The rule is that one time she watches the nice TV in Spanish, and the second time he watches the nice TV in English:

Well, sometimes [there is conflict.] We just got a second TV a larger TV rather than the smaller that we used for the longest time, and we just got a nice wide-screen large TV, and so we put the second one in the bedroom, because we both want to use the big TV. Occasionally, we have different TV shows we want to watch. If she wants to watch something, and I want to watch something else, then we have to choose who watches on the smaller television and who watches the show on the bigger TV. Yeah, that can be an issue that we have. (Kevin Slone, age 28)

In my case, Kevin speaks English, I speak Spanish, he wants to watch things in English and I in Spanish. To decide we take turns, one day him, one day me, and some other times we like to watch together. Some times he goes to the bedroom and I stay watching here (in la sala). (Alejandra Slone, age 27)

Cindy (Bolivian and Spanish-only speaker) and Donald (American and English-only speaker) decided they would watch TV together even when the other one didn’t like or understand the other’s favorite program. Tipically, Donald resigned from his desire to look at programs in real time; Cindy’s tactic was to persuade him to record his favorite program shown at the time they were watching together, so he could watch it later on his own and as many times as he’d liked.

We have solved the problem. He tapes his program. After, he watches it, since we have two TV sets, but the nice thing is that we want to be together, so we don’t separate, he watches that his program is being taped and accompanies me until my show ends. (Cindy Penaloza, age 31)

He likes those building and construction shows and … I get bored. He knows that I just can’t stand it anymore, so when he notices that I’m mad and I’m ready to leave, he goes and tapes it, and then I stay. He has more access to TV than I, so he watches it in his own time. (Vivian Novillo, age 29)
Distinctive about American married to Bolivian household geographies was that Bolivian women were dominant in both private and shared spaces. They got to watch the “good TV,” that is, they won the daily struggles on TV-watching rituals together and men conformed to watch their taped favorites at another time. This was not true for homes with working-class couples holding the same ethnicity; patriarchal values were still pervading there, in contrast to interethnic couples in which males wanted to please females in many ways, even at the price of surrendering their headship.

**Power and religious values**

The religious-values context was detected as an important determinant of ICT consumption practices. Adults with evangelical Christian faith religious values regulated ICT consumption and even, in some cases, stopped some ICT consumption for good. The main values that Christianity encourages in the home are mostly that the husband is the breadwinner. Women are typically encouraged to stay home and educate their children, and their information comes essentially from what the Bible teaches and any content related to this source.

In this sense, some of the religious parents decided to depart from TV consumption completely and shifted to DVD consumption in order to control “non-edifying of the Christian faith” content in an efficient manner and convinced their family in the same direction:

> We decided to disconnect cable completely. There is no gain from watching TV, and also, we fear that our daughter can be exposed to dangerous content. We have set a DVD player and TV in our bedroom with her favorite movies. We bought her a little couch, and she loves it.” (Mache Solares, age 29)
Other evangelical Christian families didn’t ban TV completely; however, they did ban it from their bedrooms, which was observed as an institutionalized politic within these religious-oriented households. This means that TV was considered a hindrance to their intimate relationship in a territory that was reserved as private.

Finally, I found that religious content was their principal reason to appropriate this or that ICT; therefore, content determined their consumption choices in a very strong manner. As a result, dominant members regulated ICT consumption according to this principle, and it also worked in relation to the movements toward the North-produced content in English and to the South-produced content in Spanish.

**Gender power dynamics**

As previously observed, the negotiation of power in the consumption of television in these Bolivian families was according to the class, gender and generational contexts holding an interchangeable dynamic. There is a tendency to regulate gender politics by way of establishing internal policies between all the household members (Huerta Wong 2004).

Some of these internal self-regulating politics may contribute to the reproduction of the traditional power structures; however, I concur with Juan Enrique Huerta Wong (2004) that these seem the result of negotiations destined to reach all of the family members’ conformity, their satisfaction and also their wellbeing through bans and prohibitions in order to protect the perceived weaker family members from any potential risks.
Men and women offered clear and contrasting accounts of their consumption habits – in terms of differential power to choose who uses which technology and how they use it, their styles of consumption and their choice of a particular technology for a particular use. These differences can be the result of the particular social roles that these men and women occupy within the home.

Consequently, the results of this research unveil the ways in which power shifts from one’s territory to the other within and to the outside world according to gender and age and that it is loaded with cultural competencies. Therefore, the adult “whiter” and mestizo males hold a dominant position over the indigenous, feminine. Children’s position tends to fluctuate because their cultural competencies many times exceed those of their parents, which puts them in a position of dominance.

In these immigrant Bolivian homes, the sometimes subordinate (children, women and the indigenous) exercise tactics to contest this dominance, creating and recreating new spaces of power that are not always in the physical realm--transforming their private moments and territories inside the home’s geography through dwelling in new symbolic territories built and constructed, mediated by the digital capabilities of the new ICTs and also through their English-language capabilities and technical capacities, thus their cultural capital.
Chapter 8: Appropriations, identity and the outside world

“Today, instead, shaped by consumption, identities depend on what one owns or is capable of attaining.” García Canclini (2001)

This chapter presents interpretations of subjects’ appropriations of ICTs inside the homes in daily life in this study. I start exposing the particular ways in which these members have appropriated certain ICTs to later embark on an analysis of the immigrant members’ identity configurations and how ICTs have influenced, enriched or affected these cultural constructions and rituals. I present this process from both genders’ points of view in relation to their actions toward the North, or the host culture, and the South, or their ethnic social network and the homeland.

Kathryn Woodward (1997) says that inside the Circuit of Culture, “identities are produced, consumed and regulated within culture--creating meanings through symbolic systems of representations about the identity positions which we might adopt” (p. 2). Woodward affirmed that identity is marked through symbols that we may use and are associated with our identity; she also stated that identity is marked by difference.

“Identity is relational, and difference is established by symbolic marking in relation to others” (e.g., a national flag, a national custom, uniform and so on) (p. 12).

Families inside the households explored in this research construct their identities in opposition to the outside world or public realm and through ICT-motivated rituals and appropriation practices that identify them within their specificities of class and gender.
Adult women and men’s technology appropriations

All the researched families appropriated either traditional or newer ICTs with no regard to their income or business activity. Television, cell phone, DVD and video-game ownership by the Bolivian families with children and teens (Gray, 1992) in the studied homes seemed fairly popular, especially in homes with children.

The ways in which these families appropriated ICTs (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1992; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996) have been detected as indicators of inequalities in access and use according to gender (Gray, 1992, 1997), age and specific class competencies. Class is not too relevant when explaining inequities because of the stratification dynamics of the immigrant homes (García Canclini, 2001). As explained in the overview of Bolivians in the United States, many middle-class families became working class when negotiating their survival in the dominant or host culture, though still loaded with their already acquired cultural and symbolic competencies (García Canclini, 2001; Bourdieu, 1986; Martín-Barbero, 1993, 2001b).

I observed how middle-class men as well as women exercised more equality in their appropriation activities; their increased access to information and their educational backgrounds facilitated their ownership and incorporation of newer technologies showing levels or increased stratification as Martín-Barbero also found to be true (1993, 2001b). Most of the women expressed their preference of ICT consumption in the privacy of their bedroom, confirming a positioning of certain ICTs in the private/female spaces of the house (Morley, 2000).
Also, relevant to these results is the finding of ICT appropriation modes as establishers of hierarchies inside the immigrant homes (Huerta Wong, 2004; De Certeau, 1984). In most cases, these hierarchies were established as a result of ownership privileges given to some members to make them happy so the family preserves their peace and harmony. This meaning is strictly related to the idea of “leisure” time or quiet time, which includes relaxation and “unwinding” for some middle- and working-class female household members, and a companion role some ICTs (e.g., TV) play, together with the females’ ongoing domestic tasks. Therefore, the quantity of content available on TV for example has a big impact on the way Bolivian women in this study have extended the amounts of time some of them spend around the house together with the TV turned on.

I can’t watch TV all day long sitting down. Since the kitchen is in the same area, I can also cook and watch, iron and do some errands. … I watch six hours at least, until midnight. I normally start around 6 p.m., but I also do other things. (Teresa Mansilla, age 59)

Conversely, in working-class homes in this study, the kids and the mother were left with the older and not so up-to-date computer to share in most cases. There were cases in which the working-class mother wouldn’t even use the computer because of her lack of knowledge, time constraints or banned access. Hence, strong inequality of access was detected due to male hierarchy, with the dominant role surrendered voluntarily by the wife (De Certeau, 1984).

In the case of this working-class mother, the husband banned her access to the computer apparently for confidentiality issues. However, he could have given her another
profile, which makes me believe he just wanted her to not touch the computer, so she
doesn’t ruin it because of lack of knowledge.

I can’t use the computer because he (the husband) put a password that only he
knows in the computer. I would like to use it to find out more information about
how to raise my baby boy. (Lidia Alacoma, age 45)

Another particular identity marker in working-class women was their distant
relationship with the computer, manifested by their expressed lack of information about
its functions, confirming their scarce cultural competencies or skills, which could not be
surpassed even by free continuing education (e.g., supplementary computer classes):

I see the computer, I clean it, I move it, but I don’t get closer than that. I got some
computer classes in Washington and I learned about Windows, Office, we even
did some surfing on the Internet, but that was as far as I could attend. I don’t
need it. If that were the case, I would be buying one for myself. … (Mirta
Lanchipa, age 62)

Both women and men mentioned the cell phone as the essential communication
technology. Their consumption practices were motivated by its:

a) Availability: women’s and men’s decision to use cell phones was primarily to make
themselves available to family members, clients or others; therefore, its significance
is closely linked to the enhancement of social, cultural and symbolic capital and
competencies;

b) Control: Parents used this technology to control their teenagers’ whereabouts; a sense
of security is projected when children have this device, knowing how to get a hold of
them and their location.

c) Monitoring: wives can monitor their husbands’ whereabouts; the “city of men”
(Bourdieu, 1977) or the public realm as the mainstay for men, is that unknown and
big world where women oversee their husband’s daily travel. This also happens the other way around. When the wife moves into the public realm, the cell phone is that special link with the outside world with a specific target, to monitor and also, control the partner’s whereabouts. This interesting phenomenon starts when they both decide to appropriate the technology, consenting to its use for this purpose.

d) Security: as a device to get help in case of emergency. One of the main reasons for a phone purchase is because of the security it provides when facilitating communication from any place at any moment. It proved useful for the families to get directions when lost in the city and to get help in case of car trouble, as was also found to be true in European contexts (Ling & Haddon, 2001).

