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Your Thoughts Projected: Television Comedies, Economic Content, and American Economic Attitudes, 1949-1990

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YOUR THOUGHTS PROJECTED:
TELEVISION COMEDIES, ECONOMIC CONTENT, AND AMERICAN ECONOMIC
ATTITUDES, 1949-1990

A Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
History

by
Cody J. Lolos
August 2018

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

YOUR THOUGHTS PROJECTED:

TELEVISION COMEDIES, ECONOMIC CONTENT, AND AMERICAN ECONOMIC ATTITUDES, 1949-1990

by

Cody J. Lolos

August 2018

This study analyzes the relationship between American television audiences and television comedies in the latter half of the twentieth century. The driving questions are how did television comedies depict economic content and how was that content related to American audiences' economic perceptions? By analyzing eight television comedy programs, this study asserts that not only did television comedies contain a substantial amount of economic content, including consumption, thrift, employment, and other significant and relevant economic factors, but the economic content found in television comedies accurately reflected Americans' economic attitudes over time. As a result, television comedies' economic content further correlated with real-world economic conditions found in modern America. The study includes comparative analysis between television comedies of the 1950s and early-1960s and the late-1970s and 1980s. This analysis includes discussion of television as a mass culture medium, the significance of television program ratings and reviews, and the change and continuity found in the forms of economic content within the selected television comedy programs that in turn

illustrated the different economic mentalities held by the American public over the course of the latter half of the twentieth century.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Americans by the mid-twentieth century had a plethora of options to access entertainment and information. Many forms of media, like periodicals, books, radio, and movies were perennial choices. Yet in the 1950s, television ascended to a new height as the principal medium of mass communication that effectively combined information and entertainment. Over the course of the 1950s, a range of program options developed, with news shows, comedies, dramas, and a variety of other forms of entertainment.¹ While scholars have examined how television became a medium for mass communication and the impact that it had on American society and culture, there has been relatively little done to examine the relationship between the economic content within television programs and the American audiences in the twentieth century. That is the purpose of this study.

Television comedy programs in the latter half of the twentieth century offer astute insight into the minds of contemporary American viewers. The developmental process of the television medium and its subsequent diffusion throughout the nation was predicated on the relationship that the medium had with its audiences, where television programs were shaped by and reflected Americans' economic concerns. Situational comedies (sitcoms) found on TV during this time offer a record of how Americans viewed the world in general, and economics in particular. The economic content within these programs illustrates a strong correlation between real-world economic conditions and Americans' attitudes towards economic factors. In essence, Americans' perceptions towards economics influenced the content of sitcoms as part of a reciprocal

1. Alan Brinkley, *American History: Connecting With the Past*, 14th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012), 788-790.

relationship with the audience. Consequently, the correlation between television comedies' economic content and real-world economic conditions in America was the product of Americans' economic perceptions, just as Americans reinforced their own economic attitudes by viewing the economic content shown in television comedies.

The scope of my analysis consists of studying the economic content within television comedy programs found within two distinct periods of both the American economy and the television industry: first, the 1950s and early 1960s and, second, the late-1970s and 1980s. By economic content I mean any explicit or implicit reference to the following factors: consumption, employment, thrift, macroeconomic conditions, financial planning, financial status, charitableness, advertisements integrated into the programs, and home economic concerns (such as bills, taxes, and necessary household expenses that are otherwise distinct from general consumption patterns). These factors collectively comprise the basis for economic conditions in reality and the economic content within the television programs.

Consumption, employment, and thrift constitute the core factors in my analysis, while the rest are subsidiary. Consumption includes non-necessary purchases, investments, bets or gambling, and the like. Employment considers attitudes towards different employment statuses, including self-employment, and any factors attributed to employment (for example, going to a company event, comments regarding a given job, etc.). Thrift includes attempts to save money or savvy attempts to make money. Subsequently, my categorization of thrift also includes characters' efforts to safeguard their money against potential financial losses. Integrated ads refer to advertisements that featured either the sponsor of the show directly placing an ad into the program (during the opening or closing credits, or even in the middle of the show), or the characters of the show advertising for the sponsor or another company or product.

Macroeconomic conditions involve consideration of larger regional or national economic factors. Likewise, bills and taxes include portrayals of characters' attitudes towards these economic factors, and the context in which bills and taxes are shown. Necessary expenses are a form of home economic concerns including food purchases, allowances for family members and any other factor that a given show portrayed in a way that suggests it is of critical importance. Financial planning involves attempts to arrange or organize finances for a future time, which could be tied to thrift, consumption, or both, or it could be an independent factor. Financial status considers how characters in a given program perceive either their own financial position, the position of others, or both. Finally, charitableness involves the willingness of program characters to donate money directly or purchase something for someone else, which could also be tied to other economic factors.

For the purposes of my analysis, I subdivided the eleven fundamental economic factors into three forms based on the context of each economic factor within the programs. This consists of positive, neutral, and negative depictions. Positive forms include any explicit or implicit positive portrayal or speech of economic content, while negative consists of the opposite. Neutral economic content includes any economic content, implicit or explicit, that is included but not heavily emphasized within the programs. Such content is effectively passive, but nevertheless present and therefore contributed to the frequency and type of economic material found in the programs. It is, of course, important to note that these classifications are broad and subjective – what one viewer considers a positive depiction of a given form of economic content may be a negative one towards another. This is an inherent challenge when dealing with viewers' perceptions. But my classifications applied to the eleven forms of economic content are based on how the characters within the television programs portrayed the economic content. For example,

characters complaints about their jobs would constitute negative depictions of employment, since the characters in question held a negative opinion of their employment status, even though they were employed. Conversely, if characters spoke positively about their jobs, that would represent positive depictions of employment. The same principles apply to other forms of economic content.

By examining television comedies and their economic content over time, I explored the ways in which the American public engaged with television programs. As such, I treated television as a mass medium that impacted Americans collectively. In this case, the correlation between real-world economic conditions and the economic content in the television programs provided information on how American audiences interacted with the television medium, and, perhaps more importantly, how Americans perceived economic conditions and concerns. Through this analysis, television comedies demonstrate that consumption and thrift were the principal economic factors of the 1950s and early-1960s, while in the late-1970s and 1980s, employment became more important, though concerns about consumption and thrift remained evident. The other economic factors were subsidiary, though they collectively provided a more complete representation that illustrated the correlation between television comedies' economic content, real-world economic conditions, and Americans' economic perceptions. I selected several television comedies for this analysis. Programs from the 1950s and early-1960s include: *The Goldbergs*, *I Love Lucy*, *Father Knows Best*, *The Honeymooners*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies*. The selected programs from the late-1970s and 1980s are *Three's Company*, *Cheers*, and *Roseanne*.

I reviewed the preceding eight programs for the frequency that these forms of economic content occurred within the programs. This process is heavily predicated upon each viewer's

perception of economic conditions within a given program. An example may more readily illustrate this: if a show dealt with characters purchasing home appliances, a viewer might interpret the purchase as a form of consumption. However, another viewer may see that as a form of thrift, since the appliances could save time or the like. Or a viewer could perceive it as a necessary purchase if they believe that the given appliance is critically important. In effect, each viewer could interpret a given program's content in different ways. Furthermore, for the purposes of this study, economic mindsets, such as entrepreneurialism and other economically-related attitudes, are included in the analysis of other economic factors, particularly consumption, thrift, and employment, depending on situational context and specific character depictions. In order to attempt to mitigate possibly different interpretations, I am accounting for changes in frequency of economic content within the programs and accounting for the different economic perspectives and attitudes enshrined within the programs.

But why analyze television comedies for their economic content? As the comedian Alan King once stated, “Comedy is a reflection.”² Of course comedy could take other approaches, including challenging social norms, highlighting social and cultural issues, and related factors. But in the case of economic content found in television comedies, while the shows retained the ability to approach comedy and social commentary in a multitude of ways, they predominantly reflected real-world economic conditions and concerns and, by extension, audiences' economic perceptions. King's remark offered insight into the functions of comedy and its unique ability to shed light on actual conditions, even if it was set in a fictional scenario. Television comedies retained this trait, and were well-situated for analysis. They portray the correlation between real-world economic conditions and the explicit and implicit economic content found within the

2. “Comedian Alan King Dies at 76 – Old-School Comic Based Zany Tirades on Everyday Life,” *Seattle Times*, May 10, 2004, accessed March 9, 2018, NewsBank.

programs. Furthermore, the uniform structure of television comedies offered an additional degree of conformity for analysis, as the shows in general ran for 30 minutes or less, had a specific scenario within each episode (the basis for the situation comedy format), and maintained larger plotlines that ran over the course of programs. The structural similarities, then, enabled a more focused and clearly defined analysis of the forms of economic content within the programs than a more expansive study of other television genres as well.

One of the challenges in approaching this study was selecting what television comedies to include—there were a plethora of options. But I selected popular shows that fit within the chronological periods of my analysis. It is possible that other programs would illustrate different trends in economic content found in the shows and, by extension, viewers' relationship with the television medium; however, this study could not account for the complete range of programs found on television in the latter half of the twentieth century, which would certainly go beyond the temporal and material constraints of an M.A. thesis. Yet if my argument is correct, these shows, and others like them, provide discrete depictions of how Americans perceived economic conditions. Collectively, the shows create a continuum that illustrates the correlation between economic content in television comedies and the real world, and the ways that Americans' economic attitudes and concerns evolved over time. While each show is partially self-contained—with characters, plots, themes and related considerations independent of the next—they are all emblematic of the ideals and beliefs held by the audiences. So any given sample only enhances our understanding of Americans' economic mentalities in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The study begins with an overview of the significance of the television medium and how it developed over the course of the 1950s and into the 1960s, with a comparison of the television

industry in the 1980s. While charting the development of the television medium, I also considered concurrent geographic and economic conditions (i.e. the populations that received television and the economic factors affecting America). These are foundational considerations that provide context to the economic content in television comedies and the mentalities of the American public concerning the economic content within the shows. Analysis of the selected television programs follows and proceeds in a chronological fashion based on the dates that the shows were on-air. Each chapter begins with an overview of what the given show consisted of and the public's response to the program. Moreover, each chapter also considers the state of the American economy, economic concerns, and other relevant contextual sociocultural factors. This is followed by an extensive analysis of the economic content within the show, how that content related to the other selected programs, and how that in turn related to the real-world economic conditions and Americans' views of economics. Chapters VIII and XII consist of aggregate reviews of trends in the economic content found within the shows and how that correlated with changing economic conditions and concerns in the real world as well as Americans' economic perceptions at the time. The appendixes provide further information concerning the percent of episodes in a given television program containing each form of economic content analyzed in this study. Each appendix contains information related to a particular program: Appendix A pertains to the *The Goldbergs*; Appendix B to *I Love Lucy*; Appendix C to *Father Knows Best*; Appendix D to *The Honeymooners*; Appendix E to *The Beverly Hillbillies*; Appendix F to *Three's Company*; Appendix G to *Cheers*; and Appendix H to *Roseanne*. Appendix I provides a comparison between each of the selected television comedies economic content over time. The study concludes with a final comparison between both periods regarding the correlation between

the economic content in the programs and audiences, as well as outlining areas for further investigation and revisiting the relevance of this study.

One of the foundational aspects of this study—Americans’ relationship with television programs—involves considering how Americans conceive of reality and what the relationship was between television and understanding reality. Several scholars examined the ways Americans’ perceptions of reality existed over time, including Daniel Boorstin in his exemplary work, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*.³ Boorstin’s study from the mid-twentieth century argued that Americans had become increasingly absorbed with illusions instead of reality, which encouraged Americans to attempt to control their perceptions of the world around them.⁴ Boorstin contended that this was the result of “our wealth, our literacy, our technology, and our progress,” which enabled Americans to choose to see illusions rather than real-world conditions.⁵ In effect, these illusions became the reality for Americans, which Boorstin illustrated by analyzing the news media, the construction of celebrities and celebrity culture, tourism, homogenization in literature and other forms of entertainment, and the diminution of ideals in return for images (the facilitators of illusions).⁶

Boorstin utilized the dictionary definition of an image: “an image is an artificial imitation or representation of the external form of any object, especially of a person.”⁷ Yet Boorstin elaborated significantly on the definition of an ideal, which he thought was “what we actively

3. Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. 1961 (reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1992), ix-x.

4. Boorstin, *The Image*, ix-x.

5. Boorstin, *The Image*, 3.

6. Boorstin, *The Image*, 7-12, 45, 77-80, 119-130, 180, 182-183.

7. Boorstin, *The Image*, 197.

strive toward,” and which was “created by tradition, by history, or by God,” such as religion, values, and ethics.⁸ Boorstin’s comparison between the changing values of Americans from ideals to images bears further review because it is a foundational factor that affected the sociocultural constructs of America.⁹ In essence, Boorstin described how Americans had, in general, turned away from believing in a higher power—whether God or nature—and instead believed (falsely) in their own abilities to control their reality.¹⁰ And as a result, Boorstin thought images had thoroughly enthralled Americans, creating (or at the very least, having the potential to create) a state of “unreality,” where images are more real to Americans than the real world.¹¹ Boorstin’s analysis demonstrated how Americans intended to both shape and synthesize their environments, which in turn enabled images to supplant ideals, the traditional cultural and social values held by Americans—that which comprised traditional American identity.¹² Consequently, Boorstin found that images were Americans’ creations of their own realities, ranging from the images of celebrities to corporations, and even entertainment media like books and movies.¹³ As Boorstin thought, these images fundamentally restructured Americans’ worldviews.¹⁴

Boorstin’s description of this process can be readily applied to television. Television essentially functioned as a medium of pseudo-reality, where the programs were formed by Americans with the American audience in mind. Thus, television became an illusory medium,

8. Boorstin, *The Image*, 181-183, 197-198.

9. Boorstin, *The Image*, 182-183, 212, 232.

10. Boorstin, *The Image*, 181-183.

11. Boorstin, *The Image*, 239-241.

12. Boorstin, *The Image*, 118, 182-183, 185-194, 197-211.

13. Boorstin, *The Image*, 122, 142, 149, 153-154, 162, 183-204.

14. Boorstin, *The Image*, 183-184, 232-233, 241-246.

one wrought of images for the audiences. But, as I will argue here, that did not necessarily make its messages false. Instead, American viewers shaped television programs to portray how they perceived the world, which was then projected back to them in a circuitous, self-reinforcing loop. In this way, Americans' economic mentalities shaped the television medium and were in turn reaffirmed by the messages presented through television programs. While other scholars examined television's ability to engage with audiences, they have done so without significant analysis of economic content and, more importantly, how television comedies' economic content correlated with the real-world American economy and American economic attitudes.

Beyond Boorstin's study, Paddy Scannell crafted an intriguing overview of the effects that television has had since its development.¹⁵ Scannell drew from Annales methodology (specifically Braudel's *longue duree* approach) to establish that television functioned as "a time-based medium. Time is what it consumes."¹⁶ The implication of this, Scannell explained, was that television demanded viewing time.¹⁷ Hence, its audience had to be able to afford to use their time for television, a luxury found primarily in developed social and economic regions, including America.¹⁸ And viewing television was a shared feature among Americans—an increasingly collective experience—as Americans took the time to watch TV together.¹⁹ Thus, television became an important a component in the larger social fabric of the time.²⁰ Scannell is undoubtedly right that television became a mass medium. But it was also more than that—it was

15. Paddy Scannell, "The Dialectic of Time and Television," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 625, no. 1 (September 2009): 219-221, accessed March 8, 2018, Nexis Uni.

16. Scannell, "The Dialectic of Time and Television," 219-223.

17. Scannell, "The Dialectic of Time and Television," 223-224.

18. Scannell, "The Dialectic of Time and Television," 223-224.

19. Scannell, "The Dialectic of Time and Television," 224-226, 229-231.

20. Scannell, "The Dialectic of Time and Television," 224-226, 229-231.

the means for people to share a common view in the messages found in television programs, including the economic content. Thus, television as a mass culture medium further reflected the collective economic mentalities held by Americans.

As Boorstin's and Scannell's works show, the ramifications of understanding how Americans perceive the world around them, the implications that Americans' perceptions have on different media (including television), and the aggregate effects of television on society are incredibly significant. Consider Plato's allegory of the cave. In the scenario Plato described, imprisoned people viewed shadows on a cave wall in front of them as reality, knowing nothing of any other world outside of what they saw.²¹ The situation with television was both immediately similar and markedly different. Audiences willingly turned to the television medium for information and entertainment. Rather than being unaware of the real world, these audiences instead chose to invest their time viewing and engaging with the pseudo-realities of television programs. What was on television effectively became a component of the audience's reality as they interacted with the medium. But Americans willingly accepted the images they saw on television because what they perceived through the television medium was what they believed—the images fit their beliefs and attitudes, particularly in the case of economics. And this was a process occurring throughout America as television matured in the latter half of the twentieth century and became a mass culture medium.²²

Besides the ramifications of Americans' relationship with reality, many other historians explored consumer culture and materialism found in America in the twentieth century. The core

21. Samuel Enoch Stumpf and James Fieser, *Philosophy: History and Problems*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 43-45.

22. The process of television diffusion and the expansion of the industry are addressed in detail in Chapter II.

features examined within such studies have included considerations of the social, cultural, economic, and political effects of consumerism and materialism. Over the course of the last sixty years, several prominent studies considered how consumer culture became a defining feature in America. One of the seminal works analyzing how consumerism and materialism affected Americans' identities was David Potter's *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character*, published in 1958.²³ Potter contended that over the course of their lives, Americans had continually been influenced by the vast material wealth found in the United States.²⁴ Moreover, Potter thought that economic abundance encouraged a façade of American ideals, including democracy and equality, even as material abundance inculcated consumer culture and class inequality.²⁵ For Potter, then, consumerism was a byproduct of material wealth, which in turn shaped Americans' identities and the broader structure of society, creating an industrious people whose search for wealth (along with the wealth they already possessed) led them to expand across the continent.²⁶ Yet Potter's analysis relied heavily on abstractions based upon a combined theoretical framework founded in cultural history and psychological studies, rather than on more concrete material analysis.²⁷ While this is not a deficiency in Potter's work, it is indicative of the expansiveness of consumer culture analyses—scholars had many possible approaches to this topic. Potter's approach emphasized the ideological corollaries of economic abundance; however, other historians instead chose to focus on different factors.