This level of analysis only contemplates the process of appropriation and ownership of the cell phone. In conclusion, it was observed to be one of the most equitable technologies for all the interviewed individuals and groups and was mainly used by all members (Haddon, 2004). This means that the cell phone is not considered a luxury anymore but a vital artifact needed to survive in the host culture. I will explore more nuances about this last statement in the next chapter.

**His news in English, her telenovelas in Spanish**

English is important capital for survival in the North. For families with the same ethnic background, men were more pressured to acquire the English language. Not all the working-class males in the homes I interviewed spoke English, but they were forced to immerse themselves in the North in order to survive, with no English at all and with some
or good skills according to their cultural capital. The male’s focus group gave me more input about the most assimilated males, who had better English skills, and preferred their news in English instead of Spanish:

   I watch soccer and news. News in Spanish don’t attract me too much. … I watch 95% of American TV and 5% of Latino TV, soccer in Spanish, but news, sitcoms and series always in English, movies also. (Gabriel Fernandez, age 39)

   Females in the interviews liked to watch TV in Spanish regardless of their English skills. They identified and recognized themselves and their culture in telenovelas, they got a sense of remembrance of the faraway homeland, and TV was their only referent to their culture of origin even though the Latino content watched didn’t have anything to do with Bolivia or South America, for that matter. Let me remind the reader that Latino content in U.S. television is generated mainly from Mexican media moguls, who dominate the media scene even though Miami is their center of operations.

   **Traditional homes vs. modern homes**

   If identity is understood through difference, then there is difference between and within homes when observing the new/old, updated/outdated and modern/traditional ICTs they display. It is not necessarily true that these dichotomies show the relevant differences in their life rituals and practices; what they show is that that these rituals and practices are enhanced with different quality and variety of content, more options therefore, and more cultural capital growth potentialities, giving the home-specific identity markers.

   Modern homes showed a sense of skill and intrigue for the new, with more features and diversification of ICT consumption practices than traditional homes. These
possibilities affected the flow of communication within the private and shared spaces and toward the public world.

This conventional dichotomy of traditional/modern does not refer to the quantity of digital or analog technologies these households may have appropriated, but to the diverse array of information channels and interchange possibilities that the potentiality of each type allows. For this family, apart from their face-to-face forms of talk, ICTs also mediated short dialogues from different parts of the house:

We have two computers in my house. One chats upstairs and the other downstairs; sometimes we even chat between each other. (Osman Lazarte, age 29)

We have cordless phones and … intercom. … We don’t have to scream anymore, we just push the button. (Gabriel Fernandez, age 39)

The context of class influences their choices because the motivations to consume digital or analog seemed to be rooted in the cost of the commodity and its impact on the budget for the services it required to function properly (e.g., to be able to send e-mail from the cell phone another plan needs to be purchased on top of the current one). Consequently, working-class homes were more traditional in their ICT consumption, that is, more conservative and less prone to innovations because this was cheaper. Middle-class homes were more aggressive in their ICT display, and this was also related to dominant-culture aesthetics they liked to project (I will discuss this point further in the next chapter).

In addition, age was another factor to analyze, since both middle- and working-class youths were more inclined to appropriate and incorporate newer technologies than older working-class adults. This was due to the fact that newer technologies showed an image
of them as modern, updated individuals in sync with the modern times; also, it demonstrated their good economic situation, even though this was not always true for working-class individuals.

Consequently, homes with either new or older technologies appropriated ICTs to satisfy each household’s particular communication needs. Both types of homes projected differences in their relations, rituals and practices either as a group or alone. Therefore, more possibilities or hindrances to the enhancement of cultural and symbolic capitals were at stake.

Dominant/host culture aesthetics with ethnic nuances

Stuart Hall (1997) clearly defined what identities in a diaspora meant: they are not static, they are constantly reproducing themselves; “identity” does not refer to purity or essence but a recognition of heterogeneity and diversity “which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference” (p. 58).

Therefore, the middle-class households were not static, constantly renewing their image to the world through regular consumption practices in order to improve and modify their appearance to the world. These consumption practices involved the purchasing of technologies and the spatial positioning of these in common and shared spaces. Now, identity is not constituted by the simple ownership and display of these technologies but by the significance of their display to the world. As Anthony Giddens (1991) explains, “To a greater or lesser degree, the project of the self becomes translated
into one of the possession of desired goods and the pursuit of artificially framed styles of life. … The consumption of ever-novel goods becomes in some part a substitute for the genuine development of self; appearance replaces essence as the visible signs of successful consumption come actually to outweigh the use-value of the goods and services in questions themselves” (p. 198). Conversely, working-class homes also displayed newness but only through their cell phones. Only a few had big-screen TVs to display.

Consequently, in these modern times, ICTs actually project these “artificially framed styles of life” because of their modern design and sleek appearance (e.g., big plasma TV, latest wide-screen laptop computers, flat-screen desktop computers and so on) contributing to an image of a better lifestyle and affluence for any household. I found this to be more visible in the middle-class families; in a way, there is a kind of reaffirmation of class to the world sustained by the image of their lifestyle, even though their income might not concur with this (see figures 15, 16).
Working-class families who participated in this research did not blatantly show off their latest new and sleek technologies. However, even though I’m tempted to affirm this as a question of class, I observed that some of the middle-class as well as working-class families were content with the old working TV set; they tended to have many of them, almost one in every room. Also, they were content with the generic brand bulky desktop computer. However, both working- and middle-class men managed to carry the latest cell phone with many built-in features (camera, Bluetooth, color screen, mp3, and walkie-talkie\textsuperscript{23}). This did not hold true for all working-class women, who tended to use older and not-so-exciting cell-phone devices.

What seemed remarkable is how the aesthetic of the dominant culture was articulated with ethnic identity markers. Did these families display any ethnic symbols as identity

\textsuperscript{23} An additional feature provided by Nextel cell phones, which work as radio-to-radio communication devices.
markers together with their projections of lifestyle? Some of them did, most of them didn’t, and the reality is that while some of the middle-class households didn’t show ethnic-belonging identifiers, they did show dominant culture aesthetics. However, the content displayed on TV, for example, broadcasting Latino channels such as Univision or Telemundo or Spanish-dubbed programs were in itself a strong symbol of their identity and cultural longings for the South.

Figure 17: Big screen presenting a Latino talk show in a middle-class sala

Social activism: organized through the cell phone

Continuing with the home’s topology and orientations proposed in chapter 7 (figure 6), I continue my interpretations of identity and how ICTs are configuring or affecting their relations with the host culture and the imagined communities of their ethnic origin.
An imagined community is different from an actual community because it is not (and cannot be) based on quotidian face-to-face interaction between its members. Instead, members have a mental image of their affinity. As Benedict Anderson (2006) puts it, a nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”

In the movement toward the North, from the shared space and from the men’s point of view, the Bolivian imagined community has been known to be a very quiet and a not-too-politically-involved or active group (Grismon & Paz-Soldán 2000; Constable & Brulliard, 2007). Consequently, their use of ICTs will correspond with these movements when looking at the host culture and their use of telephones and computers, particularly through the use of e-mail, which emerged as extremely important in maintaining those social networks and connections to the outside world. Bolivians belong to a different array of social networks within this community.

Bolivians here have clung tightly to their roots, establishing dozens of folklore groups, three soccer leagues in Northern Virginia and a weekend school in Arlington where children study Bolivian traditions. Yet surprisingly, they have never formed an ethnic enclave or become politically active as a group. Although many are eligible to vote, almost none has run for local office, and most have avoided becoming involved in the public debate about immigrant rights. (Constable, 2007)

Paul Gilroy (1997) writes about identity as solidarity, with identity providing the summoning and binding of individual agents into groups as social actors, through discourses of citizenship. Similarly, Bolivian young adults networked through ICTs to organize their participation in 2006 rallies against immigration limitations.
Consequently, immigration status has a tremendous impact on the home’s identity in its relation to the North, or host culture. The relations with these two worlds according to gender and class will tell more about each home’s identity markers. Working-class people tended to connect more with the South, which means the world outside the Bolivian imagined community or, farther away, the homeland. Maybe they are in search of belonging and looking for a lost referent that they can’t find in the host culture, where they don’t really belong. On the other hand, middle-class people were less connected to the homeland, not so linked, and they had fewer displays of ethnic identity markers, perhaps as an indicator of a higher level of assimilation to the North.

Most of these working-class Bolivians’ identities in the United States were both unsettling and unsettled; they didn’t belong completely in the United States and yet some can’t get used to living back in their country. This is why Paz-Soldán reminded us of that Bolivian slogan “My home is the U.S., my heart is Bolivia.”
ICT-mediated ethnic rituals: identity staged in the Latino context

Garcia Canclini (1990) affirmed that to have an identity “would be, to have a country, a city or a neighborhood, an entity where all that is shared by those who dwell in that place becomes identical or exchangeable. In those territories identity is staged, fiestas are celebrated in daily rituals” (p. 177). Information and communication technologies are facilitating identities that transcend the local, for the reason that they are providing new territories, new localities where people can share meanings in common physical and virtual places: identity is staged through technological appropriations, displaying and entering inside their spaces to find others like them. Through them, members of a community connect to others, build relationships and belong to social networks.

Bolivians’ stagings of their culture have been a result of coordination and networking in order to organize such practices and rituals agreed upon as an organized and well-united collectivity (Zalles Cueto, 2002). These identity stagings have been publicized by newspapers, a Bolivian Internet blog24 and also through specific activities from county governments, such as Arlington County declaring a Bolivian day destined to showcase their culture. For this day, they organize daylong folkloric parades, food fairs and folkloric music concerts.

These ethnic culture displays inside the Latino and the host culture started from the home, from which they were coordinated, planned and completed. The Bolivian community gets together through ICT mediations, daily life connections and networking.

24 Posted at Barrio Flores’s web log: www.barriflores.net/blog/2005/09/22/bolivian-festival-in-manassas/
formations. These ethnic rituals are the tactics of survival that members of the home perform in order to affirm ethnic belonging not to a Latino culture but to a Bolivian one. ICTs promote and diffuse these events via Internet and television, where the home recreates itself.

**Linking the household to the world: connections with outside**

About connections with the outside, Jesus Martín-Barbero (2002) sums up this concept concretely: “TV allows the ‘domestic and domesticated experience’: it is from the home that people actually exert their daily connection with the city.”

Because it was constituted in the center of routines that rhyme with daily life, in a device of assurance of individual identity, and in videotext terminal, video shopping, electronic mail and teleconference, TV converts the domestic space in the widest virtual territory: the one which, as Virilio affirms, “everything arrives without having to leave.” (Martín-Barbero, 2002).

Moreover, Bolivian identity is preserved through belonging to networks, extension and preservation of family relations from the homeland, and membership to associations and charity organizations. In addition, the way the members handle the household with or without ICTs also gives a sense of the household’s self-identity.

These Bolivians connect with their homeland through ICTs. Most prefer phone calls (through cheap calling cards) for social communication. The younger ones like to chat, but the older ones prefer just e-mail; it is now more common than traditional letter writing.

I have friends all over the world, in Spain, Mexico. I communicate through e-mail. (Fernando Rueda, age 47)

Telephones also help maintain long-distance relationships:
My husband Federico speaks with his father constantly on the phone (landline) with a calling card. (Antonia Serrano, age 31)

Most of the women have connected to their kids’ school Web sites in order to be informed about different school activities.

For the school, here you volunteer. There are many ways to coordinate from the computer, through the school’s Web site. I can go in and check if it is my turn to be a volunteer, ask to change your schedule, or you can see the school’s menu. (Catalina Lemke, age 33)

Therefore, the immigrant homes in this study, either traditional or modern, are connected and related to the outside world through ICT linkages. As we already stated in previous chapters, this outside world is mainly the world of the North or host culture and the inside world of the South or the homeland (see figure 5).

Television occupies a central place in either shared or private spaces of the approached nonreligious homes. Even though this study’s objectives are not oriented to audience preferences, it contemplates the reasons why families’ consumption habits follow certain directions. For that reason, my findings reflect media content in the following aspects:

First, the language of content watched. This element signifies the contexts of space, place and orientation according to gender consumption practices and rituals. Therefore, language of content will contribute to the understanding of the content selection in relation to their ultimate connection to the outside world, be it the host culture or the homeland. Thus, working-class women acting from their central place and private space were found to consume content mainly in Spanish. This means that they also connect to the outside through television, but the orientation of this connection is toward the South
or the homeland, perhaps an indicator of their small level of assimilation to the host culture. Now, the constructions of what constitutes “Latino” content in Hispanic media have already been studied in the past with a gender-specific orientation (Rojas Cortez 2003). However, the point is that a connection to the homeland is established by way of the language in which it is broadcast even though the offer of programs comes from a culture somewhat close to home. On the other hand, middle-class women and working-and middle-class males expressed their habits of watching content in English, thus signifying a higher level of assimilation to the North or at least a compromise to this assimilation process perhaps because of the privileges class has afforded to them.

Second, the genre of content consumed. Martín-Barbero (2001b) stated that “Genres mediate the logics of use and the productive system. Their rules basically configure the formats and it is in them where the group’s cultural recognitions anchor.” This is why not only the language will provoke interpretations of a user or family’s connections with either or both worlds but also the type of content consumed, that is, specifically news, telenovela, comedy, variety shows, talk shows, investigative reports, medical drama, cartoons, sports and sitcom. Martín-Barbero (1993, 2001b) emphasizes the melodrama as the genre in which the popular and even educated Latin America is recognized. Again, this study did not focus on audience ratings according to content for the reason that accounts of my interviewees were only referential. Thus, the genres mentioned more than once and my observations in the field showed criss-crossings of class, gender and age:

Note: This list is not exhaustive because it was created from the interviewee’s accounts or from my own observations while doing the interviews.
o News in English (NBC, CBS, Fox) and Spanish (Univision, Telemundo, CNN en Español, Canal Sur), mentioned by adult middle-class males. Adult working-class males mentioned news only presented in Spanish (Univision and Telemundo);

o Telenovelas in Spanish (Univision and Telemundo), mentioned by adult working class females;

o Variety shows in Spanish, such as *Don Francisco* or *Bailando por un sueño* (*Dancing for a Dream*), mentioned by adult and young working-class family groups;

o Sports in Spanish (Fox Sports), mentioned by both adult middle- and working-class males;

o Sitcoms and series in English (old sitcom reruns), mentioned by young males and females;

o Cartoons in English, mentioned by male and female children.

Consequently, immigrant homes’ connections to the outside are mapped from the context of gender, age and class in accordance with the language and genre of the content watched. This is to pursue identifiers that link them either to the host culture or the homeland, in an effort to belong to both worlds, but with different intentions and gratifications of information and entertainment needs. These interpretations can enhance understandings of the ways in which these families’ cultures either look at the North or the South in reference to their cultural competencies and level of assimilation to the dominant culture.
This orientation of the home toward the South from the private female side is directed to the homeland, where their origin is, where family and siblings might have been left behind, and where history, symbols and old rituals are still alive. Working-class members especially connected to the homeland through the phone:

I use the phone to make very long distance calls to Bolivia. I use those cheap calling cards that are sold in gas stations. (Teresa Arauz, age 53)

I use my landline sometimes to call my country, Bolivia mainly, only for that. (Lidia Rueda, age 45)

On the other hand, middle-class women expressed less use of this virtual threshold with the South, even though they managed to maintain ties with loved ones or friends. Typically, they were not as close to them anymore, one reason being that their closest relatives have joined them here or they just didn’t maintain those relationships because of the distance and their business trying to build a home in the United States. Hence, these families may be identified as Bolivian Americans.

I don’t have any connections with Bolivia anymore. I might call once in a while. I used to read Bolivian news, but not anymore. (Claudia Locklin, age 35)

My husband calls his dad maybe monthly, but that is about it. I have not called Bolivia in many years. All my family siblings are here. (Antonia Serrano, age 31)

As a result, working-class homes were connected to the South first through the phone and second through the computer’s instant messenger or e-mail interface through what is termed in this study as “the virtual threshold,” which is crossed as a frequent though not daily practice.

The homes connected to their ethnic origin were predominantly working-class homes, maybe because their members are not completely assimilated and have not decided to
stay permanently in the United States. These members may be identified as Bolivians in America, whereas middle-class Bolivian Americans have decided to stay and have established themselves in the United States permanently.

With regard to the cell phone’s technical characteristics, which facilitate the connection of the home within itself and with the outside world, I detected differential consumption practices regarding the cultural competencies of middle- and working-class members inside the private and shared spaces in reference to their orientation and movement toward and within the home. Therefore, cell phone consumption was mainly geared toward the monitoring and the controlling of members’ movements to the outside; coordinating member’s activities in the outside; mediating network formation and participation inside the North side; allowing social capital enhancement in the North side; and facilitating social connection/integration with the North and South sides.

First, when monitoring and controlling members’ movements to the outside, women expressed the need to know what the men were doing while outside of the home. Hence, the cell phone acted as a monitor and control device between both worlds:

*My phone is very important ’cause I call my husband a lot and he calls me. I need to talk to him. I need to know what is he doing, and he needs to know where I am, what I’m doing. I need my phone. I have to have it. … If I don’t have it would be a problem. I will not be very happy, I will NOT be very happy. (Angie Solares, age 23)*

Secondly, when coordinating members’ activities in the outside and promoting family togetherness in both worlds, families appropriated and incorporated the cell phone. This was part of their planning and management of their homes in relation to the outside or North. For example, a working-class adult woman accounted for the essentiality of the
cell phone for her family’s survival in togetherness after the divorce experience. The cell phone held and mediated this relationship of togetherness as a family in movements between both worlds: inside and outside creating a familial network inside this domestic Circuit of Culture.

Third, when the cell phone mediated network formation in the outside world or host culture, it facilitated political participation in solidarity with other similar networks inside the Latino community. For example, the Washington Post reported on how young male and female Bolivian students used ICTs, especially the cell phone, to network while organizing their participation in the 2006 rallies against anti-immigration laws: “As with protests earlier this week, students learned of the action by word of mouth, fliers, text messages, and the Web site MySpace.com” (Bahrampour & Stockwell, 2006).

Finally, the cell phone’s prime reason of appropriation was its technical capacity to mediate connections with the outside North in the hope that it will increase the possibilities of social capital enhancement, therefore, better chances of economic survival in the dominant culture.
Chapter 9: ICTs and the Bolivian household in suburban Washington DC

Main findings

An ambitious study on life and technologies, focusing on a reality I was part of, was intricate, and there were many nuances to discover. It turned out to be complex and invited me to immerse myself in my own culture, while out of the country of origin, a previously unknown scenario for me. I conducted my research while living in a transient state due to immigration rules I had to follow in order to maintain my legal status in this country as an exchange student. In this stage, I found myself trying to access unreachable Bolivian homes, soliciting unmotivated responses and encountering apathy to contribute to an understanding of Bolivians in the metropolitan area. My first attempts to approach the families were unsuccessful: nobody was interested and I was uncertain about the viability of this project.