23. David M. Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), vii-viii, 75-77, 84-90, accessed February 10, 2018, ProQuest Ebook Central.

24. Potter, *People of Plenty*, 80-90, 208.

25. Potter, *People of Plenty*, 75, 80-90, 91, 101-112, 127, 166-167, 208.

26. Potter, *People of Plenty*, 80-90, 165, 208.

27. Potter, *People of Plenty*, ix-xxi, 19-31, 75-77.

Whereas Potter dealt with the theory of how consumer culture impacted Americans' identities, other historians dealt with consumer culture more directly through the media that facilitated it. Roland Marchand's *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* was emblematic of this approach.²⁸ While Marchand's study dealt specifically with the content within advertisements in the 1920s and 1930s, the content of those advertisements was predicated upon American consumerism.²⁹ Marchand demonstrated that advertisements promoted material goods using messages meant to relate to consumers on an ideological level tied to modernization and consumer culture.³⁰ By analyzing the advertisements of that era, Marchand gained further insight into the social mores of the time, which evinced the degree to which consumer culture had permeated American society.³¹ This involved an ethnographic approach to understand both the mindsets of the advertisers and those of the consumers (i.e. how ads were interpreted at different sociocultural levels), along with the impact of the mediums of advertising (print, radio, and so on).³² What Marchand's study achieved was a detailed breakdown of the factors that influenced the forms of advertisements (notably modernization, advances in technology, and material desires), and analysis of the advertisements efficacy, which informed Americans' material culture, competing economic class values, and the ever-present consumer culture.³³ Even though Marchand was unable to fully address the degree to which advertisements accurately reflected Americans' social values, his work nevertheless highlights

28. Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), xvi-xx.

29. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, xx-xxii, 2-9, 77-80, 118.

30. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 2-16, 51, 72-87, 118.

31. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, xvi-xxii, 118.

32. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, xvi-xxii, 52-53, 88-94.

33. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, xx-xxii, 1-16, 52-53, 88-89, 118-120, 165, 206-208, 335.

the inculcation of consumer culture in America and the importance of considering specific medium's abilities to provide insight into America's culture, society, and values.³⁴

While Marchand focused on a specific medium of American consumer society, Lizabeth Cohen's *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* instead reviewed the broad sociocultural, political, economic, racial, and gender consequences of American consumerism.³⁵ Cohen argued that Americans after the Second World War welcomed mass consumption and viewed it as socially beneficial; however, American identity and consumer identity "were ever-shifting categories that sometimes overlapped, often were in tension, but always reflected the permeability of the political and economic spheres."³⁶ Cohen considered the evolution over the course of much of the twentieth century of the related American national and consumer identities that reflected the continued surge of consumerism throughout America.³⁷ In essence, Americans came to view consumerism as a corollary to American democracy, which Cohen illustrated by utilizing New Jersey as a case study of larger national consumption patterns.³⁸ Cohen detailed the emergence of consumer culture prior to World War II; the relationship between civic duty and consumption during the war years; the growth of consumer culture after the war and its continued connotations to American values; and the expansion of consumer credit, suburbanization, and the advertising industry.³⁹ But even with

34. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, xvi-xx.

35. Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 7-9, 31-53, 62-63, 166.

36. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 7-8.

37. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 8-9.

38. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 11-15.

39. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 8-9, 13-15, 21-27, 62-63, 109, 114-124, 134-150, 164, 191, 195, 286, 292-295, 346.

the supposed benefits of mass consumption, Cohen also addressed the growing economic, gender, and racial inequality that affected consumer habits and American sociocultural constructs, while market segmentation further instilled the divisions found in American society.⁴⁰

Whereas Potter, Marchand, and Cohen evinced the effects of material wealth and consumer culture in America, David Steigerwald analyzed how Americans economic and social values facilitated a shift towards correlating consumer habits with thriftiness: “rather than a mark of good character or a way to hand wealth to later generations, thrift became a means to consumption; it was redefined as the partner, rather than the opposite, of debt.”⁴¹ Steigerwald perceptively noticed that historians had considered aspects of advertising and consumers’ agency when examining consumer culture, factors that he believed Cohen moved past in her work; however, he thought that it was necessary to consolidate the factious arguments by first determining what made consumer capitalism so successful.⁴² Building on William Whyte’s *The Organization Man*, Steigerwald illustrated how consumers were part of a larger sociocultural reorientation in America as society shifted in towards the ascendant consumer culture at the expense of traditional social values, including the traditional connotations of thrift.⁴³ Jan Logemann’s comparative study on mass consumption between the United States and West Germany in the mid-twentieth century further expounded the degree to which consumerism,

40. Cohen, *A Consumers’ Republic*, 31-41, 62-63, 166, 191, 227-228, 251-256, 295, 310, 331.

41. David Steigerwald, “Did the Protestant Ethic Disappear? The Virtue of Thrift on the Cusp of Postwar Affluence,” *Enterprise & Society* 9, no. 4 (December 2008): 790, accessed March 8, 2018, Project Muse.

42. Steigerwald, “Did the Protestant Ethic Disappear?” 789-792.

43. Steigerwald, “Did the Protestant Ethic Disappear?” 793, 810-812.

facilitated by consumer credit, gained hold in America.⁴⁴ Logemann contended that the United States' adoption of consumer financing options was "a vital tool in promoting mass purchasing power and a middle class consumer life-style," which was not so much "a decline of 'thrift' in America," but rather a "changed economic reality of postwar affluence."⁴⁵ Steigerwald and Logemann's works provide insight into the functional changes of American economics in the twentieth century. As my study demonstrates in the following chapters, thrift did indeed shift in Americans' minds; however, while it could complement consumption, that was not always the case. Instead, much as Logemann indicated, changes in economic conditions, such as the adoption of consumer financing, effectively dictated how Americans perceived thrift (and other economic factors, for that matter).⁴⁶ In this case, the television medium provides additional nuance to better understand the evolution of Americans' economic mentalities and the correlation between economic content in television comedies and actual American economic conditions.

The preceding studies offered insight into the context of consumer and material culture in America. Potter's argument that material abundance inherently shaped Americans' identities and inculcated consumerism within society provided context to the American sociocultural constructs within the twentieth century, much as Cohen's study did.⁴⁷ At the simplest level, the arguments and analyses within those studies highlights the importance of understanding why economic

44. Jan Logemann, "Different Paths to Mass Consumption: Consumer Credit in the United States and West Germany During the 1950s and '60s," *Journal of Social History* 41, no. 3 (Spring 2008): 525-526, accessed March 8, 2018, Project Muse.

45. Logemann, "Different Paths to Mass Consumption," 545-546.

46. Logemann, "Different Paths to Mass Consumption," 545-546.

47. Potter, *People of Plenty*, 75, 80-90, 91, 101-112, 127, 166-167, 208; Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 7-8, 11-15.

factors, including consumption, are integral to my analysis regarding television's relationship with American audiences. As Americans consumed material goods in the real world, so too did the actors in television programs, a factor that linked the real world to the pseudo-reality in television comedies. So when television developed in the mid-twentieth century, it did so in a culture that prized consumption and materialism—in effect, television became a new mode of consumption, one that was innately integrated into the social and cultural fabric of America. Marchand's mode of analysis, obliquely reviewing the social values visible through advertisements, is a strategy that could certainly be applied to other mediums, in this case television comedies.⁴⁸ While not all aspects of television programs are fully realistic, their structure undoubtedly contains important information about the society and culture of America that existed concurrently to when the programs aired. What's more, specific content within the shows, including economic content, can then be isolated for further analysis. As such, this methodology supplements the study of television comedies' economic content over time.

Aside from the consumerist and materialist components of American history, television in the latter half of the twentieth century effectively became a mode of mass communication that facilitated mass culture. Many scholars have addressed various aspects of mass culture in America. Marchand's analysis of advertisements in the early-twentieth century demonstrated how advertising enabled several mediums—including print, radio, and film—to expand consumer culture.⁴⁹ Cohen's study also established how consumer culture became a mass culture movement fundamentally ingrained in American society, one tied to the ideal values of

48. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, xix-xxii.

49. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 52-53, 88-89, 165, 235-238, 335.

American citizenship.⁵⁰ Consumer capitalism effectively drove the push for suburban expansion, greater material goods, market segmentation into different demographic audiences, and other structural shifts in American society and culture.⁵¹ In this way, Cohen and Marchand captured the significance of consumer culture in America. My study, in turn, examines the role that television, perhaps the most significant mass medium in the latter half of the twentieth century, played in the realm of consumer culture through the relationship audiences had with television comedies and the economic content found within those shows. This approach offers a different form of insight into the economic attitudes held by Americans during this time, where television maintained a central role in reflecting and influencing Americans' mentalities, just as the economic content correlated with real-world economic conditions and concerns, thereby establishing television comedies as accurate chronicles of economic change and continuity.

James Baughman's *The Republic of Mass Culture* was an excellent example of approaching American media as modes of mass culture.⁵² Baughman argued that television supplanted traditional forms of media—including radio, print periodicals, and film—in the twentieth century.⁵³ Baughman explained that television became so dominant that other media had to develop new ways to reach and relate to their audiences.⁵⁴ In effect, Baughman's research indicated how successful television became as a mass medium.⁵⁵

50. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 7-8, 11-15.

51. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 8-9, 13-15, 62-63, 113-124, 164, 191, 251-274, 295, 310, 331.

52. James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking, and Broadcasting in America since 1941*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), xiii-xvii.

53. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture*, xiii-xiv, 9, 30-31, 59.

54. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture*, 59-74, 117, 175.

55. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture*, xiii-xvii.

Like Baughman, several contributors to *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism* expounded on the mass culture implications of the television medium.⁵⁶ Robert Allen's analysis of the discourse between television and its audiences illustrated how television viewing was fundamentally a process of exchange between the programs and the viewers.⁵⁷ Allen considered the various ways that audiences could engage with television programs, as well as subsets of those programs (such as soap operas), to better demonstrate how different genres of television programs interfaced with audiences to different degrees—a concept related to how viewers experienced the programs and the messages they contained.⁵⁸ Mimi White's analysis complemented that of Allen by extrapolating on the ideological ramifications of television programs and advertisements.⁵⁹ White contended that television programs and other related content on TV “[offered] a particular construction of the world rather than a universal, abstract truth.”⁶⁰ That is, television communicated its content differently to different people, predicated on external sociocultural factors, including class and social values, as well as other intrinsic features.⁶¹

56. Robert C. Allen, “Introduction to the Second Edition: More Talk About TV,” in Robert C. Allen, ed., *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 7-10, accessed March 8, 2018, ProQuest Ebook Central.

57. Robert C. Allen, “Audience-Oriented Criticism and Television,” in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 81.

58. Allen, “Audience-Oriented Criticism and Television,” in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 81-83, 90-97, 100-105.

59. Mimi White, “Ideological Analysis and Television,” in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 126-127.

60. White, “Ideological Analysis and Television,” in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 134-135.

61. White, “Ideological Analysis and Television,” in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 135-144.

White's analysis suggested an implicit postmodernist view towards television; however, Jim Collins explicitly examined television as a postmodern medium.⁶² Collins explained how television's role in providing information, the subjectivity of information found on television, and the implications of competing messages within the medium and the values of those messages made television effectively postmodern.⁶³ As Collins stated, "the concerns of postmodern television and postmodern theory, then, are thoroughly intertwined, because both are responses to the contingent, conflicted set of circumstances that constitute cultural life at the end of the twentieth century."⁶⁴ The implications of this, like White's argument, are that television content is inherently multifaceted—it could mean different things to different people. While this is likely true, television fundamentally contributed to and reflected a collective, amalgamated position of Americans' broader mentalities, including those concerning economics. In this way, television actually provides substantial insight into Americans' beliefs in general, which can then be subdivided into the various components that constitute Americans' perception of reality (i.e. society, culture, gender, race, economics, and others). My study accounts for the economic facet, which television comedies readily illustrate. But more than that, while viewers could undoubtedly interpret television programs' economic content differently, that content specifically related to viewers' economic perceptions as a mass medium. In this sense, television comedies condensed the economic content they contained into that which the audience already believed and perceived in the real world.

62. White, "Ideological Analysis and Television," in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 134-135; Jim Collins, "Television and Postmodernism," in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 251.

63. Collins, "Television and Postmodernism," in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 254-261.

64. Collins, "Television and Postmodernism," in Allen, *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*, 266.

Yet other studies adopted a broader approach towards American cultural studies. LeRoy Ashby's *With Amusement for All: A History of American Popular Culture Since 1830* offered an expansive analysis of the defining mediums of popular culture since the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ Ashby argued that popular culture effectively defined American cultural values and American identity as they evolved over time.⁶⁶ Ashby considered how popular culture evolved, particularly in relation to mediums of entertainment, including theater, sports, movies, music, radio, and television.⁶⁷ Factors such as class, race, gender, economics and politics influenced the facets of popular culture and what forms of entertainment became accepted by the social majority.⁶⁸ Yet Ashby thought this was a process of "ongoing exchanges and sometimes brutal struggles between society's outsiders and insiders."⁶⁹ This has included social minorities facing challenges not only from social elites but also from the government and corporations in America, all of whom have tried to "contain and control" the direction of popular culture development.⁷⁰

The preceding statements are indicative of the continued challenge involved in defining the characteristics and components of popular culture and, by extension, mass culture. As social theorists like Antonio Gramsci indicated, the dividing feature between bourgeois society and common people was the hegemonic control that the bourgeoisie wielded, thereby defining the

65. LeRoy Ashby, *With Amusement for All: A History of American Popular Culture since 1830* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), xxxv-xxxix, 1, 506-517.

66. Ashby, *With Amusement for All*, xxxv-xxxix.

67. Ashby, *With Amusement for All*, 13-14, 21-22, 31-37, 42-52, 64-65, 100-101, 152-164, 190-195, 210, 249, 263-266, 302-306, 329-334, 380-384, 438, 441-442, 496-500.

68. Ashby, *With Amusement for All*, xxxv-xxxviii.

69. Ashby, *With Amusement for All*, xxxvi.

70. Ashby, *With Amusement for All*, xxxvi-xxxviii.

cultural values that would be internalized by the rest of society.⁷¹ Similarly, Michel Foucault's analysis of social structure and hierarchies of power reflect how social norms and truths were defined by those with the ability to project authority over others (i.e. those with power).⁷² So, based on these interpretations, the construction of popular culture is founded principally on the values of the dominant social group or individuals with authority in society that would have then been diffused throughout the social hierarchy.⁷³ Yet television challenged this formulation, as audiences retained a substantial amount of authority over the medium since only successfully rated shows remained on-air at the networks' and sponsors' discretion based on audience ratings.⁷⁴ The significance of these perspectives further illustrates the values ensconced within television programs and their subsequent relationship with the American audiences. What's more, television's role as a mass culture medium enabled it to defy Gramsci's conceptualization of a culture dominated by hegemony. Instead, television viewers actively shaped the television medium and the content it contained, so that television not only reflected Americans' social and cultural worldviews but also their perception of economics and economic conditions. But the purpose of this study is neither to support nor refute the theories of Gramsci or Foucault, as television functioned as a distinct medium, one capable of both defying and encouraging

71. David Miller, Janet Coleman, William Connolly, and Alan Ryan, eds., *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 179-180.

72. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 16-24, 126-131, 162-170, 184-194, 218-228, 255-256, 296-308.

73. Miller, Coleman, Connolly, and Ryan, *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, 179-180; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 255-256, 285-292, 296-308.

74. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Network Broadcasting, 85th Cong., 2d sess, 1958, HR Rep. 1297, 171, 188-189, accessed January 18, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437122805100;view=1up;seq=5> ; United States Congress, House of Representatives, *Broadcast Ratings: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce*, Part 1, 88th Cong., 1st sess., March 5-8, 18, 1963 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), 33, 35, 66-69, 76-84, 182-191, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951d035053807;view=1up;seq=9> .

hegemony, depending on the conditions and context in question. Instead, my study removes the question of hegemony by focusing exclusively on how audiences related to select television comedies in terms of economic content. And when I refer to Americans' economic mentalities or mindsets, I do so in a much narrower scope than the Annales school or even Gramsci or Foucault, because I am solely referring to economics, not broader social or cultural concerns.

All of the preceding scholars approached specific themes in American history—Americans' perceptions of reality, consumerism and materialism, and mass culture—in a broad spectrum. This occurred by applying their studies to an extensive chronology or by examining multiple factors that contributed to American history (e.g. culture, economics, gender, etc.). This study, on the other hand, is more limited in scale and scope, analyzing only portions of the latter half of the twentieth century within the television medium. And at that, I focused exclusively on a subset of television programming, specifically television comedies, and addressed only the economic content within these programs. That is not to say that other defining factors of American society aren't present, such as cultural constructs or gender, but they are only considered as the shows presented them in relation to specific economic content. Americans' relationship with the economic content within television comedies is the crux of this study, and it encompasses elements of all three of the preceding themes. Yet understanding the actual significance of the television medium to the American public is imperative.