I finally realized that as a female researcher I had more credibility and better chances of accessing the families through women, who were my main point of contact, and even helped me to set up possible new interviews. I learned through this qualitative method how difficult and challenging doing cultural studies is and how a researcher’s perceptions and assumptions influence one when studying members of their same culture. As I approached more and more families, I learned more about their material and sociocultural conditions and how they have learned to survive, improve, and conform to them. I also learned that information technologies were essential and configured their places and
mediated their relations, negotiations, identity projections and connections to the outside world. In addition, I learned that my ethnic and class condition may have diminished my opportunities to reach the absent indigenous transient population in this study.

My interactions with the families and also with women’s and men’s focus groups were rewarding and the informants’ accounts dissolved many preconceptions and/or biases I had with regard to gender issues influencing relations inside the household and how technologies mediated their relations between, inside and to the outside world.

Moreover, the framework of the study--the eyes through which I analyzed all my fieldwork--was holistic enough to let me look at these immigrant homes through different lenses and from different contexts. This study may not answer all the questions it proposed at the beginning but conveys the main questions in a systematic and articulated way, presenting many visual diagrams and models from which to look at the object of study and also draw some conclusions.

I recognize that having gathered data mostly from families as a whole and not individuals in their ICT consumption, and having to juggle the interviews with parents only, and then with their children alone, has the risk of reflecting more marginal views, shifting the focus of the analysis to gendered families that resulted in the principal axis of these results, crisscrossed by age, class and the family contexts.

In addition, because of budget constraints and the inaccessibility to indigenous Bolivian families because of my class extraction and the essence of our cultural background, I have been unable (due to theoretical and practical limitations) to pursue a more detailed study based on these indigenous working-class immigrant families,
therefore situating my findings on the analysis of working-class mestizos and middle-class “whiter” members.

A. ICT consumption practices structure central, marginal and periphery places in the private and shared spaces of the household

This structure is formed through the functions of ICTs that are given by the family depending on preference, ease of use and/or need, either as a collective practice or in isolation. This structuration is not informed by frequency of use. Their consumption practices in the shared or private spaces determined the movements and orientations of actions toward the center or toward the periphery together with movements toward the outside world and to the inside.

In this scenario, class informed differences in ICT consumption practices and their place of use (see figures 19 and 20). Also, they signified the cultural competencies and dynamics of the home’s members as displayed on the choices of ICTs brought inside the home: their newness or conservativeness, which also produced social stratifications.

In the same way, gender informed movements and actions to the inside of the home or to the outside world, conferring ICTs’ certain functions according to these movements, which were performed from the women/private spaces toward the men/shared spaces or vice versa or from both of these categories toward the outside, public or host culture and/or their local networks inside the Latino community or the homeland.

Therefore, television’s centrality was clearly defined, and it was consumed without regard of class, age or gender. The cultural mediations produced by the
different genres of content consumed connected the homes both with the host culture and/or the ethnic culture, enforcing their cultural competencies according to the orientations taken toward the North or host culture, South or ethnic associations and/or the homeland or both. Consequently, television was central to the home’s assimilation; either to the host culture or the closest referent to their ethnic identity (I’ll explain this further in G and H). In addition, because of the cell phone’s ubiquitous character, it was consumed in all the spaces and places both outward to the North and vice versa or within the home itself. The shared centrality of the cell phone was not assigned to a physical space. The cell phone dominated all spaces, however there were inequities in its use mainly regarding age: children were not allowed to use them until they demonstrated appropriate cultural competencies, there were isolated cases in which the woman didn’t have her own cell phone having an agreement with her spouse to use it whenever either one was in the outside world.

In the periphery space of the immigrant home, ICTs were either shared or private, and genders accessed them through different tactics (which I detail in D).
Figures 18 and 19 are diagrams of detected structure of ICT consumption within the triple-fold double orientation of the immigrant home. As it was conveyed earlier, men are considered in this movement toward the outside and women toward the inside. The homes were distributed in central, marginal and periphery places within shared and private places.

First, the women’s territory of the modern middle-class home (figure 18) is private. She still consumed TV centrally in the kitchen/living-room area and bargained for it when she wanted. In case a favorite program was showing, she also had her bedroom TV to watch privately. Second, when available, the laptop computer was used both in private and shared places by men and women. In the
periphery were the desktop computer, DVD player, video games and radio. Third, children consumed ICTs mainly in the marginal and peripheral shared places. As previously explained, the virtual threshold was mainly used by women in their private moments to connect with friends or family inside the Latino realm or the homeland, however not as consistently as working-class females.

ICTs in most of these middle-class homes were newer and of sleek appearance. They occupied an important space and were considered markers of status and class. In addition, cell phones were also new and had many features such as built-in camera and data services and were capable of providing localization services (GPS).

![Diagram of this study’s traditional working-class home ICT consumption structure](image)

Figure 20: Diagram of this study’s traditional working-class home ICT consumption structure

In a similar manner, working-class homes had the TV in a central place within shared and private spaces. Women had TVs in the bedroom and phone devices in
every space. Radio was still in the periphery together with the desktop computer, which was in a shared space. Children had video games in the shared spaces of their bedroom or basement room. What was distinctive about these homes was that the technologies were older and not up to date, with the exception of males’ cell phones, because of their corroborated status and hierarchy within the household given by their need to be in contact with the North, show belonging to the North’s system of information and communication and/or their cultural competencies learned through their constant relation with the dominant system.

B. Centrality of selective ICT consumption practices is a result of the home’s internal value system

Homes in this study had specific characteristics, detected as their internal value systems, which corresponded to their outside relations in their belonging to specialized networks or affiliations. Some homes were blatant about their Christian evangelical value system, and some were not. The difference between this and the other was confirmed in the construction of the diagrams of structure of ICT consumption (see figures 18 and 19 in contrast to 20).

I was surprised to detect that this internal value system configured and structured ICT consumption’s practices and the centrality given to very different ICTs in comparison with the nonreligious homes. This means that TV was displaced from a previous centrality in the family’s past by another ICT, because of the appropriate content that contributed to the reinforcement of this value system which permeated their home life. Therefore, radio took the central place
mainly because of its content, and it was consumed very selectively, that is, only evangelical Christian content radio was heard. Class was a factor in language selection for religious-oriented radio choices, therefore, middle-class families consumed mainly English evangelical-Christian radio and working-class families consumed Spanish speaking evangelical-Christian radio.

Television didn’t seem to satisfy these content needs. Consequently, it was almost completely displaced and its function was resignified as a device or apparatus useful to view DVDs, also with appropriately selected content, especially in middle-class homes.

Other ICT consumption practices in the other spaces of the home are consumed to reinforce the mentioned internal value system, which feeds back to itself with its relation to the outside or public realm, where the home networks exist.
Radio is central to Christian middle- and working-class families. The TV, desktop computer and other technologies were displaced to the marginal space. Because of their preference for radio and musical genres within it, the iPod and pocket PC were mentioned as consumption devices mostly preferred by males and in the female’s wish list. The cell phone, newer than the other technologies, was in all places and spaces, letting the members cross boundaries at will.

C. Cultural competencies influenced equity of access to ICTs in the immigrant home

Issues of inequality between females and males were true in the home in this study when two groups of members were identified inside these immigrant
homes: the ones-who-know-how and the ones-who-depend-on-the-ones-who-know-how (Foucault, 1980) or the “strong” and the “weak” (De Certeau, 1984). These two groups within my sample existed across class; and, gender and age was more influential. Also, both traditional and modern homes in this sample were exposed to these inequalities in reference to their Spanish and English linguistic competencies.

Spanish-speaking working-class females in traditional homes were exposed to these inequities only when trying to access the computer, and not with the TV or cell phone. Older Spanish-speaking working-class adults were also at a disadvantage against younger ones. The more competent family members accessed the ICTs freely, the less competent had to wait on the others to help them access it or accessed what they knew of the technology with limitations.

On the other hand, inequity was harder to detect in the middle-class homes of my sample, maybe because cultural competencies in both genders might be similar, a determining factor for improved access and use of ICTs.

Not all members of either traditional and/or modern immigrant homes were able to take full advantage of their information and communication potentialities embodied in digital ICTs (computer, video games, HDTV, VOD and so on) without the appropriate information and knowledge, which entailed deepening of inequalities. The potentialities of ICTs and the purpose of use, that is, for pleasure or for connection with the host culture or ethnic culture, was and is hindered for the unknowledgeable older Spanish-speaking adult working class and is facilitated for the bilingual adult and young middle class. Consequently, the
knowledgeable and the skilled will have more spaces to consume from the North and/or the South with specific ICTs such as the computer and HDTV and video games. Furthermore, working-class traditional homes are increasingly dependent on their assimilated English-speaking sons and daughters. Issues of power derive from these dynamics, which I will discuss in the following chapter.

D. Power shifted across the territorialized homes through ICT consumption

Even though each electronic landscape was distinctively different for each home, territory formations responded to relations within the boundaries, allowing different types of interactions and promoting the conformation of new rituals and practices according to gender and class. As a result, new hierarchies were delineated inside the immigrant home.

Therefore, members have learned to cross these private/shared boundaries with different tactics, which are given by opportunities in time and motivated by specific interests and needs. Consequently, the disadvantaged ones in terms of gender and age took control of the territories of the advantaged ones when possible, exerting power through those dynamics.

Virtual territories were the result of successful strategies used by the young and more competent, which were accompanied by tactics to access the not readily available ICTs in private territories.

Consequently, power shifts in the immigrant homes were observed as tactics that were exerted in each other’s territories according to many elements: opportunity, type of ICT used, gender and age of the inquirer together with his/her cultural competencies. Hence, dominance does not rest anymore only on one side
or person in an uninterrupted manner; it shifts according to pressures of gender and class interlaced with the goals and interests they have at a specified moment in time and space. The consequences of these shifts are strongly beneficial and result in decreasing inequity of ICT consumption. Also, because it requires the power seizer to load himself/herself with the needed competencies to do it, it might close gaps as a result of these generalized power shifts between some adults. The consequences for children and teens might not be as beneficial, since the security of the home with them as members were at stake. Also, the uncontrolled access to malicious content could occur in the case of secretive use of the computer by teens or children.

E. ICT consumption produced inequalities through the conformation of hierarchies

In addition to power shifts, more inequalities were observed when ICT consumption produced hierarchies within the home through the exercise of privileges of access and ownership of certain ICTs by certain members of the household. Here, the privileged with ownership of new ICTs held advantage positions against the others. Therefore, the digital devices owner or the big video games’ principal user will exert dominance over the non-owners, who therefore become disadvantaged. As a result, a system of hierarchies was detected from this ICT ownership dynamic, which favored the one with advantaged ownership, providing more power against the one disadvantaged in terms of ownership (e.g., the little girl who does not own the Xbox or Gamecube but just a small Game Boy).
Also, this system of hierarchies was detected through manipulations and pressures of certain members in order to gain prime access, therefore subordinating the other members to disadvantaged access (e.g., the teen daughter who threatens to get bad grades if she does not access the computer). Internal policies were also another side of the establishment of hierarchies, and the dominant member establishing them was mainly the adult male or chief of the household. Through these policies, advantage was given to certain members over others (e.g., the father who bans use of the phone when he believes is not the right time to answer a call).

F. Some homes and/or members used ICTs to project higher status

ICTs displayed in most middle-class homes projected an affluent lifestyle. On the contrary, traditional ICTs were displayed in working-class homes to represent their class status. I must emphasize that this affirmation must not be understood as an absolutely true statement, as the projection of a certain image does not always mean that any particular home holds a certain status.

What was interesting is the image of itself that the household wanted to give to others and how the members managed to succeed in this endeavor. How did they do it? They did this through the purchase, appropriation and display of the sleekest looking and more expensive technology (e.g., plasma TV, smart phone).

I did find that working-class homes were not more interested in projecting a different lifestyle than the one they had, in the same way middle-class religious homes were not looking for specific identifications or levels of affluence.
However, the cell phone crossed all boundaries of class, age and gender. Their owners, either middle or working class who had the latest technology, did portray a higher status and or higher cultural competency through it in contrast with the ones owning old cheap or free cell phones even though they did have the purchasing power.

This study found that ICTs are increasing social stratification, but taking in account indicators of success instead of income levels (i.e. symbolic display of affluence) in order to privilege the owners and/or to show higher connectedness with the host culture, the latter taking advantage of the extra services offered through these latest devices (e.g., text messaging, Internet browsing, GPS). Therefore, symbolic capital is projected through this consumption dynamic, and it happens regardless of class.

To complement this, the images of self that the homes project to the public are their main identity representations, which are crisscrossed by status identifications according to dominant aesthetics, ethnicity or a mix of both worlds. Affluence or class was represented through these symbolic displays in hopes of being recognized as a unit that has either been successfully integrated to the host culture or is just here temporarily, or until it is time to go back. Here, then, the two main identities defined with assimilation levels and/or transient status were Bolivian Americans and Bolivians in America.

G. ICTs were essential for assimilation and survival in the host culture

The mobility facilitated by some ICTs such as the cell phone blurred the boundaries between private and shared places and also between them and public
places. These Bolivians’ home private/shared realm connected with the host culture through their English mainly male side, even though when in some working-class homes no English was spoken, they managed to connect with it in unknown ways (maybe through friends, networks or bilingual host culture members). Furthermore, the cell phone provided flexibility to informal sector working-class laborers to survive in the host culture, thanks to its technical characteristics of mobility.

In addition, television connected both middle- and working-class homes to the host world’s values, aesthetics and policies through different contents and genres: news, situation comedies, talk shows and variety shows, among others. The homes that consumed English-content programming projected more assimilation progress than homes that didn’t. Working-class homes were more connected to the Latino culture values, aesthetics and policies through news from the Latino culture, telenovelas and talk shows.

Both the physical and virtual thresholds also connected the home to the North and South depending on the purpose and motivation. The Internet was mainly used by middle-class modern homes to manage their economic and/or social capital. Also, some working-class members used the virtual threshold to get competitive prices on goods to benefit the home’s economy.

Purchase and appropriation of a cell phone came with a binding contract, which meant that the members had to compromise with permanency in the country; therefore, the cell phone can be considered a marker of some level of permanency in the host culture.
H. ICTs were perceived as essential for ethnic culture survival through connections with their homeland referents

ICTs connected both traditional and modern homes with their ethnic culture from their private and shared places and their central, marginal and periphery spaces. In America, being “Latino” has been constructed as a wide referent of ethnicity for Spanish-speaking immigrants or descendants. Hispanic media, as it is called, portrays and reproduces this image through different content and genres; through them, families learned to understand Latino culture with little reference to the different arrays of nations that contribute to the “Latino culture.” Therefore, the Spanish-only-speaking Bolivian homes in this study don’t have any choice but to consume what is produced in a language they understand.

Adult working-class females in my sample watched Spanish content regardless of their linguistic competencies. They identified and recognized themselves and something close to their culture in telenovelas. They got a sense of remembrance of the faraway homeland, and TV is their only referent to their culture of origin even though the Latino content watched didn’t have anything to do with Bolivia, or South America for that matter. This nostalgia is important for them because of the impossibility for them to communicate in the host culture language. This was also true for a study about long time Laotian displaced elders in America for whom “television was doubly a dear memento and a grim reminder of a lost home” (Riggs, 1998, p.160).
Many working- and middle-class women connected to the ethnic culture and/or homeland through instant messaging regardless of their age and cultural competencies. The less competent ones established a ritual of use and managed to learn how to “enter” this world, even though some of them hardly knew how to surf the Internet or even use e-mail. Males, in contrast, connected with the South through e-mail.

The landline phone was still being used by adult working-class women to connect to the South or homeland, but its frequency of use decreased because some homes with younger and knowledgeable members are increasingly substituting it by chatting, which seems logical as it is cheaper and because it is more enticing.

As a result, the immigrant home is connected to the South or ethnic culture through television, the cell phone and the computer. This virtual threshold is crossed or “entered” in a regular way. The homes’ connections to their ethnic origin was expressed in stronger statements by the working-class homes, maybe because of their semi-permanent migratory state and because they are not completely assimilated and have not decided to stay. These members may be identified as Bolivians in America. On the other hand, middle-class families were less inclined to convey their connections with the South, perhaps because they no longer have family there and lost connections with their friends. Their families are all in the United States, and therefore, these homes were more assimilated and they are identified as Bolivian Americans.
Recommendations for further research

- In order to gain a deeper understanding of the levels of assimilation of immigrant homes through ICT consumption, an integral study of content and genres consumed according to each ICT’s particularities and productions would be very relevant. Also, the language in which this content is consumed would reveal more nuances in this field.

- Transient indigenous population could not be reached by this inquiry. It would be relevant to elaborate a strategy to reach and enter their world inside the host culture and their home configurations, which I suspect are much different from those which were found in this study.

- Also, it would be relevant to find out if the centrality of the radio in religious homes other than evangelical Christian (e.g., Catholic, Jewish, Muslim) is also true.

- The issue of ethnicity is a relevant power dynamic, and it would be relevant to replicate this study with other big ethnic groups belonging to the Latino community to get a better picture of Latinos and ICTs (e.g., Mexicans, Cubans, and Salvadorians).

Conclusion

In a holistic qualitative inquiry, a small sample of 12 immigrant Bolivian homes of the DC metropolitan area disclosed tactics and strategies to survive in the host culture, with constructed specific uses and different levels of democracy according to class and gender.
Meanings arising from the analysis of the immigrant home through the categories of the Circuit of Culture such as representation, consumption, identity, production and regulation (Du Gay et al., 1997) in relation to the Technology Mediated Consumption model generated a typology of the immigrant home, which contributed to a deeper analysis of how these Bolivian families live with ICTs. Therefore, these ICT consumption practices and rituals generated a variety of meanings that members assigned to these artifacts in central, marginal or peripheral spaces according to gender, generation and class. These rituals determined by gender- and age-specific uses, were performed according to their cultural, linguistic and symbolic competencies (Bourdieu, 1986, 1984).

Religious homes with Christian evangelical values represented a big difference in their ICT consumption in daily life. Their practices granted centrality to radio over television because radio supported their beliefs and values in a more efficient way through a rigorous selective manner, that is, they only consumed Christian radio either in Spanish or English according to their class extractions and level of English-language proficiency. Other ICTs used in other spaces of the home, were also consumed in function to the reinforcement of the mentioned internal value system.

Both religious and non-religious immigrant homes were connected to the South or ethnic culture through the television, the cell phone and the computer through a “virtual threshold.” This virtual threshold is crossed or “entered” in a regular way. The homes’ connections to their ethnic origin was expressed in stronger statements by the working-class homes, maybe because of their semi-permanent migratory state and because they are not completely assimilated.
Both middle- and working-class older adult women and men were less knowledgeable about ICTs. However, they used them with the aid of the younger family members. The technical features of digital ICTs was and is hindered for the unknowledgeable older Spanish-speaking adult working class and is facilitated for the bilingual adult and young middle class. Consequently, the knowledgeable and the skilled had more spaces to consume from the North and/or the South with specific ICTs such as the computer, HDTV and video games.

Since working-class traditional homes were increasingly dependent on their assimilated English-speaking sons and daughters, issues of power derived from these dynamics. Power shifts in the immigrant homes where observed as tactics that were exerted in each other’s territories (De Certeau, 1984) according to many elements occurring at the moment it happened: opportunity, type of ICT seized, gender and age of the inquirer together with his/her cultural competencies. Hence, dominance does not rest anymore only with one side or person in an uninterrupted manner; it shifts according to pressures of gender and class interlaced with the goals and interests they have at a specified moment in time and space. The consequences of these shifts are strongly beneficial and result in decreasing inequity in ICT consumption. The consequences with children and teens could be less beneficial, since the security of the home was at stake and also the uncontrolled access to malicious content could happen in the case of secretive uses of the computer by teens or children. In addition, this study detected a system of hierarchies arising from this ICT appropriation and incorporation (Silverstone, Hirsch and Morley 1992, Silverstone and Haddon 1996) dynamic that favored the one
with advantaged ownership, providing for more power spaces against the one with less advantaged ownership.