CHAPTER II:

TELEVISION'S GEOGRAPHIC DIFFUSION AND THE CHANGING AMERICAN ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

Selecting the 1950s and early-1960s and the late-1970s and 1980s for comparison offers two distinct periods in United States economic and social history. The first period, the 1950s into the 1960s, was one of economic abundance, urban and suburban expansion, and the years that television spread throughout the United States. The late-1970s and 1980s, by contrast, saw a stagnant economy, an urbanized American geographical landscape, and the maturation of the television medium. In order to better establish the significance of television as a mass culture medium, it is useful to first review how television diffused throughout the United States in the 1950s and 1960s and other major geographic and economic developments that occurred concurrently. What's more, the expansion of television throughout the nation informed the development and structure of television programs. Over these years, television became an increasingly influential and integral component of the American sociocultural fabric. In the twenty-fifth annual report from the Federal Communications Commission in 1959, FCC Chairman John Doerfer posited that “radiobroadcast is the magic medium that brings information, education, religion, and entertainment into our homes. Television adds image—even in color—to the family enjoyment.”¹ Doerfer's statement reflects the degree to which television had become socially and culturally ingrained in America—it permeated nearly all aspects of Americans' lives. And the FCC charted the rise of this new medium.

1. Federal Communications Commission, *Silver Anniversary Report for the Fiscal Year 1959* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, [1960?]), iv, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335110;view=1up;seq=7> .

Television fell under the FCC's purview as part of its larger supervision of communications mediums, with regulatory authority stipulated under the Communications Act of 1934.² Based on the Communications Act of 1934, the FCC expected that broadcasters would "serve 'the public interest, convenience, and necessity,'" and act with "a proper sense of public responsibility."³ The Communications Act of 1934 required that all broadcasts support the public interest, which was consequently what the FCC intended to assure; however, the FCC did not want to censor broadcasts but rather allow each station to broadcast programs that their audiences wanted to see.⁴ In effect, the FCC wanted programming to be "desirable" to a given community.⁵ The FCC's role, then, was specifically meant to monitor broadcasters and oversee the development of the television medium and ensure that as it expanded, it continued to perform with the public interest in mind, factors that Congress also considered in the 1950s.⁶

Over the course of the 1950s, television experienced rapid growth as an industry, accompanied by exceptional geographic diffusion. Congress, the FCC, and the American public all took an interest in both the medium and the diffusion process.⁷ Between 1950 and 1951, the number of ultra-high frequency (UHF) and very-high frequency (VHF) channels allocated to a

2. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 53-54, 125.

3. Federal Communications Commission, *Silver Anniversary Report*, 50.

4. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 53-54, 125.

5. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 128.

6. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1955* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1956), 94, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335417;view=1up;seq=7> ; Federal Communications Commission, *Silver Anniversary Report*, iv, 50; Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 1-8.

7. Federal Communications Commission, *Seventeenth Annual Report: Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1951* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1952), 1, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335615;view=1up;seq=9> ; Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 94; Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 1-8.

given area depended upon the populations of the cities that the channels were assigned to, with only cities of one million or more people given between six and ten total channels, 250,000 to one million people four to six channels, 50,000-250,000 two to four channels and cities with less than 50,000 people one or two channels.⁸ Broadcasters continued to expand their coverage, which by mid-1951 consisted of 107 stations that reached “63 cities and metropolitan areas with a population of approximately 87,000,000 people in 43 States.”⁹ Even at this point, television reached a substantial portion of the American population. And over the course of the 1950s, there was a general population shift away from rural areas towards more urban environments especially towards what the 1960 population census termed the “urban fringe”—the suburbs, which from 1950 to 1960 saw population growth exceeding 80 percent.¹⁰

By 1953, the continued development of additional UHF television channels augmented the existing VHF channels by reaching areas that would otherwise have difficulty receiving television broadcasts.¹¹ At the time, in mid-1953, the FCC indicated that there were 483 commercial television stations, reflecting the substantial growth in the industry since 1951.¹² Television had continued to expand in existing markets, as the *New York Times* noted that at the time, New York had “3,535,000 TV homes; Chicago, 1,570,000; Los Angeles, 1,460,000; Philadelphia, 1,255,000, and Boston, 1,061,000.”¹³ Cumulatively, there were 24,292,600

8. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 27.

9. Federal Communications Commission, *Seventeenth Annual Report*, 6, 112.

10. U.S. Census Bureau, *1960 Census of Population United States Summary*, vol. 1, part1, 143, accessed March 6, 2018 https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/09768103v1p1_TOC.pdf

11. Federal Communications Commission, *19th Annual Report: Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1953* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1954), 93, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335516;view=1up;seq=7> .

12. Federal Communications Commission, *19th Annual Report*, 110.

13. “TV Markets,” *New York Times*, July 19, 1953, microfilm.

televisions in the U.S. as of June, 1953, of which the five preceding cities held over 36 percent of all televisions in use.¹⁴ By September of 1953, the *New York Times* related how, “according to Advertising Agency magazine,” television had begun to saturate several broadcasting markets, including those in Cleveland, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia, among others.¹⁵ And the *New York Times* reported that, according to the National Broadcasting System, in September, “there were 25,233,000 television sets in use throughout the country.”¹⁶ Clearly television use had expanded dramatically, and experts such as Allen Du Mont believed it would continue to grow—he predicted that there would be “fifty million television sets” by 1958.¹⁷ Television only continued to expand. There were 90 more authorized commercial stations in 1954, nine more in 1955, and 27 more in 1956.¹⁸ And in mid-1954, the FCC annual report indicated that there were over “30 million TV sets in about 29 million homes,” a substantial amount since the population was just over 150 million in 1950.¹⁹ So even as television station development slowed, more Americans owned television sets, further indicating how influential the medium became.

As of mid-1955, the FCC reported that “over 90 percent of the people of the country were within service range of at least one TV station, and about 75 percent were served by [two] or

14. “TV Markets,” *New York Times*, July 19, 1953.

15. “TV Ownership,” *New York Times*, September 17, 1953, microfilm.

16. “TV Set Total Soars,” *New York Times*, October 7, 1953, microfilm.

17. “50,000,000 TV Sets By 1958 Predicted,” *New York Times*, October 31, 1953, microfilm.

18. Federal Communications Commission, *20th Annual Report: Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1954* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1955), 1, 105, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335466;view=1up;seq=7> ; Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 113; Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1956* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, [1957?]), 116, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335318;view=1up;seq=9> .

19. Federal Communications Commission, *20th Annual Report*, 109; James A. Henretta, W. Elliot Brownlee, David Brody, Susan Ware, Marilyn S. Johnson, *America's History*, vol. 2: *Since 1865*, 3rd ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 1997), A-7.

more stations,” with 35 million TV receivers in use.²⁰ The *New York Times* reported the Census Bureau’s findings that “four out of five families in cities [had televisions]...and less than half those living in rural areas.”²¹ Indeed, in rural locations just over “one-third of United States farms [had] television sets,” with nearly 47 percent of farms in Northern states having televisions compared to only just over 25 percent in the South, while farms in the eastern United States had more televisions than in the West.²² The FCC also noted that, according to the Department of Commerce, “two-thirds (32 million) of the 48 million households in this country had one or more TV sets, which was six times the number in 1950.”²³ In the same year, Texas, Pennsylvania, California, New York, and Ohio had the most commercial television broadcast authorizations.²⁴ In regards to cities, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Washington had the most commercial television broadcast authorizations.²⁵ To put this in greater perspective, California had the most commercial television broadcast authorizations with 35, and of those in the state, eight were in Los Angeles alone (which also had the highest number of commercial television broadcast authorizations by city).²⁶ This further indicates how television broadcasting remained heavily centered in metropolitan regions into the mid-1950s. As a result this may have (and likely did) affect the structure of the sitcoms found on television by catering to urban preferences and outlooks more so than rural ones.

20. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 5, 94.

21. “32 Million Own TV Sets,” *New York Times*, September 26, 1955, microfilm.

22. “Third of Farms Have TV, With Jersey in the Lead,” *New York Times*, December 7, 1955, microfilm.

23. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 119.

24. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 114-115.

25. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 116.

26. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 114-116.

As of mid-1956, the FCC reported that “173 communities had [one television] station, 79 had [two], 28 had [three], and [nine] had [four] or more.”²⁷ Yet there was no significant growth from the preceding year in terms of the percentage of Americans receiving television broadcasts.²⁸ However, the FCC also indicated that based on a Census Bureau survey from mid-1956, 80 percent of “city homes and half of the farm homes” had televisions.²⁹ Texas, California, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio continued to have the most commercial television broadcast authorizations in 1956.³⁰ By contrast, the Virgin Islands had zero commercial television broadcast authorizations, while Guam, Wyoming, Vermont, and Delaware each had one, which represented the states and territory with the least commercial television broadcast authorizations.³¹ So, while television expanded, it did so principally in already established regions, a factor that continued into 1957, where the FCC showed only incremental increases in the number of communities receiving one or more television stations.³² However, when considering the percentage of Americans receiving television broadcasts, there was no change at all from 1956 to 1957.³³ Similarly, in mid-1957, 80 percent of American homes had televisions, just as in 1956, only now “some 44.5 million TV receivers were in use.”³⁴ What this suggests is

27. Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report*, 93.

28. Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report*, 93.

29. Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report*, 121.

30. Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report*, 117.

31. Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report*, 117.

32. Federal Communications Commission, *23rd Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1957* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, [1958?]), 3, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335367;view=1up;seq=7> .

33. Federal Communications Commission, *23rd Annual Report*, 3.

34. Federal Communications Commission, *23rd Annual Report*, 3; Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 36.

that as the American population increased, television use increased at a comparable rate, thereby mitigating any percentile changes in television use. And the 1950s was certainly a time of substantial population growth in the United States—by 1960, there were nearly 30 million more Americans than in 1950, an increase of almost 19 percent.³⁵

By the end of June in 1957 there were over 650 authorized commercial television stations, a substantial increase from the early-1950s.³⁶ Yet the geographic distribution of televisions in mid-1957 remained relatively similar to the previous year.³⁷ The FCC annual report in 1958 also showed minimal growth in television use or geographic diffusion.³⁸ There was a marginal increase of three percent to the number of American homes that had television equipment, and “over 46 million sets [were] in use.”³⁹ Similarly, there were only 14 additional authorized commercial television stations that year, amounting to a total of 665.⁴⁰ But television diffusion continued to make inroads, as, by mid-1958, all American states and territories had commercial television.⁴¹ In 1959, the FCC made their twenty-fifth annual report on broadcast communications.⁴² And, once again, the number of commercial TV stations had only minimal increase (two stations) from the previous year.⁴³ In August of 1959, 86 percent of homes had

35. U.S. Census Bureau, *1960 Census of Population United States Summary*, vol. 1, part1, xvii.

36. Federal Communications Commission, *23rd Annual Report*, 125.

37. Federal Communications Commission, *23rd Annual Report*, 127-128.

38. Federal Communications Commission, *24th Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1958* (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, [1959?]), 4, 128, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335268;view=1up;seq=7> .

39. Federal Communications Commission, *24th Annual Report*, 4.

40. Federal Communications Commission, *24th Annual Report*, 128.

41. Federal Communications Commission, *24th Annual Report*, 129.

42. Federal Communications Commission, *Silver Anniversary Report*, iii.

43. Federal Communications Commission, *Silver Anniversary Report*, 71.

television, very similar to 1958.⁴⁴ And in September of 1960, *Newsweek* reported that the Census Bureau showed that 46.5 million U.S. homes had TV, only 2 percent greater than 1959.⁴⁵ In 1960, however, the number of authorized commercial television stations actually decreased by 14, and in 1961 it decreased by another 3.⁴⁶ But after 1961, the number of authorized commercial television stations continued to rise at a steady rate into the 1980s.⁴⁷

As the preceding evidence of the television diffusion process suggests, the television medium had effectively integrated itself into American culture. Consequently, the American public, broadcasters, and the federal government all had a vested interest in the cultural, social, and economic effects of the television medium.⁴⁸ Television broadcasts effectively functioned “as advertising media” because advertisers sponsored the programs in order to attract viewers.⁴⁹ The stations, the advertisers, and the government paid remarkable attention to television program ratings and viewership data.⁵⁰ In a 1963 Congressional hearing regarding broadcast ratings, the Television Network President of CBS testified that CBS utilized ratings to gain “a measure of audience behavior” to better determine what shows people were interested in and, by extension,

44. “TV All Over,” *Newsweek*, September 8, 1958, 90; “Gold Rush,” *Newsweek*, August 24, 1959, 66-67.

45. “Networks in Clover,” *Newsweek*, September 19, 1960, 82.

46. Federal Communications Commission, *26th Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1960* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1960), 59, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335169;view=1up;seq=7> ; Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report/Fiscal Year 1981* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, [1982?]), 96, accessed January 22, 2018 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32437011335250;view=1up;seq=7> .

47. Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report*, 96.

48. Federal Communications Commission, *Seventeenth Annual Report*, 1; Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 94; Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Network Broadcasting, 1-8, 171, 188-189.

49. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Network Broadcasting, 171.

50. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Network Broadcasting, 171, 188-189.

what programs successfully promoted the sponsors' content.⁵¹ Both ABC and NBC also agreed with CBS's sentiments on broadcast ratings.⁵² Consequently, as Peter Tewksbury, the director of *Father Knows Best*, testified, "the entire television industry is completely controlled by the Nielsen rating."⁵³

Tewksbury's statement reflects the degree to which broadcast ratings determined which programs would continue to be broadcasted and supported by stations and sponsors alike. But perhaps more importantly, only shows that reached a large audience demographic remained on-air.⁵⁴ This is a concept worth considering in greater detail. If the arguments posed by Gramsci and Foucault hold merit, the values and truths assigned to any medium—in this case television—reflect the values and beliefs of those in power (those who controlled the medium).⁵⁵ This would, on the surface, appear to be the sponsors and producers of the shows. However, what the preceding points actually indicate is that if the ratings system was indeed the basis for determining what programs remained on-air, it was actually the audience that dictated the content of the shows. The audience, by tuning in to particular programs that they wanted to watch, determined the trajectory of television development, which by extension suggests that the shows with high ratings were favored by the audience, and therefore by the sponsors because of the audience's support. Thus, contrary to the concepts found in Boorstin's argument, television not only reflected Americans' economic reality but also the beliefs of the viewers, where the

51. House of Representatives, *Broadcast Ratings*, 33.

52. House of Representatives, *Broadcast Ratings*, 66-69, 76-84.

53. House of Representatives, *Broadcast Ratings*, 182-191.

54. House of Representatives, *Broadcast Ratings*, 35, 182-191.

55. Miller, Coleman, Connolly, and Ryan, eds., *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, 179-180; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 16-24, 82-89, 162-177, 192-194, 222-228, 296-308.

audience saw programs that showed the content that they wanted to see, thereby reinforcing economic attitudes and concerns.

While network ratings undoubtedly contributed to the content of television broadcasts, there was also substantial concern over the effects that content had on the public. During 1951, the Ford Foundation wanted to develop television programs that would attain a higher quality of cultural content, which consisted of educational programs.⁵⁶ However, many believed that commercial broadcasting would impact television development more than educational broadcasts, showing a degree of divisiveness over the course of television development.⁵⁷ It was also during 1951 that *New York Times* writer Jack Gould thought that television had become increasingly influential to Americans and had “vast potentialities for shaping democracy’s future.”⁵⁸ As Gould indicated in late-1951, television had grown to the point where it financially surpassed even radio.⁵⁹ And religious leaders, like a representative of the Catholic Church, thought television programs were “fit for family audiences,” demonstrating how well-received the programs on television were at this time.⁶⁰ Yet Congress still intended to protect American audiences from any potentially problematic programs, which encouraged continued Congressional hearings to discuss television content.⁶¹ This discourse continued into 1953, as the effects of television on family life remained the subject of substantial debate.⁶²

56. Jack Gould, “Ford Foundation Planning Study to Raise Cultural Level of TV,” *New York Times*, June 13, 1951, microfilm.

57. Jack Gould, “Concern Is Voiced on Ford TV Step,” *New York Times*, June 14, 1951, microfilm.

58. Jack Gould, “Video Is Assayed in Cultural Value,” *New York Times*, June 30, 1951, microfilm.

59. Jack Gould, “The Honor Roll,” *New York Times*, December 30, 1951, microfilm.

60. “Respect for Home on TV Commended,” *New York Times*, January 14, 1952, microfilm.

61. Clayton Knowles, “‘Sins’ of Radio, Television Aired Before Congressmen,” *New York Times*, June 8, 1952, microfilm.

A year later, in late-1954, *New York Times* contributor Gilbert Seldes examined several fears about the ways that television could degrade American society in the early years of television, but that, at that time, television had undoubtedly become ingrained in the American cultural landscape and, perhaps even more importantly, increasingly influential to the American public.⁶³ Seldes explained that many questions about television remained, including whether it functioned for the public interest and the quality of programs available through it; however, Seldes contended that even though TV programs had become increasingly similar, audiences readily accepted the mediocre fare offered to them.⁶⁴ Gould followed up on the issue of quality television a year later in 1955, where he contended that the quality of television programs directly related to the financial input from sponsors.⁶⁵ As television programing became an increasingly competitive field, sponsors were leery of allocating too much money into any given program to enhance its quality, and therefore the quality of those programs stagnated.⁶⁶ Yet, because TV was still a new medium, Gould also reasoned that it would continue to evolve as a means of “survival” when competing against other forms of media.⁶⁷ So, as television continued to expand geographically, if we believe the assertions of the contemporary critics that television programs were akin to each other (and I believe we can), the geographic diffusion of television correlated with the homogenization of television programs. As a broader array of Americans gained access to television the programs became ever more comparable to each other. Gould

62. “Radio Panel Split on Home TV Value,” *New York Times*, January 1, 1953, microfilm.

63. Gilbert Seldes, “A Clinical Analysis of TV,” *New York Times*, November, 28, 1954, microfilm.

64. Seldes, “A Clinical Analysis of TV.”

65. Jack Gould, “Too Much Quality,” *New York Times*, March 6, 1955, microfilm.

66. Gould, “Too Much Quality.”

67. Jack Gould, “Some Reason For Optimism,” *New York Times*, April 24, 1955, microfilm.

readdressed this issue in 1956, where he explained that television had become indispensable to Americans.⁶⁸ But it was the success of television that made innovation both necessary and very challenging for program producers because they had already provided a plethora of programs that audiences readily had access to.⁶⁹ This encouraged viewers' increased selectivity towards television programs, forcing producers to innovate even further.⁷⁰ These critics offer valuable insight into the motivations of the public when viewing television. Since audiences dictated what they would watch, television programs continued to cater to their desires. And these were the desires of a broad market audience, one that represented the aggregate economic perceptions of Americans. The implications of this are straightforward: television programs showed audiences what they wanted to see and, by extension, what they believed in or agreed with. In effect, people wouldn't watch a show they didn't like. If they didn't like it, the show would receive poor ratings, and would be replaced. Thus, the shows on television directly reflected and influenced Americans' mentalities.