In addition, this study found that ICTs are increasing social stratification as Martín-Barbero (1993) also detected, but through indicators of success (e.g. purchase and display of sophisticated new ICTs), privilege and/or higher connectedness with the host culture, and therefore, symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) projected through this consumption dynamic regardless of class.

The theoretical foundations of this study (Du Gay et.al, 1997; Silverstone et.al, 1992, 1996; Martín-Barbero, 1993; García Canclini, 1999), together with the methodological framework (Bourdieu, 1977), were fundamental. They all integrated in a compatible manner providing many categories that allowed a better understanding of the ways in which families live with ICTs inside a host culture. Consequently, the provision of a holistic interpretive scheme to facilitate the study of families, their practices, rituals and power relations in relation to ICT consumption, based on the mentioned theoretical and methodological frameworks and their articulations, is the main contribution of this study to the field.

All in all, ICTs were pivotal in connecting these Bolivian immigrant homes with themselves and the public spaces embodied in the multicultural and cross-cultural host culture, the Bolivian and/or Latino community and the homeland. In other words, ICTs connected these households with the global, bi-national (the nation over there and the nation over here) and the bi-local (the city over there and the city over here), and all this through the cell phone in a continuous and interactive flow. Consequently, with ICT mediations, the private and shared spaces opened to the public realm so the home could
function in two spaces (private and shared), two nations (American and Bolivian), three identities (American, Latino and Bolivian), two countries (United States and Bolivia) and two cities: the one they live in and the one they belong to (the homeland). This is the story of survival of these Bolivian immigrant families in the United States. ICTs will continue to contribute to their survival as Bolivians in America or to the increasing assimilation of Bolivian Americans. Either way, ICTs are among their vital needs.
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# Appendix A: List of informants by family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>M/F</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>TIME IN US</th>
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</tr>
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<td>Mario</td>
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<td>Potosi</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Potosi</td>
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<td>HS</td>
<td>La Paz</td>
<td>2 years</td>
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<td>MS</td>
<td>La Paz</td>
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<tr>
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<td>UG</td>
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<td>ES</td>
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<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. VEIZAGA-LANCHIPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmen</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>house cleaner</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>La Paz</td>
<td>15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirta</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>house cleaner</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>La Paz</td>
<td>17 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Family composition of informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY</th>
<th>#MEMBERS</th>
<th>COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANDRADE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>father, mother, daughter (13), daughter (8), daughter (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARAUZ</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>father, mother, daughter (22), daughter (20), daughter (13), daughter (25), husband (26), baby (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>father, mother, daughter (4), daughter (4), son (7), son (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORTEZ-LEMKE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>father, mother, son (11), daughter (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCKLIN</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>father, mother, daughter (4), son (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUEDA-ALACOMA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>father, mother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, baby (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERRANO</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>father, mother, nanny, son (12), son (1), daughter (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLARES-ORTIZ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>mother, daughter, daughter, husband, baby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLARES</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>father, mother, baby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEIZAGA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>father, mother, son (9), stepdaughter (20), husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUSTINIANO-MANSILLA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>father, mother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C: Focus group participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Osman Lazarte</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Realtor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson Lopez</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel Fernandez</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Carlos Bedregal</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivian Novillo</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Receptionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Penaloza</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heidi Quevedo</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silvia Torres</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amira Moncada</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valeria Moncada</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro Moncada</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Ethnographic instruments

1. Exploratory questionnaires

2. Mental mapping (participant draws an image of own household)
   Pilot instruction: Please draw a picture of the floor plan of your house with all the rooms and all the things you remember in each room as well as you can. (You can use a separate sheet for second and third floors)

3. Unstructured interview (principal researcher and participant discuss a predetermined issue)
Appendix E: Exploratory questionnaires

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND FAMILIES

QUESTIONNAIRE

ID_____  

I. DATA.-

Family (First and Last Name):________________________

You are the ___ Father  ___ Mother  ___ Son  ___ Daughter  
Other (specify)____________________

Age:_____ Occupation__________________________________________

Combined Income (you, your wife and your kids if they contribute):
   _______ $ hourly  or  ___ 10k-30k  ___ 31k-50k  ___ 50k-80k  ___ 80k+

Number of family members living in the household_______

Who?________________________________________________________

Do you work?__________  Do you study?_______

Last educational degree obtained________________________________

In which city were you born?____________________ Years living in USA_______

Immigration status (optional)____________________________________

II. LIFESTYLE

a. What are your favorite hobbies inside the household?
   How much time do you spend on them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency (day, week, month)</th>
<th>Approx. Time (hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III. TECHNOLOGIES IN THE HOUSEHOLD

#### a. Do you own or share any Information and Communication Technologies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Mine</th>
<th>All’s</th>
<th>When did you get it, is it old or new?</th>
<th>You use it for……</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># = quantity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (circle one or both)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#___</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laptop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#_____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Any special properties?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land line phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#_____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mp3 players</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. Do you feel comfortable using these technologies? Which yes
Which no

c. Would you consider taking classes to know more about them? Which ones?

d. Would you like to buy more Information and Communication Technologies? Which ones? Why?

e. Which technology do you use the most? What for?

f. Your TV has ___ Cable ___ Satellite ___ Fiber Optics

g. Do you have Internet? ___ YES ___ NO
 ___ Dial-up ___ DSL ___ Cable

IV. PLACES

a. Which one is the most popular place in your house to watch TV?

Do you have your own favorite place?

b. Which one is the most popular place to use the computer?
Do you have your favorite place?

c. Which one is the most popular place to use the phone?
d. If you own a cell phone, which place of the house is your favorite to use it? Why?

e. Do you like the way in which these technologies have been placed in your house?
f. If you had the chance, would you change where it is placed? Where would you place it?
g. MAP

Please draw a picture of the floor plan of your house with all the rooms and all the things you remember in each room as well as you can. (You can use a separate sheet for second and third floors)

V. FAMILY WORK.-

1. Work distribution
   a. How is the work in the house shared (domestic tasks, child caring, education, care of adult dependents and so on)

   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

   b. Who is mainly responsible for the following activities and who helps?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Helps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grocery shopping / Alimentation planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dish washing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry / Ironing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House cleaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child rearing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the children with homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for adult dependents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Are you satisfied with this housework distribution?

d. Do you think that the information technologies help or not with this distribution of the work? How?

e. Have you utilized any of these technologies to plan something for your household (finances, shopping and so on)? Describe.
f. Have any of these technologies facilitated your participation in activities of school, community or politics? Which and how?

g. Which technology(s) do you consider completely necessary in the home?

h. Which technology do you consider not necessary at all? (you could live without it)

i. Would you say somebody in your home controls the use and access of these technologies?

Who?

Which?

How?
Appendix F: Unstructured interview content guide

LIFE & ICTs
Demographics (age, class, gender, race)
Family type, size, conformation, language spoken
Employment (status) & Education (highest level attained)
Daily life: Activities inside the household
ICT’s ownership and since when
What do they use each ICT for
Motivation for purchasing other ICTs

SPACE/PLACE
Most common places using ICTs
Most used spaces with ICTs
Where are the ICTs placed (Electronic geography)
Who rules which space/place (who has the ultimate decision in how furniture and technologies are placed, who believes he/she is the owner of that territory/room)
Zoning
Would you rearrange the way technologies are set? How?
Draw a map of your home (include yourself, your family and the technologies)
Choose a technology and tell me an anecdote about it

POWER
Division of labor and leisure
Conflict/Resolution between family members over facilities at home
Quality of Relations between parents and children
Who uses each ICT and for what
Computer
TV
Telephone
Cell phone
DVD/VCR
How often does this person use each technology, does he/she believe she needs/wants more training to use it?

Is technology used for planning, education, work or participation in community/state social and political activities?

Strategies, tactics and uses, negotiations
Appendix G: Household biographies: socio-techno stories

Next, the reader will be able to get better acquainted with the approached families and have a textual encounter with them, from which s/he will learn more about the family composition, their home and some accounts of their ICT consumption, practices and battles, shared by them through diverse exploration approaches. This referential context will prove useful as the investigative report develops through the different interpretations of their life with ICTs.

The Andrade family

The Andrades live in a small two-bedroom apartment in the city of Arlington. A small living room beside a crowded dining room makes up the family room. It contains all kinds of technologies, some in active use and others just sitting there abandoned. The big-screen TV, at the top of the row of technologies, was always on during my visit and was equipped just with basic cable (only the local channels) and a DVD player, Beside it is a sofa and right behind it an old unplugged, unused computer CPU. Just next to it is Hareth (13), the oldest daughter, the teen of the house sitting in front of the only computer, doing her homework, they say. Haziel (8) watches TV intermittently and colors her book. Mr. Andrade (41), an architect in Bolivia, came to the United States two years ago to find a better living for his family. Now he works as an electrician, has temporary jobs earning minimum wage and studies English. Mrs. Andrade (37) was a house cleaner and she answered most of the questions.

Mr. Andrade said he likes to spend his free time watching TV for half an hour almost every day of the week. In addition, he likes to surf the Internet for an hour a day. Mom likes to listen to music on their stereo for an hour a day and reads if there is any time left in her busy schedule. Hareth likes to spend her free time on the computer every day for up to two hours. Also, she said she likes to listen to music for six hours a day. Little Haziel loves to play with the Game Boy and also in the park when the weather is good.

Hazel and Hareth share a room and a big bed. “We have a TV, but it doesn’t work,” Hareth says. “We like to watch at our parent’s bed.”

Dad uses the computer to read his e-mail and to do drafting work for residential plans. He knows how to use AutoCad (the architect’s specialized software) and believes he would not need to learn anything else. Mom likes to surf the Internet for information, maps to get to places, reading, and recipes and also to learn more English. She would like
to take classes to learn more about accounting software. She stated that the computer is the technology she uses the most.