Aside from the critics' opinions of the quality of television programs, the diffusion process of television, while certainly quick, was not an easy process. Several issues continued to challenge the spread of television. One of the prominent ones was ensuring television access to all Americans. This was, in part, an issue of broadcasting technology, which the FCC considered addressing through the use of "community antennas, which operate in areas of poor or no regular TV reception," while telephone lines were also utilized to transmit television programs within cities.⁷¹ Between the costs of television equipment and the costs associated with television

68. Jack Gould, "Television Today—A Critic's Appraisal," *New York Times*, April 8, 1956, microfilm.

69. Gould, "Television Today—A Critic's Appraisal."

70. Gould, "Television Today—A Critic's Appraisal."

71. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 9, 33, 38.

programs, economic considerations hampered the television diffusion process in the 1950s.⁷² The FCC was particularly concerned with ensuring television access to Americans because of both the speed at which the industry expanded in a matter of a few years and the billions of dollars invested in television equipment to view those broadcasts.⁷³

While the technological and geographic issues were certainly factors that inhibited television's diffusion, the FCC determined that "economic difficulties" made television's expansion into smaller communities substantially more difficult.⁷⁴ Even with the lack of growth in television diffusion between 1955 and 1956, the FCC still intended to pursue television expansion efforts.⁷⁵ This trend continued into 1957, as the FCC attempted to encourage the development of broadcast stations in smaller communities by lowering the cost of station construction and operation, including reducing power requirements for the stations.⁷⁶ In 1958, the FCC continued to consider "'booster' and 'repeater' stations to further extend TV service to isolated places."⁷⁷ The FCC still believed that economic costs were the main impediment to television diffusion, combined with the discrepancy between UHF and VHF allocations.⁷⁸ By 1959, the FCC thought that the UHF-VHF channel allocation issue contributed even more to the difficulties in television diffusion.⁷⁹ This problem continued into 1960 as well.⁸⁰ The FCC

72. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 33.

73. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 94.

74. Federal Communications Commission, *21st Annual Report*, 94-95.

75. Federal Communications Commission, *22d Annual Report*, 94.

76. Federal Communications Commission, *23rd Annual Report*, 109.

77. Federal Communications Commission, *24th Annual Report*, 4.

78. Federal Communications Commission, *24th Annual Report*, 102.

79. Federal Communications Commission, *Silver Anniversary Report*, 53.

understood this as the result of an “almost complete saturation” of broadcast markets by VHF, which was ineffective at operating at a national level.⁸¹

Over the course of the 1950s and beyond, Americans continued to acquire more televisions and utilize them to a greater degree. A 1958 House of Representatives report indicated that in mid-1957, “the average television family had its set tuned in an average of [five] hours per day. Within a few short years television had significantly affected the leisure pattern of the average American home,” and become an integral feature within American society.⁸² Television retained its level of importance in the 1980s—if anything, it became even more influential as the medium matured. Yet even in the 1980s, television critics continued to analyze the effects that the medium had on the masses. Joshua Meyrowitz wrote in *Newsweek* in mid-1985 that TV had “the power to redefine our place and our social reality.”⁸³ At the time, “the average household [kept] a TV set on for 50 hours a week,” which Meyrowitz believed altered American community and family structures, making television the “new American neighborhood.”⁸⁴ Yet the television comedies I examined show that, at least in the case of economics, television reinforced Americans’ attitudes and correlated with real-world conditions. Three years later, in 1988, Harry Waters reviewed television after 50 years of use.⁸⁵ Waters argued that “TV has become What We Do,” and, like Meyrowitz before him, he cited the large

80. Federal Communications Commission, *26th Annual Report*, 43.

81. Federal Communications Commission, *26th Annual Report*, 43.

82. Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Network Broadcasting*, 36.

83. Joshua Meyrowitz, “The 19-Inch Neighborhood,” *Newsweek*, July 22, 1985, 8.

84. Meyrowitz, “The 19-Inch Neighborhood,” 8.

85. Harry F. Waters, “The Future of Television,” *Newsweek*, October 17, 1988, 84-86.

amount of time Americans allocated to television.⁸⁶ At the time, cable TV reached “more than half of all U.S. households,” and television showed no signs of diminishing in importance.⁸⁷ If anything, television continued to exert an overwhelming degree of influence on American culture, which Waters contended many American believed would adversely affect the sociocultural constructs of society, which could potentially homogenize Americans’ regional identities and even impair Americans’ ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality.⁸⁸ As Waters’ thoughts show, critics were certainly aware of the importance of television to Americans, even as it changed how Americans perceived the world. For the purposes of my study, this underlines how television content remained intimately tied to Americans’ beliefs.

While the cultural and social implications of television remained unclear, the geographic spread of TV didn’t. The FCC noted in their 1981 annual report that there were 522 commercial VHF stations and 244 commercial UHF stations.⁸⁹ Television by this point had effectively saturated the market, while the FCC continued to work towards utilizing low-power television stations to help serve the “large, unsatisfied demand for television service in both rural and urban areas.”⁹⁰ Simultaneously, the FCC also favored market competition as the principal means of ensuring “public interest goals” for television, effectively implementing deregulatory efforts that would minimize “unnecessary rules.”⁹¹ Aside from over-the-air broadcasts, cable television had become increasingly important by the 1980s, as the FCC remarked in their report, stating that

86. Waters, “The Future of Television,” 84.

87. Waters, “The Future of Television,” 85.

88. Waters, “The Future of Television,” 84.

89. Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report*, 24.

90. Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report*, 24-25, 29.

91. Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report*, 23.

cable TV served “more than 20 million subscribers in some 12,600 communities in the United States,” in both rural and metropolitan areas.⁹² The FCC was optimistic about cable television because of its versatility, and believed it successfully served the interests of its audiences.⁹³

Comparing Different Economic Periods in America

The process of television diffusion and the challenges to that process did not occur in a vacuum. Other larger geographic and economic developments occurred in conjunction with television diffusion. While television diffusion made the TV an integral medium for American sociocultural constructs, the geographic and economic factors of the 1950s and early 1960s, as well as the late-1970s and 1980s provided the foundational basis for the context of American mentalities relating to economics and the economy, and by extension the content they saw on television. Robert Gordon’s *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War* illustrated how, by the 1950s, the growth of suburban America, facilitated by technological improvements, automobiles, and an expanded consumer culture, became increasingly influential to the American social landscape.⁹⁴ Americans simply had the means, both economic and technological, to expand beyond the cities and into the suburbs, while also maintaining a vested interest in consumer culture.⁹⁵ Conveniences such as frozen foods, plastic items, synthetic fabrics, and household appliances like the refrigerator all contributed to this

92. Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report*, 35.

93. Federal Communications Commission, *47th Annual Report*, 35.

94. Robert J. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 332-333.

95. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 332-333.

consumer culture as the standard of living increased.⁹⁶ Supermarkets, shopping centers, and fast food became new outlets for consumption.⁹⁷ And consumer goods, such as clothes, became increasingly affordable.⁹⁸ Perhaps one of the most significant indicators of the consumer culture stemmed from the restructuring of housing during this time, as houses increased in size with more appliances available, features of the growing consumer middle class.⁹⁹ And within the third volume of *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, Carol Heim explained that “more than 15 million new housing units were started in 1950-1959, approximately twice as many as in 1940-1949.”¹⁰⁰ Suburban housing became increasingly important as the population grew, providing affordable housing options to many in the middle class, which were further aided by commuter options at the time ranging from automobiles to trains that facilitated access to metropolitan areas.¹⁰¹ Americans’ ability to utilize the highway systems beginning in the mid-1950s further augmented economic development and efficiency.¹⁰² Yet even with these signs of further development and advancement in the standard of living, Gordon argued that these advances slowed in the mid-twentieth century.¹⁰³ Americans, it seems, weren’t realizing the same degree of economic progress that was found prior to 1940.¹⁰⁴

96. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 332-341.

97. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 332-333, 341-345, 365-366.

98. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 347.

99. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 356-363.

100. Carol E. Heim, “Structural Changes: Regional and Urban” in Stanley L. Engerman and Robert E. Gallman, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, vol. 3 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 150.

101. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 363-368, 374-376.

102. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 389-391.

103. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 370-373.

104. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 370-373.

While there was undoubtedly a state of postwar affluence experienced throughout the nation, inflation also rose during the 1950s, combined with rising interest rates in 1957 coinciding with a slight economic contraction, though it was only a brief one.¹⁰⁵ However, economic growth slowed in the early-1960s, along with the rate of inflation.¹⁰⁶ Heim further elaborated that in the latter half of the twentieth century, the American population shifted and became more equitably distributed throughout the country.¹⁰⁷ This coincided with greater parity in wage and salary incomes.¹⁰⁸ By the 1970s and 1980s manufacturing jobs became increasingly depressed, with fewer employment opportunities, relatively lower wages, and increased economic inequality as a result.¹⁰⁹ Though earlier decades had rapid expansion in home building, by the 1970s suburban growth also slowed.¹¹⁰ Heim illustrated how in the 1980s banks were effectively in financial distress from a combination of real estate loan instability and other forms financial mismanagement.¹¹¹ Gordon's perspective neatly complements that of Heim, as he demonstrated that productivity between 1970 and the 1990s had effectively stagnated compared to the period from 1920-1970, as the benefits of technological advancement did not fully take effect until the 1990s.¹¹² Similarly, manufacturing, business growth, and consumer investments

105. Martin L. Primack and James F. Willis, *An Economic History of the United States* (Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin/Cummings Publishing Company, 1980), 418-419.

106. Primack and Willis, *An Economic History of the United States*, 426-427.

107. Heim, "Structural Changes," in Engerman and Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History*, 100.

108. Heim, "Structural Changes," in Engerman and Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History*, 103.

109. Heim, "Structural Changes," in Engerman and Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History*, 114-115, 132.

110. Heim, "Structural Changes," in Engerman and Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History*, 150, 152-153, 155-156.

111. Heim, "Structural Changes," in Engerman and Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History*, 175-176.

112. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 574-577.

languished during the 1980s.¹¹³ Nor did wages see any significant growth for the middle and lower classes, while education inequality grew and contributed to wage differentials.¹¹⁴

The diffusion process of television and concurrent geographic and economic developments provide the contextual framework for the significance of the television medium and the mindsets of Americans in two distinct periods of American economic and social history. By establishing how the 1950s and early-1960s differ from the late 1970s and 1980s, it possible to better understand how the economic content within television programs during these periods correlated with the economic conditions in the real world and the values Americans assigned to that economic content. Television comedies accurately reflected American's worldviews and their interpretations of reality. These views, in turn, represented an aggregate American economic consensus, one that was largely emblematic of middle class and urban attitudes and concerns. Consequently, the television medium portrayed economic content in ways that depicted the American public's perception of economic factors and the economy. And *The Goldbergs* offers one of the earliest examples of the relationship between television comedies, economic content, and American perceptions.

113. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 575-589.

114. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 613, 620-625.

CHAPTER III: *THE GOLDBERGS*

In the wake of World War II, Americans were not only optimistic about the economy, but about America itself—its people, its culture, and its values.¹ This was a time where many Americans transitioned into the growing middle class and adopted a national, American identity founded in the prosperity and affluence of the period.² The national American identity was firmly grounded in capitalist structures that promoted and enhanced both consumerism and material culture.³ Elements of economic prosperity even enabled substantial population growth.⁴ President Eisenhower's administration further ensured American economic growth by protecting against inflation, cutting taxes and government spending, and further encouraging American mobility and suburban expansion with highway development.⁵ In short, the government effectively adopted a supervisory stance instead of more blatant action, while the political structure in turn reinforced economic expansion.⁶ As a result, Americans embraced economic prosperity and consumer culture and many became middle class citizens.⁷ This led to the

1. Gary B. Nash, Julie Roy Jeffrey, John R. Howe, Peter J. Frederick, Allen F. Davis, and Allan M. Winkler, eds., *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*, 5th ed. (New York: Longman, 2001), 840; Edward L. Ayers, Lewis L. Gould, David M. Oshinsky, and Jean R. Soderlund, *American Passages: A History of the United States* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt College Publishers, 2000), 932-935.

2. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-844; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 893-894; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 932-935, 938-939; Brinkley, *American History*, 780.

3. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-844; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 893; Brinkley, *American History*, 786.

4. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840; Brinkley, *American History*, 780.

5. Nash et al., *The American People*, 847-849, 918; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 902-903, 905; Brinkley, *American History*, 786-788.

6. Nash et al., *The American People*, 918.

interrelationship of middle class values—particularly in regards to materialism and the suburban lifestyle—and economic concerns and considerations.⁸ And it was these Americans' views towards the economy and economic factors that television comedies like *The Goldbergs* depicted.

The Goldbergs, which ran on television from 1949 through 1956 after previously having a successful run on the radio that began in 1929, was one of the earliest television comedies.⁹ *The Goldbergs* involved the daily lives of a Jewish family living in the Bronx and, later, in a suburb named Haverville.¹⁰ The Goldberg family included the father, Jacob (Jake), who worked in the apparel business as a dressmaker; his wife, Molly, who took care of the house and their children, Sammy and Rosalie (Rosie).¹¹ Molly's uncle, David, also lived with them in their apartment.¹² Over the course of the show's run, viewers saw the everyday encounters, activities, and interactions of the Goldbergs with their neighbors, strangers, friends, and family. *The Goldbergs* was a timely show, airing on television during a time when American Jewish families were fully integrating into the middle class.¹³ Rather than emphasizing the Goldberg family's Jewish heritage, the show portrayed them instead as a middle class family, one that would have been comparable to other middle class families of the time. Subsequently, the plots and themes

7. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-844, 855; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 893, 912; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 938-939; Brinkley, *American History*, 786-788.

8. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-844.

9. *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD (Shout! Factory, 2010).

10. *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; See the following episodes for their particular depictions of the programs setting. *The Goldbergs*, "The New Landlord," aired September 5, 1949, on CBS, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Moving Day," aired September 22, 1955, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

11. *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

12. *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

13. Nash et al., *The American People*, 858.

found in *The Goldbergs* provide a window into the values and minds of the Goldbergs and, by extension, the viewers watching them.

As an ad in *Broadcasting* from late-1955 showed, *The Goldbergs* was “America’s most beloved family show.”¹⁴ Indeed, *The Goldbergs* had been well-reviewed in the preceding years. In 1949, at the time of its television premiere, *The Goldbergs* was positively reviewed because of the strength of its prior radio audience and because of how realistic and relatable Molly was as a character.¹⁵ However, *The Goldbergs* reliance on integrated ads detracted from the realism found in the show, which reflected what one reviewer perceived as potential weaknesses in the script for the show.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the show remained at a promising highpoint in the television program ratings.¹⁷ This included repeatedly placing in the top ten most watched programs in 1950.¹⁸ The show was so popular, indeed, that a review in *Life* suggested that it could even influence the format of other programs.¹⁹ The show’s humor and characters continued to receive positive reviews through 1950.²⁰ In 1952, even with a slight change in the format to 15 minute episodes (which previously had been about 30 minutes each), reviews remained strongly in favor of the show’s plot and characters.²¹ These reviews and critiques collectively show the strength of

14. Guild Films Company, Inc., “Build with Guild,” *Broadcasting*, May 23, 1955, 45, microfilm.

15. “The Goldbergs,” Television Reviews, *Variety*, January 19, 1949, 26, microfilm.

16. [Untitled review of *The Goldbergs*], Tele Follow-up Comment, *Variety*, March 30, 1949, 30, microfilm.

17. “The Goldbergs,” Television Reviews, *Variety*, September 7, 1949, 34, microfilm.

18. “Nielsen TV Ratings for New York,” *Broadcasting*, April 3, 1950, 60, microfilm; “TelePulse Reports Berle Tops for Six Months,” *Broadcasting*, October 23, 1950, 58, microfilm.

19. “The Goldbergs March On,” *Life*, April 25, 1949, 59-62, accessed June 20, 2018, EBSCOhost.

20. [Untitled review of *The Goldbergs*], Tele Followup Comment, *Variety*, March 8, 1950, 34, microfilm; “The Goldbergs,” Television Reviews, *Variety*, September 27, 1950, 30, microfilm.

21. “The Goldbergs,” Television Reviews, *Variety*, February 6, 1952, 35, microfilm.

The Goldbergs relationship with its audience. The show was popular; even more than that, it was relevant to its viewers in its exploration of plots that the audience found genuine. Of course, as my argument suggests, this was a natural progression for the show—it needed to reflect what viewers wanted to see, which was just another way of perceiving their own lives through the television medium.

By April of 1954, reviews became more tepid—one reviewer thought that the plotline was neither great nor particularly bad, it simply sufficed.²² However, with the Goldberg’s move to the suburb of Haverville, a different review explained that the show retained “its innate and unique warmth and humor,” and remained a sound program overall.²³ A *New York Times* review from September of 1955 thought that the change in locale would potentially benefit the program, after having its ratings decline over the years.²⁴ But a *Newsweek* article was even more pessimistic, contending that *The Goldbergs* had been “dead” since 1950.²⁵ However, that article failed to capture the significance the show retained amongst its viewers. *The Goldbergs* had maintained an incredibly long run across two mass culture mediums, and acted as an interface between the viewers and the characters within the show. As the preceding reviews suggest, the program was not only relatable and realistic, it was entertaining, and drew an audience to it that found the show worthwhile.