Hareth uses the computer the most. She likes to chat, to play, to listen to music and to watch live television. She uses the computer for at least two hours when she gets back from school.

We give preference [to use the computer] to her [Hareth], because she needs it to do her homework. It is more for her. We use it only when everybody is sleeping; then we do what we have to do. (Mrs. Andrade)

The Game Boy is Hareth’s, but it is mainly used by Haziel.

Hareth would like to rearrange the way the technologies are placed, taking the computer and the big-screen TV into her room.

The Arauz family

The Arauzes live in a single home in Leesburg, a middle-class neighborhood. Dad, mom and three of their unmarried daughters live in the house, and the oldest married daughter lives with her husband and baby in the basement. Mom stays at home and dad is an auto mechanic who recently opened a shop near the house. They all emigrated from Santa Cruz, Bolivia, six years ago and are now permanent residents.

Coming up the stairs from the main entrance door is La Sala, connected to the dining room and an attached huge kitchen; the landline phone was there, with a radio on. There were no other technologies around that area. “The TV is in the basement,” says Teresa the mother, “we like to gather there and we make a nice meal together to watch Bailando por un sueño [Dancing for a Dream],” a show on the Latino channel Univision on Sundays.

They decided to have just one cell phone and to alternate its use in a way that the one who was in the home would use the landline and the one who was out would use the cell phone. Therefore, Mr. Arauz was using it the most.

Dad mainly watches news on the TV at 6:30 p.m. and when he gets home his daughters stop watching and go to another room to keep watching their show to give dad the TV so he can watch the news. Mom watches a varied selection of programs, news and religious teachings.
Mom prefers her bedroom to watch TV and she uses the landline phone in the kitchen. She says she doesn’t use the cell phone at home. She arranged the places of computers at home. However, ad would like to change the place of the TV and bring it to the Sala because now all the viewing activity is in the basement living room area, which is the popular place to use the computer, to watch TV and to use the phone.

**Silvia and Mario Montero’s contrasted views of living with technologies.**

Recently married, in their mid-20s and raising a toddler, this couple live inside the household in a room in the basement area sharing the TV and computer room as a common space with the Arauz family. Both of them have some years of college but didn’t graduate.

They have been living in United States for four years already.

Silvia likes to spend her time watching TV every weekday for at least an hour and a half, watching news and series; she listens to music for at least an hour a day and surfs the Internet for half an hour three times a week. She describes herself as the owner of the TV, the DVD and the mp3 player and believes that the computer and the landline are everybody’s. She doesn’t feel that confident using the computer and would like to get more training, but she feels very comfortable using the TV, DVD and Mp3 player.

**The Arce family**

The Arce family is composed of mom (30), dad (38), son (9), daughters (4 and 5) and a nanny in a traditional single-home house in Alexandria, Virginia. Both parents are high school graduates and come originally from Santa Cruz, Bolivia. He is an American citizen, and she is a legal resident alien. Their children were born in the United States. Their combined income is around $31,000 to $40,000. She is a manager, and he works in landscaping.

In her free time, mom likes to listen to music (three hours a day), watch TV every day for about four hours and play with her children. Little Andre (9), likes to watch TV for two hours every day and also play with his younger sisters. Andre doesn’t have access to the Internet at all, and his dad doesn’t have plans to introduce him to it yet.

The Arces use satellite and decided to place a TV in each bedroom of the house, the family room; the twins’ play room and the basement, where the home theater has the big screen. Dad bought himself the latest computer for his home office in the basement and got a very outdated computer for the family to use, placing it at the end of a small hallway.

Little Andre loves to watch TV, and he does that for two hours a day. He likes to lie on the bed and watch his favorite cartoons and Disney Channel programs. He is clueless about the Internet and computers; he didn’t show any interest for these technologies in the unstructured interviews. He also has a Game Boy he uses only when he is really bored and there is nothing to watch on TV. In his bedroom, he has found a place to watch without interference from his little sisters. He expressed that on other TV sets he has to watch what his little sisters want, otherwise they throw a fit. In his room he has the liberty to watch TV until 10 p.m. even if he gets sleepy. Andre feels free to watch TV anytime. He said his father doesn’t intervene at all to control him and his TV consumption.
Mom says that she has to have a TV in the house. Dad says he wouldn’t mind not having TV:

For me if there is no TV, there’s nothing (Mrs. Arce)
One of the reasons that I can’t watch too much is because I get headaches. I’m not that fanatic, if there is not TV it doesn’t matter (Mr. Arce)

The Internet has helped mom to tighten links with her husband’s family in Bolivia through the chatting interface, though she never learned how to use e-mail. Dad reads Bolivian news from the Internet and also checks his e-mail. He uses the computer and Internet for work, to check his finances and find job offers for his profession.

The Cortez-Lemke family

The Cortez-Lemke family lives in a mid-size single home in Woodbridge, Virginia. Dad (38), mom (33), Andre (11) and Micaela (8) have lived in United States for eight years already. Dad owns a small family business selling cell phones and mom is a graduate student.

The dining room, which is beside the kitchen, has a full computer workstation with a printer and a fax. The whole family uses the computer at different times of the day, for news, recipes, school closings, homework, school research, games, online banking, bill payment, and so on. Mom and dad have their own laptops. She often uses hers in her bedroom, and dad goes around the house with his, working in different places, depending on his mood.

Dad works sometimes from home using any of these computers. He’s also got two cell phones, one being a smart phone (PC pocket phone). Mom owns one cell phone and she uses it mainly to communicate with dad and the kids when away from home. Once at home, she never answers the cell phone, only the land line, with which she communicates with school, friends and relatives. Her PC pocket helps her be more organized with school, church and the kids’ schedules.

The kids use electronic games as part of their daily life, even to relate to other kids in the neighborhood.

The family’s only TV is a big screen with cable connection and was placed in the basement equipped with a DVD player, and the latest video games. The kids spend a lot of the time in this room, where Andre dominates the scene.
My son enters to an Internet game, and then he plays with a neighbor he agrees with and meets with him online. (Catalina, 31)

The biggest battles in the house are between the girl and the boy, who argue about what program to watch and Andre calling the shots on when to play and use the TV for his games, sometimes for hours on end. Since there is only one TV, the family has set a schedule to watch it. If there is free time, they watch TV with mom’s permission.

Dad has all the purchasing power in the household but not because mom can’t buy, it is just because mom believes they don’t really need all that technology… she believes that they are a luxury. Dad researches and buys technology and places it around the house. His latest purchase was a laptop, and he then placed one they had in the guest room, so when their family comes to visit they have a means of communication.

The Veizaga family

The Veizaga family is composed of mom, dad, son (9) and stepdaughter (20). They have been living in United States for fifteen years. They were the most difficult family to access, and only the mother and the son would answer the questions. She is self-employed cleaning houses, and her husband works in construction.

Mrs. Veizaga used to watch too much TV. That’s why she decided to stop, and she stated that she now watches very occasionally, maybe once a week or even once a month, but for five to six hours.

Their fairly new big-screen TV (cable) is located in one corner of the living room area with a couch in front of it. The other TV is in their son’s room, and it doesn’t have a cable connection. The TV is only used to watch DVDs and especially to play video games.
They had bought a computer six months before this interview and got a dialup Internet connection, but none of the parents use it. Mom even took classes to learn but never practiced and now she forgot what she learned.

I see the computer, I clean it, I move it, but I don’t get closer than that, I got some computer classes in Washington and I learned about Windows, Office, we even did some surfing in Internet, but that was as far as I could attend. I need it for my son’s school; I don’t need it, if that were the case I would be buying one for myself. … (Mrs. Veizaga)

Mrs. Veizaga believes that the phone is very essential, especially for their son to be able to access it anytime; therefore, she placed receivers all over the house where his son is most likely hanging around. She is the one making the decisions on purchases and for everything in the house. “My husband doesn’t care if there is or there isn’t, as long as there is something,” she said. “I am the one who buys, the one who adds and subtracts.”

The Locklin family

The Locklins are composed of dad (36), mom (35), a toddler (3 ½) and a baby (1). Dad is American and mom is a Bolivian naturalized citizen. Both of them have finished graduate education, and now mom stays at home with the kids and dad is the breadwinner. Their income is between $50,000 and $80,000.

The Locklins have one TV, and they only use it to watch DVDs and videos, mainly with their children. We don’t have television….we just have an apparatus…to watch videos, DVDs and stuff” said Mr. Locklin. In their words, they have de-technologized because they believed that they watched more TV than they should when they had access to cable. This was done primarily because of their Christian beliefs in the sense that TV content does not help them to grow in purity. They do remember their favorite shows when they did have cable:

My favorite show was “Monk,” I loved “Monk.” It’s really the only show I would go out of my plan or day and watch on Friday night. (dad)
I had several … [favorite programs]. I don’t have something special. I liked the Home and Garden Channel. Oh, “Bonanza.” I liked “Bonanza.” TV Land …stuff like that. (mom)

Pretty old technologies such as the old kind of non-digital camera, 2001 TV or 1997 laptop surround their lifestyle. With dial-up, mom and dad manage to write e-mails, surf, budget and communicate with relatives far away.

They bought two cell phones when their first daughter was born in 2002 just because they needed to coordinate her pickup from day care and coordinate other activities as a family.

Both mom and dad expressed the same concerns and decisions about their technology ownership and usage. They are both concerned with saving money and pretty much inclined to share the technology whenever the other is not using it … since dad doesn’t use it at all there is not much conflict. The technology they use the most is the radio, and they have radios all around the house and listen to the same station, especially in the mornings.

Dad found the computer very useful to participate in the community and in the public sphere. He has used it for politics, sending e-mails to congressmen and senators about many issues that concern Christian beliefs. They also receive e-mails from church to be informed on events, needs and so on.

The Solares-Ortiz family

The Solares family is composed of mom (46), her two daughters (Angie 23and Andrea 20), and the older daughter’s husband Andres and their baby boy. The adults have all been in the United States for fourteen years.