Since *The Goldbergs* was a relevant program for its audience, it inherently embedded the values and perceptions of that audience within its plots and themes, including how it portrayed economic factors. But one of the challenges associated with *The Goldbergs* is that many of the

22. “The Goldbergs,” Television Reviews, *Variety*, April 21, 1954, 39, 44, microfilm.

23. “The Goldbergs,” Television Reviews, *Variety*, September 28, 1955, 38, microfilm.

24. J. P. Shanley, “TV: ‘Goldbergs’ Move,” *New York Times*, September 23, 1955, microfilm.

25. “The Exits and the Ups and Downs of Top TV Shows in 7 Years,” *Newsweek*, July 8, 1957, 80-81.

episodes no longer exist in a recorded format; they simply weren't kept.²⁶ Only 71 episodes remain from the show's seven years on television.²⁷ Five episodes remain from 1949, one from 1950, one from 1951, two from 1952, one from 1953, 22 from 1954, 10 from 1955, and 29 from 1956. The fragmentary remains of the program posed a challenge in analyzing the economic trends found within it; however, such analysis was still possible and, more importantly, yielded substantial information that corroborated the correlation between audience's perception of economic factors and the show itself, as well as the real-world conditions that contributed to viewers' perceptions in the first place. Examining the trends associated with the eleven forms of economic criteria demonstrate this.

The foremost factor to consider within *The Goldbergs* was its incorporation of advertising directly into the programs' narrative. From 1949 through 1954, every episode contained at least two or more instances of integrated advertising for companies and products such as Sanka, the Vitamin Corporation of America, RCA, and Ekco Flint Knives.²⁸ The character of Molly Goldberg facilitated much of the advertising, directly addressing the audience in regards to the advertised products, elaborating on aspects of affordability, usefulness, quality, and the like.²⁹ But after 1954, integrated advertising sharply declined and became almost

26. "'The Goldbergs' Broadcast & Preservation," *The Ultimate Goldbergs* pamphlet, 10-11, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

27. *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

28. See Appendix A, Table A2; *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; See the following episodes for particular examples of the different types of integrated ads found in *The Goldbergs*. *The Goldbergs*, "1949-08-29," aired August 29, 1949, on CBS, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "The New Landlord," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1952-02-13," aired February 13, 1952, on NBC, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1952-08-18," aired August 18, 1952, on NBC, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1953-08-07," aired August 7, 1953, on NBC, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-05-04," aired May 4, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-05-25," aired May 25, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

nonexistent.³⁰ This change likely resulted from an adjustment in the structure of the program itself, but nevertheless shows the consumer culture that existed in America at the time. Viewers were given a sales pitch for a variety of products directly in the show. In essence, the show worked towards further ingraining the consumer mindset amongst its viewers. *The Goldbergs* approach towards consumption further illustrates this.

Consumption within *The Goldbergs* must be considered in aggregate because of the limited number of remaining episodes from 1950 through 1953. In 1949 and 1956, there was a greater frequency of negative perspectives towards consumption than positive ones, while in 1954 and 1955, positive portrayals outweighed negative ones.³¹ The divergent perspectives over the years suggest that there were competing values towards consumption, which was illustrated by the varying views of the characters within the program. Foremost, consumption perspectives were generally situational – the context of a given episode and the characters involved determined how consumption was portrayed. For example, when Jake considered buying Molly a belated engagement ring—a purchase he viewed as a form of an investment—this was shown as a positive form of consumption.³² Differing character perspectives added a layer of complexity to contrasting views of consumption, leaving the viewing audience to decide which perspective they agreed with. This was the case when David, Jake, and a friend of theirs, Pincus, all took

29. *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; The following episodes provide select examples of the types of advertising found in the integrated ads. *The Goldbergs*, “1949-08-29,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1949-09-12,” aired September 12, 1949, on CBS, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1949-09-26,” aired September 26, 1949, on CBS, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1952-02-13,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1954-05-04,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1954-05-11,” aired May 11, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1954-05-25,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

30. The only integrated ad after 1954 was found in the episode titled “Desperate Men” for Old Dutch Coffee. *The Goldbergs*, “Desperate Men,” aired November 3, 1955, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

31. See Appendix A, Table A3.

32. *The Goldbergs*, “1954-06-08,” aired June 8, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

investment advice from a charlatan who claimed he was rich.³³ Molly was unhappy with the ventures, reflecting a negative view towards their investments (which were a form of consumption).³⁴ However, from the men's perspective, this was a positive consumption choice that actually paid off, since the investments worked out.³⁵ So the viewer, upon seeing the competing rationales towards consumption, would be able to relate to the complexities associated with consumption decisions. Another such example involved planning for Sammy's wedding to his fiancée, Dora.³⁶ Sammy and Dora didn't want to spend an excessive amount of money on the wedding, illustrating a negative view towards consumption, a view shared by Jake, Rosie, and Dora's father.³⁷ However, Molly and Dora's mother wanted an extravagant (and expensive) wedding, which positively portrayed consumption.³⁸ Once again, different perspectives from the characters illustrated the complex processes tied to consumer mentalities, thereby reflecting the challenges encountered by the viewing audience in the real world.

Even though many of portrayals of consumption fundamentally rested on the individual characters' perspectives, other examples were shown in more absolute terms. The Goldbergs' vacation to a Catskills resort, for example, was depicted as a positive form of consumption.³⁹ Likewise, Molly's concern about the cost of a long-distance call while on vacation offered a

33. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," aired August 3, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

34. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

35. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

36. *The Goldbergs*, "Molly's Wedding Plans," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

37. *The Goldbergs*, "Molly's Wedding Plans," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

38. *The Goldbergs*, "Molly's Wedding Plans," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

39. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-06-29," aired June 29, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

negative view towards consumption.⁴⁰ There are a plethora of other similar examples. Positive views of consumption included: David speaking positively about his son's expansive home; Molly participating in a game show and contemplating how she could spend the money; David purchasing a pool table at an auction; and Sammy and Dora's plans on purchasing furniture and appliances using an installment plan.⁴¹ Other negative perspectives towards consumption included: Molly chastising a girl for crying on a long-distance phone call because of how expensive the call was; Jake and Molly having to spend money to fix their car; and David's concern about the cost of trying to expedite their move to Haverville, a transition that the family was looking forward to.⁴²

In the preceding cases, *The Goldbergs* offered clear-cut depictions of consumerism in very specific, narrowly constrained perspectives, ones in which the audience would have been able to relate to, as the earlier reviews of the show indicated. This was the case even when there were competing views towards consumption, such as when Jake, Molly, and David purchased coupon books for a variety of goods and services.⁴³ In this example, the coupon books enabled further consumption from the family members, which was portrayed positively.⁴⁴ Jake, however, was upset by all of the expenses (even though he participated in them), which offered a negative perspective towards consumption. By the end of the episode, though, Jake had resumed his

40. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-07-13," aired July 13, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

41. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-09-07," aired September 7, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Reach for the Moon," aired December 15, 1955, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Bad Companions," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "In-Laws," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

42. *The Goldbergs*, "Moving Day," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Inheritance," aired February 23, 1956, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "The Car," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

43. *The Goldbergs*, "Treasury Book," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

44. *The Goldbergs*, "Treasury Book," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

consumer habits, thereby offering a predominantly positive view towards consumption throughout the episode, even with minute moments of negative perspectives.⁴⁵ What this demonstrates is that even though *The Goldbergs* offered both direct and competing views towards consumption, the portrayals fundamentally fell along a spectrum of thought, ranging from positive to negative. By encompassing a range of perspectives on consumption, the show addressed the complexities of consumption and made the portrayals of it even more relatable to the audience.

Aside from the positive and negative consumption perspectives found in *The Goldbergs*, consumption was a factor that was passively present through many of the episodes in 1949 and 1953 through 1956.⁴⁶ What this suggests is that consumption habits had effectively become a normalized component in both the shows and reality. When Molly gave gifts to her neighbors, or when Molly and Jake went to lunch with one of Jake's employees, or the various times that members of the Goldberg family went to the theater or other similar events—all of these represented passive (neutral) portrayals of consumption.⁴⁷ Other examples included comments regarding the cost of goods and services, as well as the mention or depiction of goods and services in which consumption was implicitly involved, such as Molly taking an art class, extending their vacation stay, or Molly discussing the down payment on the family's new house.⁴⁸ Consumer culture and consumption did not always require excessive discussion—it had

45. *The Goldbergs*, "Treasury Book," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

46. See Appendix A, Table A3.

47. *The Goldbergs*, "1949-08-29," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1949-09-26," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1953-08-07," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-05-04," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

simply become the norm. That is not to say that the characters in *The Goldbergs* didn't have opinions about consumption; they did, as the preceding evidence indicates. But consumption was also just a part of everyday life and didn't necessarily require further exposition.

While consumption was clearly an integral component of economic content in *The Goldbergs*, so too was thrift. Like consumption, there were competing views towards thrift, but the general trend was positive.⁴⁹ *The Goldbergs* addressed thrift in a variety of ways, similar to how consumption had multiple scales of complexity. And once again, this depended upon the varying characters' perspectives. For example, Jake demonstrated a positive portrayal of thrift by trying to expand his network of business relations with another businessman, and thereby advance his own business position.⁵⁰ Similarly, considering the earlier example of consumption when Jake, David, and Pincus took investment advice from a man pretending to affluence, their decisions also reflected thrift.⁵¹ Each of the men tried to make savvy investment decisions to expand their wealth in a manner each perceived as a positive, thrifty choice.⁵² Conversely, another Goldberg family member, Simon, an affluent businessman, reflected a negative position on thrift when he derided Jake, who had been having a difficult time due to a lack of work, for having what Simon considered lackluster business skills.⁵³ In this case, Jake thought Simon was cheap and taking advantage of his family, who had previously given him loans; however, Simon

48. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-06-01," aired June 1, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Moving Day," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

49. See Appendix A, Table A4.

50. *The Goldbergs*, "1949-08-29," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

51. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

52. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

53. *The Goldbergs*, "1949-09-12," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

contended that he was a “self-made man.”⁵⁴ Consequently, Jake (and by extension the viewers) are meant to interpret Simon’s position as a negative form of thrift.⁵⁵

While there were several other instances reflecting both positive and negative portrayals of thrift, many of these positions were tied to the issue of consumption. In the episode where Molly was on a game show, she considered the various ways she could spend her winning; however, towards the end of the game, after having accrued \$10,000 in potential earnings, her family wanted her to take the money, reflecting a positive perspective of thrift.⁵⁶ Molly didn’t listen, and ultimately lost the money, winning only the consolation prize of a mink coat.⁵⁷ But with that mink coat, Molly demonstrated a positive form of thrift by selling it for five thousand dollars so that she could loan another person the money (with interest).⁵⁸ So in this case, Molly’s consideration of consumption was conflated with thrift. In effect, the issues weren’t mutually exclusive, adding further complexity to the program’s portrayal of economic content, which was further indicative of the economic realities of the real world, where economic considerations aren’t always straightforward. Jake, David, and Molly’s purchase of coupon books, while undoubtedly tied to the issue of consumption, further reflected how thrift related to other economic factors.⁵⁹ Jake, David, and Molly were all trying to be thrifty in their purchase of the coupon book.⁶⁰ Much as Steigerwald suggested when it came to understanding thrift in the real

54. *The Goldbergs*, “1949-09-12,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

55. *The Goldbergs*, “1949-09-12,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

56. *The Goldbergs*, “Reach for the Moon,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

57. *The Goldbergs*, “Reach for the Moon,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

58. *The Goldbergs*, “Reach for the Moon,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

59. *The Goldbergs*, “Treasury Book,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

60. *The Goldbergs*, “Treasury Book,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

world, the Goldbergs' actions demonstrated the way in which thrift augmented consumer habits.⁶¹

But there were also competing portrayals of thrift, as was the case when the Goldbergs were preparing to move to Haverville.⁶² In this instance, Molly wanted initially to move their furniture into the new house, reflecting a positive form of thrift; however, Rosie considered that furniture “junk,” offering a sharp, negative counterpoint to Molly’s position.⁶³ Once again, the audience was left to decide which position they supported. But there were other positive perspectives on thrift within the same episode, including how Molly was willing to sell much of her furniture in order to raise money to expedite their move to get money for the down payment on the house, all of which reflected a positive position on thrift.⁶⁴ Similarly, Sammy and Dora’s idea to purchase a washing machine using an installment plan reflected a positive view towards thrift, just as their decision to have a modest wedding did as well in order to minimize cost, a factor Jake and Dora’s father found “sensible.”⁶⁵ So while there were competing depictions of thrift, the positive perspectives far outweighed the negative.

Also like the passive portrayals of consumption, the show addressed thrift in a similar vein. Indeed, there were several episodes that depicted thrift neutrally, as just another component in the economic scene within *The Goldbergs*. This included Jake’s efforts at business networking, discussions of money when it came to financing the purchase of their new home in

61. *The Goldbergs*, “Treasury Book,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

62. *The Goldbergs*, “Moving Day,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

63. *The Goldbergs*, “Moving Day,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

64. *The Goldbergs*, “Moving Day,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

65. *The Goldbergs*, “In-Laws,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Molly’s Wedding Plans,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

an economical way, and deciding who would pay for expenses in ways that illustrated thriftiness.⁶⁶ Like consumption, these depictions of thrift illustrate how it was integrated directly into daily life for the Goldberg family, which in turn suggests a correlation to its audience. The audience too would have observed, both passively and actively, the characteristics of thrift in the real world. So in functioning as a relatable show, *The Goldbergs* reflected the economic realities of its viewers. Portrayals of employment, though, were both indicative of audience views and divergent from the larger economic realities of postwar affluence found in America at the time.

In the case of content pertaining to employment, *The Goldbergs* had a more negative trend than a positive one, though this briefly changed in 1955.⁶⁷ While there were neutral portrayals of employment, such as discussions of employment without any positive or negative connotations, the majority of the content reflected either a positive or, as was generally the case, a negative position.⁶⁸ Examples of positive portrayals of employment included Jake being included in a “Who’s Who” book for his work, Jake transitioning his business towards wedding dress production with the family’s move to Haverville, and Rosie getting a job babysitting and tutoring.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Jake’s difficulties at work, Simon’s pessimism towards his own business’s condition, and the challenges Dora’s father faced with his business all offered

66. *The Goldbergs*, “1949-08-29,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Moving Day,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Molly’s Wedding Plans,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

67. See Appendix A, Table A5.

68. *The Goldbergs*, “1954-06-29,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Seymour’s Story,” aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Rosie the Actress,” aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

69. *The Goldbergs*, “1954-09-28,” aired September 28, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Moving Day,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Rosie’s Nose,” aired October 27, 1955, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

negative perspectives on employment.⁷⁰ In these cases, *The Goldbergs* illustrated both ends of the spectrum on employment; however, other content fell in between these extremes.

While there were clearly defined positions regarding employment, there were also, much like consumption and thrift, competing characters' perspectives on the issue. This was noticeable when Jake was having business problems with his partner, Mendel (a negative portrayal of employment) and instead considered making a transition to the hotel business (a positive portrayal of employment).⁷¹ But Molly believed that the hotel business was financially risky, not just for him but also for their family, offering a negative perspective on employment.⁷² Similarly, when Sammy began looking for jobs, his experience reflected a positive portrayal of employment, particularly when he was offered a job at a "New York engineering firm."⁷³ However, after Sammy and Dora realized the influence that her parents tried to exert on the situation, Sammy didn't take the job, showing a negative perspective on employment.⁷⁴ What these views indicate is that the characters within the program dealt with a variety of employment-related issues and topics, just as people did in reality. But even more than that, the types of issues that the preceding evidence depicts evinces how Americans had the ability during the 1950s to view employment. They had opportunity in the period of postwar affluence and increased economic growth to consider employment as more than a requisite means of financial stability and instead to look at a wider variety of factors, such as location, job satisfaction, and

70. *The Goldbergs*, "1949-09-12," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-06-22," aired June 22, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Molly's Wedding Plans," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

71. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-06-29," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

72. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-06-29," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

73. *The Goldbergs*, "In-Laws," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

74. *The Goldbergs*, "In-Laws," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

job benefits. Thus, *The Goldbergs* once again demonstrated how it reflected Americans' mentalities towards economic conditions and how those mentalities were themselves a product of the economic realities of the time.

While factors of consumption, thrift, and employment comprised the principal forms of economic content within *The Goldbergs*, the show also touched briefly on factors of bills, taxes, and necessary expenses. When addressed, bills were predominantly portrayed negatively, as was the case when Jake and Molly mentioned the cost of long-distance phone calls.⁷⁵ Yet bills remained a part of everyday life within the program, and were shown neutrally when Pincus, the proprietor of a Catskills hotel, received several of them.⁷⁶ As the preceding examples indicate, the characters in the show (and the viewing audience in America) may not have liked bills, but they accepted them. Taxes, too, were treated neutrally, such as when Molly sold her mink coat after playing on a game show, and she realized the government would collect \$1,000 in income tax from the sale.⁷⁷ Necessary expenses were also presented neutrally, showing how this was just a part of everyday life, including Sammy returning with the groceries or Molly shopping for everyday goods.⁷⁸ Overall, these factors contributed towards a more comprehensive understanding of the economic criteria that impacted the characters in the show and viewers in America during this time. As a result, these economic concerns made *The Goldbergs* all the more realistic.

75. See Appendix A, Table A6; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-07-13," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "1954-10-12," aired October 12, 1954, on Dumont, in *the Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

76. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

77. See Appendix A, Table A7; *The Goldbergs*, "Reach for the Moon," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

78. See Appendix A, Table A8; *The Goldbergs*, "1949-08-29," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Treasury Book," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

Financial planning and financial status were other forms of economic criteria that *The Goldbergs* addressed. In the case of financial planning, the portrayals were overwhelmingly positive.⁷⁹ Positive perspectives on financial planning included when Jake and Dora's parents wanted Sammy to plan for his future, Rosie's efforts towards financial independence from having her jobs and planning for a career, and another Goldberg relative, Harold, planning on becoming a dentist.⁸⁰ And when a negative perspective on financial planning arose, as it did when Harold found out he was receiving an inheritance amounting only to "ten dollars a week" (showing poor financial planning on the part of the deceased party), the positive perspective far outweighed the negative, as he intended to continue with his career plan, regardless of the amount of his inheritance.⁸¹ Financial planning was even noticeable passively, as was the case when Rosie had three dates, each of whom was working towards different career paths and her family wanted her to pick the one they felt was the most promising.⁸²

While financial planning had far more definitive perspectives shown within *The Goldbergs*, financial status was somewhat more split because it involved both the self-perception of the characters' own positions and their views towards others.⁸³ The man pretending he was wealthy that the Goldbergs met on their vacation in the Catskills reflected both perspectives to the audience, who initially was meant to see him in a positive financial position, only to have that façade crumble as it became clear that he wasn't truly wealthy, ending the episode with a

79. See Appendix A, Table A9.

80. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-05-11," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Rosie's Nose," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Rosie the Actress," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, "Inheritance," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

81. *The Goldbergs*, "Inheritance," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

82. *The Goldbergs*, "Boy Friend," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

83. See Appendix A, Table A10.

negative perspective towards his financial status.⁸⁴ In a similar case, Harold's (ultimately misguided) anticipation that he would receive a substantial inheritance that would enhance his position positively showed financial status attributed to prospective wealth; however, there was also a negative perspective tied to this, when Harold met a girl that Molly thought was simply interested in him for the money.⁸⁵ And in a different scenario, when Simon leant the Goldbergs his maid and butler, he was shown to have had a positive financial position because he had the maid and butler.⁸⁶ But Jake's bookkeeper indicated that Jake having the maid and butler led his employees to perceive that Jake had somehow attained a greater degree of affluence, and they would expect compensation, all of which indicated the negative financial status that the Goldbergs actually had in comparison to Simon.⁸⁷ These positions once again demonstrate the inherent complexity found in television comedies when dealing with financial status. Just as in the real world, these characters' perceptions of economic criteria informed their worldview and, perhaps more importantly, reflected the views of the audience at the time.

Along with the personal views towards economics, *The Goldbergs* also addressed the external concerns associated with charitableness. Charitableness was primarily portrayed positively.⁸⁸ Molly's effort to help a struggling dentist by providing him clientele, her consistent consideration for others financially, and Jake's willingness to help Dora's parents pay for Sammy and Dora's wedding were all positive portrayals of charitableness.⁸⁹ Charitableness was

84. *The Goldbergs*, "1954-08-03," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

85. *The Goldbergs*, "Inheritance," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

86. *The Goldbergs*, "Simon's Maid and Butler," aired 1956 season, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

87. *The Goldbergs*, "Simon's Maid and Butler," in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

88. See Appendix A, Table A11.

also just a way of everyday life in *The Goldbergs*, with multiple cases of passively showing charitableness, including the Goldbergs giving an acquaintance money for cab fare or Simon offering his Florida home for the Goldbergs to use.⁹⁰ But there were also negative portrayals of charitableness. This included Simon initially being charitable in a positive manner by giving his secretary a raise and providing money to help his other family members, only to later change his mind, thereby reflecting a negative view towards charitableness.⁹¹ Similarly, the Goldbergs' relative Muttel giving them a washing machine was a positive case of charitableness, which continued when David allowed their neighbors to use the machine.⁹² Jake, however, was upset that the neighbors were using the machine and wanted to get rid of it, showing a negative view towards charitableness.⁹³ These conditions suggest that viewers in the real world would have been of a similar mind – charitable when possible (and positive about it), barring other externalities. As such, charitableness, and the other preceding economic factors did not occur in a vacuum but were part of a larger economic process. And macroeconomic conditions are the next factor to consider.

The Goldbergs, for all of the other ways that economic content wove throughout the themes and plots within the show, did not address macroeconomic conditions.⁹⁴ It was not a critical concern. Instead, as the preceding examples illustrated, the show focused on the domestic

89. *The Goldbergs*, “1954-06-08,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Reach for the Moon,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “Molly’s Wedding Plans,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

90. *The Goldbergs*, “1949-08-29,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD; *The Goldbergs*, “1952-02-13,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

91. *The Goldbergs*, “1949-09-12,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

92. *The Goldbergs*, “1954-09-14,” aired September 14, 1954, on Dumont, in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

93. *The Goldbergs*, “1954-09-14,” in *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD.

94. See Appendix A, Table A12.

life of the Goldberg family. So instead, the preceding factors of consumption, thrift, and other economic content were at the microeconomic level, amongst family, friends, and neighbors.

Again, *The Goldbergs*' audience would have likely found this fundamentally relatable. While larger economic conditions undoubtedly mattered, most families would have been concerned foremost with their immediate well-being. Indeed, the vitality and overall affluence of the 1950s made that possible, with bountiful economic conditions so people wouldn't have to worry about macroeconomics and could instead focus on the microeconomic spheres.

The Goldbergs portrayals of the preceding forms of economic content correlated with real-world economic conditions. Even more than that, the show reflected the audience's views in a variety of ways. As the evidence indicated, audiences found the show relatable, a factor that undoubtedly included the economic content within it. What's more, since the audience related to the economic content, it further suggests that *The Goldbergs* not only reflected how people perceived of the real-world economic conditions but also accurately integrated those conditions into the program. This was a trend that continued in other television comedies, including *I Love Lucy*.

CHAPTER IV:

I LOVE LUCY

With the expansion of the television industry over the course of the 1950s, the television comedy genre also continued to develop. This included *I Love Lucy*, a sitcom that centered on Lucy and Ricky Ricardo and their everyday lives in New York and, later, a suburban location in Connecticut.¹ Ricky worked as an entertainer at a nightclub—principally by singing—and later expanded his career to include acting.² Lucy, on the other hand, was a stay-at-home wife and, later, a mother, who occasionally acquired jobs both in and out of the house, though the jobs never lasted long.³ Along with the Ricardos, their neighbors and landlords, Fred and Ethel Mertz,

1. This study also includes *The Lucille Ball – Desi Arnaz Show*, also known as *The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour*, within the analysis of *I Love Lucy*. “Production Notes,” Bonus Material, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD (Paramount, 2015); *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; The following episodes provide select examples of the program’s characters and locales. *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy Wants to Move to the Country,” aired January 28, 1957, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy Misses the Mertzes,” aired February 11, 1957, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy’s Night in Town,” aired March 25, 1957, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, “The Ricardos Go to Japan,” aired November 27, 1959, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

2. *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; The following episodes provide select examples of Ricky’s employment. *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy Thinks Ricky Is Trying to Murder Her,” aired November 5, 1951, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “The Séance,” aired November 26, 1951, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Drafted,” aired December 24, 1951, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Cuban Pals,” aired April 21, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “The Publicity Agent,” aired May 12, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Ricky’s Hawaiian Vacation,” aired March 15, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Ricky’s Screen Test,” aired November 15, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Ricky’s Contract,” aired December 6, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Face to Face,” aired November 14, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Ricky’s European Booking,” aired December 12, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, “The Ricardos Go to Japan,” in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

3. *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; The following episodes provide particular examples of Lucy’s employment (or lack thereof). *I Love Lucy*, “The Amateur Hour,” aired January 14, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Job Switching,” aired September 15, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy Is Enceinte,” aired December 8, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy Goes to the Hospital,” aired January 19, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, “Lucy Is Envious,” aired March 29, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, “Lucy Wants a Career,” aired April 13, 1959, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

were mainstays on the show, engaging with the Ricardos in their daily lives.⁴ *I Love Lucy* began in 1951 and ran through the 1950s, with a slight change in format as it transitioned into *The Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show* beginning in 1957.⁵ *I Love Lucy* aired on television during the same period of economic prosperity as *The Goldbergs*. As a result, the same American social, cultural, and economic factors (such as suburban expansion, economic growth, a growing middle class, and a strongly capitalist society) informed audiences' worldviews. But during the 1950s, Americans also experienced a change in employment structures, as the men in the postwar period returned to work, while women were largely relegated back to the household sphere.⁶ However, many women still wanted to work, and these women made attempts to stay in the labor force, while others slowly joined it in the late-1950s and the 1960s.⁷ Subsequently, there were sometimes gendered overtones involving economic factors like consumption, thrift, and employment—factors that *I Love Lucy* directly depicted. Consequently, these larger social and gender discussions were also apparent in the program; however, for the purposes of this study, only economic content is analyzed. And over the ten years that the series aired, this television comedy reflected the audience's perception and perspectives on a variety of economic content.

Like *The Goldbergs*, *I Love Lucy* was another popular show of the 1950s. When *I Love Lucy* began in 1951, one reviewer thought the show was relatable, though the comedic approach sometimes went beyond the bounds of realism.⁸ Yet even though this critic was somewhat

4. *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

5. *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

6. Nash et al., *The American People*, 858-859; Brinkley, *American History*, 766.

7. Nash et al., *The American People*, 844-845, 858, 862; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 917; Joanne Meyerowitz, "Rewriting Postwar Women's History, 1945-1960," in Nancy A. Hewitt, ed., *A Companion to American Women's History* (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 382; Brinkley, *American History*, 766.

pessimistic about the way that *I Love Lucy* handled comedy, audiences related to it and supported it, which made the show one of the highest rated programs at the time.⁹ In its first season, another reviewer thought the show was so good it could influence the course of television content by further promoting sitcom-style programs.¹⁰ Indeed, in fall of 1952, *I Love Lucy* attracted over 30 million weekly viewers.¹¹ The realism of the show continued to attract audiences through 1953, enabling *I Love Lucy* to remain as one of the most watched shows, just as in the previous years.¹² However, as one review indicated in early-1954, the reliance on slapstick comedy detracted from the realism of the show, which seems to have led to a decline in viewership.¹³ But not all reviewers agreed and instead contended that the show kept a remarkable degree of plausibility.¹⁴ Yet even with a slight shift in ratings, *I Love Lucy* remained among the top ten highest rated programs in 1954 and 1955, while continuing to garner positive reviews.¹⁵ The overall positive reception of the show—and its ability to relate to audiences—continued

8. Val Adams, "Television in Review," *New York Times*, October 21, 1951, microfilm.

9. Jack Gould, "Radio and Television," *New York Times*, September 17, 1952, microfilm; "I Love Lucy," Telepix Reviews, *Variety*, September 17, 1952, microfilm.

10. "I Love Lucy," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 17, 1951, 31, microfilm.

11. Florence Crowther, "About 'I Love Lucy,'" *New York Times*, September 28, 1952, microfilm.

12. Jack Gould, "Radio and Television," *New York Times*, January 16, 1953, microfilm; "They Love Lucy, \$8,000,000 Worth," *New York Times*, February 19, 1953, microfilm; Jack Gould, "Why Millions Love Lucy," *New York Times*, March 1, 1953, microfilm; "ARB Notes 'Lucy' Record in 10 Months of Ratings," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, May 4, 1953, 69, microfilm; "Ford, 'Lucy' Top Nielsen TV for Two Weeks Ending June 27," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, July 27, 1953, 46, microfilm; "'Lucy' Leads Videodex for June 26-July 2 Week," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, August 3, 1953, 42, microfilm; "ARB, Nielsen, Videodex Make It Unanimous for 'Lucy,'" *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, December 7, 1953, 44, microfilm; Mitchell Camera Corporation, "To Film a Successful Show..." *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, May 24, 1954, 36, microfilm; "I Love Lucy," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 7, 1953, 47, microfilm.

13. Jack Gould, "Television in Review," *New York Times*, March 31, 1954, microfilm.

14. "I Love Lucy," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 6, 1954, 32, microfilm.

15. "ARB Rates 'Lucy At Top With 56.8,'" *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, July 12, 1954, 36, microfilm; "Latest Ratings," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, December 27, 1954, 54, microfilm; "Latest Ratings," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, July 4, 1955, 32, microfilm; "The Air Around Us," *Newsweek*, October 24, 1955, 92; "I Love Lucy," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 5, 1955, 29, microfilm.

through 1957.¹⁶ What this shows is that audiences wanted to watch what they could relate to, which by extension was inherently tied to their perceptions of reality.

When *I Love Lucy* transitioned into *The Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show*, though, reviews became increasingly mixed, as some found the show enjoyable, while others thought the comedy and plot were less successful.¹⁷ Even though the program was not the same as it once was the trend over the course of *I Love Lucy* was positive. As such, the viewing audience watched the show because they enjoyed it and related to it. This in turn meant that the audience saw what they wanted to see, based on their individual perceptions of reality. And of course, this included a variety of perspectives towards economic factors.

The foremost economic factor to consider is integrated ads. Since the 1950s ushered in a consumerist society, integrated ads indicate the degree to which the television medium reflected consumer culture. In the case of *I Love Lucy*, integrated ads were present every year the show aired.¹⁸ Almost every episode of the show contained at least one integrated ad, for a variety of companies, including Philip Morris, General Foods, Procter & Gamble, Ford, and Westinghouse.¹⁹ Clearly *I Love Lucy*'s incorporation of integrated ads promoted consumer culture to its audience and, perhaps more importantly, the audience accepted them, as the ratings

16. "I Love Lucy," Tele Follow-Up Comment, *Variety*, February 22, 1956, 28, microfilm; "I Love Lucy," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 3, 1956, 52, microfilm; John Sharnik, "Is Lucy Still Loveable?" *House & Garden*, May 1957, 32, 41.

17. "Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show," Television Reviews, *Variety*, November 13, 1957, 37, microfilm; "Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show," Tele Follow-Up Comment, *Variety*, December 11, 1957, 36, microfilm; "Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show," Tele Follow-Up Comment, *Variety*, February 5, 1958, 36, microfilm; "Lucy & Desi," Tele Follow-Up Comment, *Variety*, April 16, 1958, 33, microfilm; "Lucy & Desi," Tele Follow-Up Comment, *Variety*, April 15, 1959, 121, microfilm; "Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show," Television Reviews, *Variety*, September 30, 1959, 26, microfilm; "Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show," TV Followup Comment, *Variety*, December 2, 1959, 48, microfilm; "Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show," Television Reviews, *Variety*, April 6, 1960, 60, microfilm.

18. See Appendix B, Table B2.

19. *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD. See the following for more information on integrated ads in *The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour*. "Original Broadcasts" in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

indicate. Consumer culture was a component of the show, one which encompassed other economic factors, including consumption and thrift.

Over the course of the series' run, there was generally a greater amount of positive portrayals of consumption than negative ones, with the sole exceptions found in 1955 and 1959 where there were equal amounts of positive and negative depictions, as well as 1957, in which there were slightly more negative portrayals than positive ones.²⁰ Likewise, thrift was predominantly portrayed more positively than negatively, with equal amounts positive and negative portrayals only in 1955 and 1959.²¹ Within *I Love Lucy*, while consumption and thrift were each independent economic factors, both relied heavily on individual characters' perspectives, which contributed to competing views towards consumption and thrift. Generally, Lucy and Ethel supported consumption and disliked thrift, while Ricky and Fred supported thrift and disliked consumption. This was the case when Lucy and Ethel went shopping (and they expressed a positive view towards it).²² In the circumstances where Lucy, Ethel or both of them went shopping or had otherwise spent money, Fred, Ricky, or the two of them were concerned about the expenses (a negative view towards consumption).²³ Similarly, when Lucy or Ethel

20. See Appendix B, Table B3.

21. See Appendix B, Table B4.

22. *I Love Lucy*, "Drafted," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Amateur Hour," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Wants New Furniture," aired June 1, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Go into Business," aired October 12, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Getting Ready," aired December 13, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Fashion Show," aired February 28, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets Chummy With the Neighbors," aired February 18, 1957, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Goes to Mexico," aired October 6, 1958, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

23. *I Love Lucy*, "Drafted," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Amateur Hour," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Job Switching," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Sales Resistance," aired January 26, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Wants New Furniture," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Go into Business," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Getting Ready," in *I Love Lucy: The*

made a request that would require consumption (i.e. financial expenditures) the men would usually disagree and complain about the expense and want to save their money (a negative view towards consumption and a positive one towards thrift), as was the case when Lucy and Ethel wanted electric dishwashers, or when Lucy wanted Ricky and her to move to a slightly larger apartment, and other similar situations.²⁴ On the other hand, Lucy and Ethel also made jokes and comments about how cheap Ricky and Fred were (expressing negative views towards thrift).²⁵ In these cases, there were clearly delineated views towards consumption and thrift.

While the preceding character perspectives illustrated in broad terms how the principal characters perceived of consumption and thrift, situational context was also important in determining how *I Love Lucy* depicted these economic factors. For example, when Lucy, Ethel, or both of them went shopping, the women's position was positive towards consumption, but more than that, the women would in certain cases shop for items that were on sale (such as clothes or other goods), expressing a positive position towards thrift.²⁶ Alternatively, Lucy and Ethel also positively embraced thrift as a means to support their purchasing habits and mitigate against negative responses from the men, such as when Lucy bought a kitchen appliance (that

Complete Series, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Fashion Show," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets Chummy With the Neighbors," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Goes to Mexico," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

24. *I Love Lucy*, "Pioneer Women," aired March 31, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Ricardos Change Apartments," aired May 18, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Wants New Furniture," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Fashion Show," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets a Paris Gown," aired March 19, 1956, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets Chummy With the Neighbors," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Goes to Mexico," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

25. *I Love Lucy*, "Getting Ready," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets a Paris Gown," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Christmas Show," aired December 24, 1956, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets Chummy With the Neighbors," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Raises Chickens," aired March 4, 1957, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Goes to Mexico," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

26. *I Love Lucy*, "The Amateur Hour," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

ultimately didn't work), or when she bought a vacuum (that was also flawed), and other similar situations.²⁷ In these cases, the women supported thrift because it in turn enabled their consumption habits.