Mom is self-employed and also studies. She has graduated from high school, and that is her highest educational grade obtained. She was born in Bolivia.

The older daughter lives with her husband and the baby in the basement. She is a bank teller. Her hobbies include taking digital pictures of the baby and organizing them in a photo album. She also likes to watch TV “to relax” every day for two hours.

The younger daughter (20) is a chiropractic assistant and is studying in college. In her spare time she likes to do exercises four times a week in her video room.

The Solares-Ortiz family chose to live without a landline phone and got cell phones for everybody, managing their minutes together.
The Solares family

“Do not ring the bell, knock the door gently, our baby is sleeping” said the sign on the door when I arrived at the Solareses’ home. Life with ICTs is constructed mainly around this family’s toddler girl. The Solareses are composed of dad (25), mom (29) and a 2-year-old. The chief of the household is clearly the father, the only breadwinner, who works as a construction project manager, earning around $40,000 Dad has been living in the United States for sixteen years and mom for nine. Both of them are high school graduates.

Their older TV set is in their bedroom and the newer one in the living room. Dad installed their often-used plasma TV and DVD player on the wall. They hung a painting of their city of origin in Bolivia above it. He seemed very proud of the look. This technology takes no space out of the house. However, they hardly use this equipment; they prefer to use the TV in the bedroom.

This family does not watch TV, however, because “there is no gain from it,” said Mr. Solares, alluding to religious values and beliefs. They just use TV to watch movies they rent or videos for their daughter.

They placed a laptop computer on top of their bedroom dresser, where they use it while standing. Mom uses it mainly for Internet and e-mail, and dad said that this was the technology he used most, using it “for life:” online banking, shopping, surfing, research, fun, e-mail and more. “My life is in the computer,” he said. “I use it as much as I can, I like paperless.”

They are subscribed for digital phone service but they hardly ever use this phone. It is located in their closet for use/space reasons and also to minimize the noise so as not to wake up their daughter when she is sleeping.

Mom bought dad a PDA because he needed a handy Bible to read and to be able to make notes. He also uses it as a personal agenda and dictionary, which he synchronizes with the computer. Mom can know where is he and what is he doing just by checking his agenda on the computer.

Dad mentioned a webcam, used mainly to communicate with family in Bolivia and France through the computer’s instant messaging service (MSN). Their daughter also participates and interacts with the family via the computer, sending cartoons. Another
communication technology very popular for mom and dad is the radio/CD player. They own two radios and the use them to get their news and mainly Christian radio. The radio is installed in the kitchen, and it hardly takes any physical space.

Dad believes that he still needs to improve the technology in the home, and he would like to set up wireless printing.

The Rueda family

The Ruedas live with their extended family members. Currently, six members live in the household: mom (45), dad (47), their son, dad’s mother and father, dad’s sister and her son. Mom is a citizen who has lived in the United States for sixteen years and works as a tailor. Dad is a resident alien, has lived in the United States for four years and works as a real state agent. Both of them have some years of college in Bolivia without a degree earned.

Their household is equipped with cable TV, which they also use for Internet access. Their strategy to keep costs low for this service is to use Internet/cable promotions in order to maintain their budget.

This family owns four TV sets, including a very old one bought sixteen years ago and a new one bought a year ago. Dad uses it to watch news and sports. Even though dad said in the unstructured interview that they don’t watch TV, he said that his sister comes over to watch with them. Mom said she only watches the TV in her bedroom. Dad’s mom takes care of the baby all day, but in the afternoon after 4 p.m. she goes to her bedroom to watch her telenovelas.

They also own a desktop computer bought two years ago. Mom uses it to get some information, and dad uses it mainly to file his household information, to work with his real-estate business and for e-mail. However, they don’t pay bills online, they send in the payments by regular mail. She can’t use the computer when she pleases because dad set a log-in password that only he knows.
Mom believes she needs more training to learn to use the computer better, while dad believes he is well capable of using the computer and the cell phone without any problem. He would like to get a laptop computer because of its mobility. 

Mom uses the phone exclusively to communicate with family members in Bolivia. Their toddler monopolizes the use of the DVD player in the house. He is used to watching an hour of DVD everyday, and his parents buy DVD movies only for him.

**The Serrano family**

The Serranos are mom (31), dad (30), Junior (12), Rizzie (3), baby (1) and their nanny. Dad is an attorney, and mom works with him as his office manager. Both of them have college degrees and have been legal permanent immigrants in the United States for more than thirteen years. Their income is in the high $80,000s, which makes them more affluent than the other interviewed families.

This family owns one old TV used for personal entertainment. They also own an old desktop computer bought in 2004 that is mainly used for navigating the Internet, for banking, for e-mail and for their business.

The technologies they used the most are radios, which are placed in every room of the house, even in the bathroom where they listen to Christian preaching and some news while getting ready for their jobs. They listen to local Christian radio in English many times during the day; music or teachings are always on.

Their pre-teen Junior (12 years old) is the one who manages the most technologies; he lives between two homes because his mom lives elsewhere. He lives with his dad, but even though he owns the latest video-gaming technology, he is not allowed to use it where he lives at his dad’s house but at the other location, with his mom. He agrees with this rule because he believes his younger siblings would ruin the technologies if they were to use them.

Mr. and Mrs. Serrano like the freedom and flexibility that ICTs give them for telecommuting and have brought their work environments to their home office on many occasions. Actually, Mrs. Serrano renounced her daily job and got into a contractor agreement so she could work from home and take care of the babies. The study, which is their actual home office, is off limits. Technologies are used there only with their permission.
Since the Serranos own only one computer, they have agreed on an implied schedule to use it. Whenever Dad is not home, mom uses it, and when Junior needs it, mom lets him have it for a couple hours. But when dad is home, he is the main user. “We never had any problem with that because I think it’s something where we all know that I’m using the computer,” dad said.

Dad has created internal policies to use technologies in order to preserve intimacy and togetherness, e.g., the telephone is not answered when they are eating. He still has siblings back in Bolivia, and he keeps in touch by using calling cards, often to call his dad. Most of her family has already emigrated from Bolivia to the United States. Therefore, she doesn’t have connections with Bolivia at all.

They connect to the public world through the computer by browsing Junior’s school Web site to find deadlines, schedules, activities, and phone numbers. They also log in to their community page, where they can learn about yard sales, picnics or other useful information.

The Slone family

Alejandra (27) and Kevin Slone (28) are a young couple with no children who have recently opened their own real-estate agency. Alejandra is a legal Bolivian immigrant who came to the United States six years ago with her family and married an American citizen three years ago. Kevin has a couple of years of college, and Alejandra finished high school and got into real estate. Kevin spends his spare time watching TV for two to three hours daily, then uses the computer from one to two hours daily. He cooks every day for one hour. Alejandra’s main hobby is to listen to music from two to four hours a day.

Most of the technologies they own are shared and fairly newly acquired. At the time of the interview they had just bought a TV, which they placed in the family room, and they put the old one in their bedroom, with both hooked up to cable TV.

Occasionally we have different TV shows we want to watch. If she wants to watch something and I want to watch something else, then we have to choose who watches on the smaller television and who watches the show on the bigger TV. Yeah, that can be an issue that we have. (Kevin)

They also bought a new laptop computer and got a DSL Internet connection. What is interesting about the Slones is that she speaks little English and he doesn’t speak Spanish at all, therefore, when watching TV conflict arises when deciding which show to watch and in which language, if they want to do it together.

For example, Kevin speaks English, I speak Spanish. he wants to watch things in English and I in Spanish. To decide, we take turns, one day him, one day me, and some other times we like to watch together. Sometimes he goes to the bedroom and I stay watching here [on the nice big screen].
Their cell phone is one year old. They only own one, and they alternate the use of it depending on who goes out.

**The Justiniano family**

They came from Bolivia more than forty years ago. Mr. Justiniano (67) and Mrs. Mansilla (57) work as customer service representatives for many years. They live in a single home in the suburbs of Manassas, Virginia. He loves to sing on his karaoke machine weekly and adapted the basement room as his special singing and concert room when somebody is visiting. In this area, he also likes to surf the Internet at least two hours a day.

She loves to watch TV for at least six hours a day. This is why they recently invested in a plasma TV and placed it in their living room. They believe life would be boring and without the possibility any intellectual expansion without the TV. She likes the TV in the living room because then she can do other things while watching, such as cooking, ironing, and other chores.

I would not conceive not to have a TV. The computer, perhaps because I do not understand it very well, but with a TV I relax the whole day. I don't have to go out, because to go out is to spend money (Teresa).

They do have conflict when watching the plasma TV in the living room because when he is home the only thing he likes to watch is the Discovery Channel and about Hitler. “I am done with Hitler, what else is there to know about him,” Mrs. Mansilla said. “So many years watching the same stuff, and he keeps watching over and over.” Therefore, she leaves the room and goes upstairs to her bedroom to watch her telenovelas or other shows.

Their computer is four years old, and they don't plan to update it. They use it to get their news from Bolivia and to communicate with family overseas. Dad uses it a lot to research about products they are thinking about buying. Mom just learned how to use messenger so she chats often with her family in Bolivia some evenings. She never learned to use e-mail, and she is still waiting for her husband to teach her many things she wishes to know, such as how to research, to get maps, little easy things, but this has been difficult “since they are always busy,” she said.

Cell phones are not really used by them. They each have one but they are always either discharged or turned off. They have them only for emergencies.

What they really use is the computer chat. They don’t use the landline anymore because their long-distance calls are made frequently through Messenger and Skype.
Appendix H: Examples of mental maps

Figure 22: Working-class woman's mental map
Figure 23: Working-class girl teenager’s mental map
Figure 24: Working-class male's mental map
Appendix I: ICT icon list

- Plasma TV - HDTV
- Big Screen TV
- TV
- Radio
- Digital camera cell phone
- Analog cell phone
- Digital cell phone
- Land line phone
Flat screen desktop computer

Desktop computer

Laptop computer

DVD

iPod

PDA

Video games