Just as the women's positions towards consumption and thrift were situational, so too were the men's. Ricky and Fred supported consumption when it functioned alongside their views towards thrift, such as when Lucy and Ethel wanted to get a freezer so that they could cut down on food expenses by buying in bulk and having better storage options, showing a negative view towards consumption (without the freezer), but a positive one towards thrift.²⁸ The men ultimately agreed with the women's position because it was meant to be a thrifty choice, thereby positively supporting both consumption and thrift.²⁹ Thus, based on each of the characters' views and the situational context, consumption could augment thrift positively or compete with it negatively.

Even though the main characters of *I Love Lucy* usually had set positions on consumption and thrift, the show illustrated how these economic factors were highly complex and variable within the show. When Lucy purchased defective home appliances, Ricky was upset about it.³⁰ But when Ricky decided that he had to address the situation himself to return the products, he failed, and the salesman managed to get him to buy a refrigerator.³¹ What's more, Fred was around at the time and purchased a washing machine.³² This situation demonstrated a negative

27. *I Love Lucy*, "Sales Resistance," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

28. *I Love Lucy*, "The Freezer," aired April 28, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

29. *I Love Lucy*, "The Freezer," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

30. *I Love Lucy*, "Sales Resistance," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

31. *I Love Lucy*, "Sales Resistance," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

portrayal of thrift—none of the characters managed to be thrifty—as well as a negative view towards consumption, since the men and women weren’t happy with their purchases. However, the show addressed this in a way that nevertheless illustrated the complexity of consumption and thrift. In this case, while consumption was shown negatively, it was done so in a way that made it acceptable, since neither the women nor the men were able to decline purchasing additional items from the salesman.³³ Consequently, *I Love Lucy* deftly depicted how much consumerism had taken hold in America for both women and men, which related back to the gendered conceptualization in the 1950s of consumer habits that were part of the real-world economic and social contexts at the time. All of the preceding examples are just a fraction of the overall portrayals of consumption and thrift within *I Love Lucy*. It can hardly be understated how significant these factors were to the program. Viewers watched the show because it was relatable, and the degree to which consumption and thrift became integral components within the show further suggests how significant those factors were in the real world.

While the characters expressed their positions towards consumption and thrift frequently, *I Love Lucy* also contained a substantial amount of neutral portrayals of consumption and thrift, though neutral perspectives on thrift declined after 1955.³⁴ Neutral presentations of consumption included the primary characters’ plans to go to entertainment events (movies, nightclubs, boxing matches, and the like), purchases of goods and services that weren’t discussed excessively or overly emphasized (such as eating out or hosting a party), other forms of consumption that were simply considered normal (like Lucy and Ethel going to a charm school to learn how to be more attractive or playing golf), or any other consideration of consumption that did not express

32. *I Love Lucy*, “Sales Resistance,” in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

33. *I Love Lucy*, “Sales Resistance,” in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

34. See Appendix B, Tables B3 and B4.

positive or negative positions.³⁵ Neutral portrayals of thrift were similar to those of consumption, and entailed showing thrift without either positive or negative connotations, such as when Fred fixed a door in the Ricardo's kitchen.³⁶ In these cases, both thrift and consumption were just a regular component of everyday life. Interestingly, though, neutral portrayals of consumption far outweighed those of thrift, which suggests that consumption had become increasingly enmeshed in the sociocultural constructs of the time. But the positive and negative portrayals of thrift suggest that, while it was no longer necessarily a passive part of daily life, it nevertheless remained a factor in the minds of Americans. Thrift still mattered, but people (in this case, the characters in *I Love Lucy*) more readily adopted a particular stance on the subject rather than simply accepting it as a part of daily life.

Even though consumption and thrift were the two foundational forms of economic content in *I Love Lucy*, employment was another significant factor. Over the course of the show's run, there were generally more positive than negative portrayals of employment, though they were sometimes split between the two, as was the case in 1952 and 1953, as well as 1959 and 1960.³⁷ And like consumption and thrift, character perspective was critical in determining

35. *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to a Nightclub," aired October 15, 1951, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Fred and Ethel Fight," aired March 10, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Moustache," aired March 17, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy's Schedule," aired May 26, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy's Last Birthday," aired May 11, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The French Revue," aired November 16, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Changing the Boys' Wardrobe," aired December 7, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Charm School," aired January 25, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Golf Game," aired May 17, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," aired October 4, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Tour," aired May 30, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets a Paris Gown," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Wants a Career," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

36. *I Love Lucy*, "The Fur Coat," aired December 10, 1951, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

37. See Appendix B, Table B5.

the attitude towards employment. Most cases of employment centered around two particular scenarios: either Ricky's work or Lucy's (and sometimes Ethel's) efforts to get a job. Some examples of this included the attitudes Ricky had towards his work, such as having a successful time performing, acquiring other performing shows, and advancing his career in the entertainment industry (all positive portrayals of employment), along with negative portrayals that included Ricky having difficulty gaining publicity for his career and setbacks in his career (such as the cancellation of a film he was acting in).³⁸ Sometimes Lucy even contributed to the positive and negative scenarios that affected Ricky's employment, such as when Lucy tried to get Ricky a raise (a positive factor of employment) only to end up getting Ricky fired (a negative portrayal of employment).³⁹ By contrast, Lucy's employment efforts were varied substantially. When Lucy wanted to get a job in order to finance her shopping habits, she even complained that "apparently you can't get a job in this town unless you can do something," a view that reflected a negative perspective towards employment; nevertheless Lucy succeeded in getting a job as a babysitter (a positive portrayal of employment), only to have significant difficulties with the job.⁴⁰ The lack of marketable employment skills was a factor that repeatedly affected Lucy's and Ethel's employment opportunities, which was indicative of the show's effort to realistically depict the challenges of acquiring employment.⁴¹ Even when Ricky tried to help get Lucy a job,

38. *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Thinks Ricky Is Trying to Murder Her," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Drafted," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Publicity Agent," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Ricky's Screen Test," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Ricky's Contract," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Don Juan Is Shelved," aired March 21, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Face to Face," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Ricky's European Booking," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

39. *I Love Lucy*, "Ricky Asks for a Raise," aired June 9, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

40. *I Love Lucy*, "The Amateur Hour," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

such as in Hollywood, she didn't do well.⁴² The competing positive and negative employment content within the show further demonstrates how employment remained a significant and tumultuous economic factor; it shifted frequently, and was depicted (for the most part) realistically, a factor that undoubtedly contributed to the audience's support of the program.

Since employment was a significant factor within *I Love Lucy*, it is unsurprising that there was a substantial amount of passive portrayals of employment.⁴³ This included Lucy helping Ricky prepare for a tour with his band, necessary trips for Ricky's work, Ricky going to business meetings, and Ricky helping with promotional work for his career in the entertainment industry.⁴⁴ Once again, the passive portrayals of employment simply demonstrated how it was a component of everyday life, one that the show's audience would have likely found relatable. Employment was a necessary part of American's lives, and therefore the show did not always focus on it in particular, but rather incorporated employment as a thematic undercurrent within the show. These depictions, then, further augmented characters' specific positions on employment. Yet consumption, thrift, and employment, while the most significant economic factors in the program, were not the only factors the show depicted. Bills, taxes, macroeconomic conditions, and other necessary home economic expenses were also included.

When *I Love Lucy* addressed bills, taxes, macroeconomic conditions, and necessary expenses, the portrayals were almost exclusively negative, with only a small amount of neutral

41. *I Love Lucy*, "Job Switching," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

42. *I Love Lucy*, "Ricky's Screen Test," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets in Pictures," aired February 21, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

43. See Appendix B, Table B5.

44. *I Love Lucy*, "The Saxophone," aired September 22, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Sublease," aired May 24, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "L.A. at Last," aired February 7, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Don Juan and the Starlets," aired February 14, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

depictions of bills in 1951 and equally positive and neutral portrayals of necessary expenses in 1954.⁴⁵ The neutral position on bills in 1951 simply involved Lucy receiving bills found in the mail, without any particular emphasis on them.⁴⁶ In this case, the bills were just a component of everyday life, one that had already been accepted. However, the negative portrayals of bills throughout the show suggest that the characters within the show still did not enjoy receiving them, a factor that audiences would have been able to relate to. Some examples of this include Lucy's mismanagement of her and Ricky's household finances and the accumulation of substantial amounts of bills; Ricky's anger at Lucy's financial mismanagement that led to the issues with the bills; and Fred's and Ricky's dislike of bills in general.⁴⁷ Lucy's distaste for bills was so significant that she even explained to Ethel her strategy to determine what bills to pay—throwing the bills in the air and paying the ones that landed face-up, or the ones that were face-down if the majority landed face-up.⁴⁸ While that of course was not a realistic strategy to address the bills, it did reflect Lucy's exasperation and dislike towards them, something audiences could relate to.

In most of the cases, the dislike of bills also reflected the characters' competing perspectives towards other economic factors. For example, when Ethel made a phone call from a hotel in Texas to her father (who lived in the state), Fred complained about the cost of the bill for

45. See Appendix B, Tables B6, B7, B8, and B12.

46. *I Love Lucy*, "Drafted," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

47. *I Love Lucy*, "The Quiz Show," aired November 12, 1951, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Job Switching," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Ethel's Home Town," aired January 31, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Bon Voyage," aired January 16, 1956, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Gets Homesick in Italy," aired April 9, 1956, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Raises Chickens," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

48. *I Love Lucy*, "The Quiz Show," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

the phone call.⁴⁹ However, Ethel reminded Fred that when they went to stay with her father he would be doing so for free, a factor that positively depicted thrift while simultaneously addressing the negative perspective towards the phone bill.⁵⁰ Similarly, when Lucy decided to raise chickens at her Connecticut home (a positive portrayal of thrift), she did so as a response to Ricky's negative rhetoric about the bills they received.⁵¹ So bills enhanced the complex relationship found between economic factors and characters' perspectives, illustrating the ways that different economic factors were tied together within the program, much as they were in the real world. Taxes, too, were a factor that functioned much like bills, and were tied to other economic issues. This was the case when Lucy failed to pay her and Ricky's bills in a timely fashion and Ricky wanted to know why.⁵² Lucy proceeded to lay part of the blame on taxes, illustrating a negative view towards them.⁵³ In this case, bills and taxes were, for Lucy, intertwined issues. Macroeconomic conditions also related to other economic factors.

Continuing with the preceding example, when Lucy failed to pay the bills, she not only blamed taxes but also inflation and the continued fluctuations found in the larger economic sphere, showing a negative view towards macroeconomic conditions.⁵⁴ Thus, bills, taxes, and macroeconomics were tied together. Similarly, portrayals of necessary expenses occurred in combination with other economic factors. A positive portrayal of necessary expenses included Lucy offering to purchase food for others, where she took their money and kept it, and then used

49. *I Love Lucy*, "Ethel's Home Town," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

50. *I Love Lucy*, "Ethel's Home Town," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

51. *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Raises Chickens," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

52. *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

53. *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

54. *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

store credit to make the necessary purchases.⁵⁵ This was Lucy's way of getting cash after Ricky and his business manager gave her a small budget, and which also illustrated a positive portrayal of both thrift and consumption.⁵⁶ Even a neutral depiction of necessary expenses, such as Lucy planning how to shop for food, also factored in consumption and financial planning.⁵⁷ Ricky's position on Lucy's handling of the bills (and the amount of bills that there were) also reflected a negative view towards necessary expenses (i.e. the basis for the bills that arrived, such as electricity).⁵⁸ In Ricky's case, bills and necessary expenses were interrelated, with a negative perspective towards both.⁵⁹ Even Ethel portrayed a negative perspective to both thrift and necessary expenses when she joked that her allowance was so low that she had to plan meals based on what was on sale.⁶⁰ Thus, necessary expenses were economic components that contributed to the cumulative economic representations found within *I Love Lucy*.

Along with the preceding economic factors, *I Love Lucy* also depicted financial planning, financial status, and charitableness. Financial planning was largely portrayed in a more negative light, with only a handful of episodes addressing it positively or neutrally.⁶¹ Financial status had no neutral presentations, and instead was split over the course of the show between positive and negative perspectives, while charitableness was largely shown positively, with only a couple

55. *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

56. *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

57. *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

58. *I Love Lucy*, "The Quiz Show," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Raises Chickens," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

59. *I Love Lucy*, "The Quiz Show," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Raises Chickens," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

60. *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Wants a Career," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

61. See Appendix B, Table B9.

neutral and negative portrayals.⁶² Positive portrayals of financial planning included Lucy's efforts to save money by cutting back on all of her and Ricky's expenses and Ricky's efforts to plan a budget with Lucy, even when it meant hiring a business manager to oversee their finances.⁶³ On the other hand, negative perspectives included Lucy's continued difficulty managing the household finances, particularly when it came to the bills and other related expenses.⁶⁴ In these cases, financial planning was a core component of home economics, one in which each character exhibited a particular position. Consequently, financial planning provided a more complete picture of how the characters in the program (and the audience in the real world) perceived of financial planning. In this case, audience members would have been able to identify with either Ricky's position or Lucy's, which would have contributed to how the audience related to the show.

Like financial planning, portrayals of financial status were relative to the characters and the contexts found in the show, even to the point of conflating class status with financial status, which in turn reflected how Americans perceived of competing views towards financial status. When Lucy and Ethel applied for membership to an elite club, Ethel worried about the other club members being above them socially, which involved a negative view of Ethel and Lucy's financial status.⁶⁵ Indeed, the club members did consider themselves better than Lucy and Ethel, but Lucy and Ethel rethought their plans and refused to be in the club, thereby turning the

62. See Appendix B, Tables B10 and B11.

63. *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Wants New Furniture," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Million Dollar Idea," aired January 11, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

64. *I Love Lucy*, "The Quiz Show," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Ricardos Change Apartments," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Million Dollar Idea," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Business Manager," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

65. *I Love Lucy*, "Pioneer Women," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

negative portrayal of their financial status into a positive one, as Lucy and Ethel chose to accept their financial position as it was.⁶⁶ Similarly, when Lucy and Ethel saw that people moving into their apartment building had signs of affluence (like a mink coat and a washer and dryer), that reflected a positive view toward those people's financial status, whereas Lucy and Ricky considered themselves poor, a negative perspective on their financial status.⁶⁷ Lucy's enviousness of others was another way of illustrating a negative perspective towards her financial status.⁶⁸ Yet Ricky's advancement in the entertainment industry signaled a positive view towards their financial status.⁶⁹ Other negative views towards financial status included Lucy and Ethel returning home unhappy with their homes after going to a home show, Lucy's perception that Ethel was ashamed of her apartment, and Lucy and Ethel's lack of money to afford transportation when they needed it.⁷⁰ The preceding selection of examples further reflects how situational and contested portrayals of financial status were. Each of the characters' had to determine their own views on financial status, much as the viewers had to. It was the very complexity of the situation that made it relatable. Charitableness, by contrast, was much more straightforward.

I Love Lucy addressed charitableness from multiple perspectives, including a neutral portrayal of charity when Ricky decided to help Ethel's women's club with a benefit event, as

66. *I Love Lucy*, "Pioneer Women," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

67. *I Love Lucy*, "Oil Wells," aired February 15, 1954, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

68. *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy is Envious," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

69. *I Love Lucy*, "Face to Face," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

70. *I Love Lucy*, "Redecorating," aired November 24, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Redecorating the Mertzes' Apartment," aired November 23, 1953, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Off to Florida," aired November 12, 1956, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

well as a negative portrayal when Ricky figured out how costly it was for him and Lucy to host a guest from Italy at their own expense.⁷¹ Yet the vast majority of portrayals were positive ones, such as Ethel and Lucy helping with a bazaar, Lucy offering to help the Mertzes redecorate their apartment, Lucy and Ethel donating money to charity, and other such instances when the principal characters gave others gifts or money.⁷² In these cases, the positive depictions of charitableness provide insight into the economic values of the time. As the show indicated, charitableness was, in most instances, a positive economic factor. Since *I Love Lucy*'s audience found the program relatable, it further suggests that viewers would have agreed that being charitable was not only acceptable but valued, in reasonable quantities. Thus, *I Love Lucy* once again provided insight into the economic values found in the 1950s.

I Love Lucy contained all eleven forms of economic content analyzed in this thesis. Consequently, these economic factors collectively contributed to the show's plots and themes and as a result were a significant component in what made the show relatable for its viewers. But viewers' economic perceptions were also influenced by the larger social and cultural contexts and concerns, including, as *I Love Lucy* readily demonstrated, the competing gender perspectives found in issues of consumption, thrift, employment, and the other economic factors. While concerns of gender structures were undoubtedly prominent in America, just as it was in *I Love Lucy*, this study further demonstrates how economic content can effectively be divorced from other sociocultural issues. In effect, the positive, neutral, and negative portrayals of economic

71. *I Love Lucy*, "The Benefit," aired January 7, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Visitor From Italy," aired October 29, 1956, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

72. *I Love Lucy*, "The Kleptomaniac," aired April 14, 1952, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Redecorating the Mertzes' Apartment," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy is Envious," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "The Great Train Robbery," aired October 31, 1955, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *I Love Lucy*, "Bon Voyage," in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD; *The Lucy – Desi Comedy Hour*, "Lucy Wins a Racehorse," aired February 3, 1958, on CBS, in *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD.

content in the show remained exclusively tied to each economic factor first and foremost.

Regardless of gender concerns or other related cultural factors, the preceding analysis is solely about the economic content in the show. Yet establishing how *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy* addressed economic content is only part of the process in better understanding the economic perspectives found in the 1950s. This required analyzing other shows as well, including *Father Knows Best*.

CHAPTER V:
FATHER KNOWS BEST

In the 1950s, the American middle class readily adopted consumer culture and materialism, factors that both promoted and supported suburban expansion and American mobility.¹ Concurrent with suburban expansion and the inculcation of consumer culture was a reemphasis on the nuclear family, a concept that became tantamount to the American middle class ideal, with a family that lived in the suburbs, a father who commuted to work, and a mother who stayed home as a housekeeper and took care of the kids.² Ideals such as these were just as important as Americans' economic and social realities at the time, and also contributed to Americans' economic perceptions, such as those shown in *Father Knows Best*. Unlike *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy*, this study only examined the first season of *Father Knows Best*, a program centered on the daily lives of the Anderson family in Springfield, Ohio, including parents Jim and Margaret, and their three children, Betty, Bud, and Kathy.³ The first season of *Father Knows Best* aired in 1954 and 1955.⁴ The inclusion of this season is meant to demonstrate the overall continuity of the economic content found within a diverse range of programs from the 1950s. Indeed, while the scope of this single season does not match that of the entire runs of the preceding programs, it does illustrate a continued trend of the majority of economic factors analyzed within these shows.

1. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-844, 847; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 893; Brinkley, *American History*, 786-788.

2. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-844; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 912; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 934-935, 938-939; Brinkley, *American History*, 788-789.

3. *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD (Shout! Factory, 2008).

4. *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

When *Father Knows Best* was going to transition from radio to television in 1954, Jack Gould believed it would be successful, primarily because the audience would be readily able to relate to the Andersons.⁵ In effect, *Father Knows Best* was a show steeped in realism.⁶ Consequently, another reviewer indicated that part of the show's comedic success was its incorporation of believable situations.⁷ And the audience's enthusiastic support of the show even allowed for its revival after an abrupt cancellation.⁸ This trend continued into 1955, and was part of what made the show so engaging to its audience.⁹ Overall, what these depict is the important interrelationship between television viewers and the programs on TV. Programs aired because viewers watched them. And viewers watched those programs because they could relate to the characters and their situations. *Father Knows Best* just continued that trend.

Since *Father Knows Best* involved the daily lives of the Andersons, it is unsurprising that several forms of economic content wound through the 26 episodes found in the first season. The foremost consideration is integrated ads. Integrated ads existed in only a minute amount of episodes in both 1954 and 1955.¹⁰ These included ads for the Scott Paper Company and Kent cigarettes.¹¹ The inclusion of these ads indicates that *Father Knows Best* functioned as part of a

5. Jack Gould, "Television in Review: New Comedy," *New York Times*, October 6, 1954, microfilm.

6. Gould, "Television in Review: New Comedy"; "Father Knows Best," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, November 8, 1954, 14, microfilm.

7. "Father Knows Best," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 6, 1954, 30, microfilm.

8. "Father Knows Best," Television Reviews, *Variety*, September 7, 1955, 31, microfilm; J. P. Shanley, "TV: Dad Is No Dimwit," *New York Times*, March 25, 1955, microfilm.

9. Shanley, "TV: Dad Is No Dimwit"; [Untitled review of *Father Knows Best*], *New York Times*, September 1, 1955, microfilm.

10. See Appendix C, Table C2.

11. *Father Knows Best*, "Thanksgiving Day," aired November 21, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, "The Matchmaker," aired February 20, 1955, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

larger consumer system. In this case, the ads reflect how the system continued to include the television industry as a mode of advertising; however, the lack of ads in the majority of episodes also suggests that consumerism did not rely exclusively on the advertising capabilities of the television medium within the programs themselves. In effect, consumerism had already become a well-established component of American culture. Conversely, the lack of integrated ads may have simply been the choice of the show's sponsors or producers. Nevertheless both the presence of integrated ads and the lack of those ads in other episodes illustrated what American viewers saw when they viewed the program. Integrated ads, therefore, were nonetheless an economic component found within the television mass medium that supported the consumerist structure of American society.

Unlike integrated ads, consumption was found far more prominently within the program. There were competing views within *Father Knows Best* regarding consumption, though there was a slightly greater frequency of positive perspectives than negative ones.¹² One solely positive view towards consumption was Jim making plans for the family to go to “the most expensive restaurant in town” to reward Kathy for a poem she wrote.¹³ Similarly, at Christmas, Jim and Margaret were giving away presents—what Jim considered a lot of presents and which he referred to as “a matter of bookkeeping,” suggesting a slightly negative view towards consumption.¹⁴ Likewise, when Jim saw Margaret putting up some curtains, he thought she was

12. See Appendix C, Table C3.

13. *Father Knows Best*, “Thanksgiving Day,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

14. *Father Knows Best*, “The Christmas Story,” aired December 19, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

too concerned about the “trappings of materialism,” a view that was negative towards consumption.¹⁵

In the preceding cases, there weren’t specific opposing viewpoints; however, in many cases there were. Jim held a negative view towards consumption when he thought the family should cut back on their expenses because the bills were increasing.¹⁶ But within that same episode, Jim bought a mink coat that cost one thousand dollars (which he considered a bargain).¹⁷ In effect, Jim contradicted his earlier negative stance on consumption—in this case, the perspective on consumption was meant to be situational, thereby further complicating the characters’ portrayals of consumption and, presumably, better reflecting viewers’ perspectives on the matter. This was something that led to conflicting views of consumption within the show, as Margaret, who initially shared a rather negative position on frivolous expenses, began to engage in more expensive shopping outings to accommodate her new appearance with the coat.¹⁸ Margaret and Jim’s inconsistent views towards consumption were likely consistent with real-world perspectives on the matter. This was also the case when Margaret made arrangements to host a wedding at their home, which Jim thought was expensive (a negative view towards consumption); however, Jim ultimately decided that because it was for a special occasion, the expenses were justified (a positive view towards consumption).¹⁹ So consumption could be supported in some cases and not in others. It was entirely situational and, more importantly,

15. *Father Knows Best*, “Jim the Farmer,” aired January 30, 1955, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

16. *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” aired February 13, 1955, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

17. *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

18. *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

19. *Father Knows Best*, “Bud the Bridesmaid,” aired February 27, 1955, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

decided at an individual level. But overall, consumption remained a significant issue within the show, just as it was in the real-world.

Just as there were positive and negative portrayals of consumption, there were also many passive depictions of consumption throughout the show. Jim getting the family tickets to a football game, Jim going golfing, and Jim and Margaret going to a lodge are just some examples of this.²⁰ Consumption had become a normalized habit, one that was not always specifically focused on but rather just an accepted component of everyday life. Yet consumption did not occur in a vacuum, and *Father Knows Best* also illustrated other economic factors as well.

Besides consumption, thrift was present in a number of episodes, with a greater amount of positive portrayals than negative ones.²¹ In some cases, aspects of thrift were directly related to perspectives on consumption. This was particularly apparent when Jim bought a used motor scooter at a bargain for Bud (a positive portrayal of thrift); however, Margaret and Betty didn't agree with the purchase, believing Jim hadn't actually got a good deal (a negative perspective on consumption).²² Similarly, the passive portrayal of consumption when Jim purchased the family tickets to a football game was also tied to both positive and negative depictions of thrift.²³ Jim was thrifty in a positive way when he decided to trade a ticket to the game to an acquaintance in exchange for the potential sale of insurance policies to the man and his employees (Jim was an

20. *Father Knows Best*, "Football Tickets," aired October 24, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, "Bud's Encounter with the Law," aired November 14, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, "Second Honeymoon," aired November 28, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

21. See Appendix C, Table C4.

22. *Father Knows Best*, "The Motor Scooter," aired October 17, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

23. *Father Knows Best*, "Football Tickets," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

insurance agent).²⁴ However, when Jim didn't have enough tickets for the entire family and later thought Margaret had lost the ticket at the Laundromat, and in turn bought some tickets from the worker at the laundry facility, the show effectively depicted a negative view towards thrift.²⁵ The mink coat purchase also involved both consumption and thrift, where Jim illustrated a positive form of thrift by purchasing the coat at a discount, thereby tying a positive form of thrift to a positive perspective of consumption. Yet other portrayals of thrift were more straightforward, such as Bud jury-rigging a makeshift raft in order to save money and get Jim's help with the project.²⁶

Also like consumption, *Father Knows Best* had neutral portrayals of thrift, including Bud trying to economize his expenses when he tried moving out of the house into a place of his own, as well as Jim trying to minimize expenses while renting or selling their house when he thought of becoming a farmer.²⁷ In these cases, the show simply depicted how normal being thrifty was, with neither positive nor negative connotations. It was just a part of daily life. And it occurred in the context of other economic factors, such as employment.

In the first season of the show, *Father Knows Best* contained a slightly greater amount of positive representations of employment than negative ones, along with multiple instances of passive portrayals of employment.²⁸ When Bud was going to get the motor scooter from Jim, he thought it would help him get work, which tied a positive perspective on thrift to a positive view

24. *Father Knows Best*, "Football Tickets," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

25. *Father Knows Best*, "Football Tickets," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

26. *Father Knows Best*, "Bud's Encounter with the Law," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

27. *Father Knows Best*, "Live My Own Life," aired October 31, 1954, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, "Jim the Farmer," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

28. See Appendix C, Table C5.

of employment.²⁹ Similarly, when Jim wanted the family to cut back on their expenses, Bud offered to get a job to help out, another positive view towards employment.³⁰ Conversely, Jim displayed a negative view towards employment when he decided that he disliked his job at the insurance company and wanted to become a farmer as a means of escaping the stresses of the modern American business world.³¹ Another negative perspective towards employment came from Bud when he failed to deliver on his newspaper route obligations and was willing to quit.³² In all of these cases, there were clear-cut positions concerning employment. Yet employment was shown passively as well, such as Jim working at the office.³³ Overall, employment was a critical component of the larger economic representations found within *Father Knows Best*, and further reflected the diverse positions towards employment at the time.

While consumption, thrift, and employment comprised the bulk of the economic content within *Father Knows Best*, bills and necessary expenses were also significant components. In the case of bills, they were portrayed only in negative ways.³⁴ This included Jim trying to get the family to consume less because the bills increased (a connection between a negative view of both bills and consumption), as well as Jim receiving several bills at the office.³⁵ Necessary expenses,

29. *Father Knows Best*, “The Motor Scooter,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

30. *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

31. *Father Knows Best*, “Jim the Farmer,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

32. *Father Knows Best*, “Father Delivers the Papers,” aired March 13, 1955, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

33. *Father Knows Best*, “Second Honeymoon,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, “Boy’s Week,” aired January 2, 1955, on CBS, in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, “Jim the Farmer,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

34. See Appendix C, Table C6.

35. *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, “Thanksgiving Day,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

though, were mixed between neutral and negative depictions, no positive ones.³⁶ This included cases where Jim would give his kids money (a neutral portrayal of home economic expenses), or when Kathy broke someone's window and Jim paid for the damages (a negative depiction of a necessary expense).³⁷ Both bills and necessary expenses were economic factors that the characters in the program (and, by extension, the viewers in the real world) did not care for but, in the case of necessary expenses, they sometimes accepted (i.e. had a neutral stance towards). But other expenses, like taxes, weren't addressed at all.³⁸ So, since *Father Knows Best* was popular because it was relatable, it is likely that both bills and necessary expenses, while generally disliked, were actual economic concerns of the American viewers, whereas taxes weren't, or rather, taxes had simply become accepted to the point that they had become a nonfactor in the show's plotline. Other nonfactors in the show included considerations of financial status and macroeconomic conditions, neither of which appeared in the show.³⁹ Thus, *Father Knows Best*, like *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy* before it, reflects the economic content that was relevant to the viewers at the time. And taxes, financial status, and macroeconomic conditions weren't involved in that case. But other economic factors were.

Along with the preceding forms of economic content, *Father Knows Best* also addressed both financial planning and charitableness. Financial planning had both positive and negative portrayals, while charitableness had neutral and negative ones.⁴⁰ Examples of financial planning

36. See Appendix C, Table C8.

37. *Father Knows Best*, "The Motor Scooter," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, "Boy's Week," in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

38. See Appendix C, Table C7.

39. See Appendix C, Tables C10 and C12.

40. See Appendix C, Tables C9 and C11.

included Jim wanting to account for the Christmas present expenditures (a negative perspective on consumption, but a positive one towards financial planning), along with a negative portrayal of financial planning when Jim was notified by his bank that his account was overextended and he became annoyed and dismissed it as an “oversight.”⁴¹ Similarly, *Father Knows Best* reflected a negative view towards charitableness when, after purchasing the mink coat, Jim was asked to provide a substantial amount of money to charity while at work.⁴² But even with that negative perspective, charitableness was still shown in a neutral manner, such as Jim and Margaret preparing Christmas gifts for their friends and acquaintances.⁴³ While financial planning and charitableness weren’t the most significant forms of economic content found within the program, each contributed to a greater comprehensiveness towards the economic realities found in the show that further reflected the real world.

Based on the preceding forms of economic content found within *Father Knows Best*, it is reasonable to conclude that this show continued the trend found in both *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy* in creating an accurate reflection of viewers’ perspectives towards economic conditions and economic factors. Indeed, since *Father Knows Best* aired in the same economic period as the preceding shows, the same real-world economic context—economic growth, middle class consumer culture, and the like—remained core principles of the show’s audience, correlating the economic content of the show to contemporary America. As a result, *Father*

41. *Father Knows Best*, “The Christmas Story,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD; *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

42. *Father Knows Best*, “The Mink Coat,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

43. *Father Knows Best*, “The Christmas Story,” in *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD.

Knows Best provided a medium that encompassed the viewers' beliefs and projected them back to its audience. And this trend continued in other shows, including *The Honeymooners*.

CHAPTER VI:

THE HONEYMOONERS

Even though middle class America flourished in the 1950s, it was also a transition period for many who had previously comprised the working class. Economic stability coupled with postwar affluence buoyed the working class to a state where middle class lifestyles (including consumerism) were increasingly possible.¹ Part of this was the result of an overall economic shift towards a service-oriented structure, associated with blue-collar workers transitioning into white-collar positions.² At the same, unions became increasingly significant in ensuring workers' rights, while corporate consolidation and the effects of economic growth enabled companies to more readily look after their workers.³ Factors such as these provided the real-world context for American television audiences, which subsequently informed how viewers perceived the economic content on television. As the preceding three shows demonstrated, television comedies effectively incorporated a wide array of economic content into their themes and plots. *The Honeymooners*, a program that aired in 1955 and 1956 and followed the lives of Alice and Ralph Kramden and their neighbors Trixie and Ed Norton in and around Brooklyn, continued that trend, but in a way that emphasized the Kramdens and Nortons as working-class families that worked towards the middle-class American lifestyle.⁴ Through the 39 episodes that comprised the entire show, audiences saw multiple perspectives on consumption, thrift, employment and the other forms of economic content analyzed within this study. What's more, the depictions in the

1. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-845; Brinkley, *American History*, 780-781.

2. Nash et al., *The American People*, 844-845; Henretta et al., *America's History*, 899.

3. Nash et al., *The American People*, 840-845; Brinkley, *American History*, 781.

4. *The Honeymooners*, DVD (Paramount, 2003).

show further correlated with the audience's perspectives on economic conditions and their perception of economic in general.

The reviews of *The Honeymooners* illustrate how well-received the program was. When *The Honeymooners* began in the fall of 1955, there were two competing perspectives on the show.⁵ The first was exceptionally positive, believing that the show fit audiences' preferences and would last several seasons.⁶ The other, though, contended that audiences had become increasingly selective and that *The Honeymooners* was simply more of the same that they had already experienced.⁷ These competing perspectives reflect the effects of the expansion of the television industry, as additional programs caused increased competition over the shows that were on-air (i.e. the viewing audience had a wider array of programming to select from). But nevertheless, *The Honeymooners* was a successful show overall, having attained one of the highest ratings at its given airtime.⁸ This reflected how the audience was able to relate to the show, since they continued to watch it. And, like the other shows in this study, *The Honeymooners* contained multiple forms of economic content.

Within *The Honeymooners*, integrated ads existed in every episode.⁹ This included both opening and closing ads for Buick, the show's sponsor.¹⁰ The incorporation of integrated ads within the program is consistent with the other 1950s programs within this study, as the ads

5. "The Honeymooners," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 5, 1955, 29, microfilm; "The Honeymooners," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, October 10, 1955, 12, microfilm.

6. "The Honeymooners," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 5, 1955, 29.

7. "The Honeymooners," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, October 10, 1955, 12.

8. "The Honeymooners," Tele Follow-Up Comment, *Variety*, February 22, 1956, 28, microfilm; CBS Television Film Sales, Inc., "Second Honeymoon!" *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, July 29, 1957, 14-15, microfilm.

9. See Appendix D, Table D2.

10. "Original Series Opening," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; "Closing 1," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; "Closing 2," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; "The Honeymooners: Alternate Versions," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0042114/alternateversions>

demonstrate the strong focus on consumerism within the television medium at the time. In this way, *The Honeymooners* was no different. The show effectively functioned as a vehicle for depicting economic conditions, which included the societal significance of consumerism, of which the integrated ads were just the beginning. One of the most significant forms of economic content within *The Honeymooners* was consumption itself.

Consumption and thrift were the two most significant forms of economic content in *The Honeymooners*. *The Honeymooners* had continued trends of neutral portrayals of consumption and thrift, along with slightly more negative portrayals of consumption than positive ones and a greater amount of positive views towards thrift than negative ones over the course of the series.¹¹ The neutral portrayals signified how consumptive habits had become increasingly normalized within society. Ralph and Ed's plans to go bowling, Ralph's plans to go to the movies, Alice and Ralph exchanging Christmas gifts, and Alice buying Ralph a birthday gift all functioned as neutral portrayals of consumption.¹² Consumption in these cases contributed to the function of the show's plots, but it was not overly emphasized—instead, these activities and actions were just a normal part of daily life. Neutral portrayals of thrift also abounded throughout the show, including Ralph and Ed purchasing a new television together, Alice fixing furniture, and Alice sewing Ralph's pants.¹³ In these cases, thriftiness simply occurred as part of life, without any

11. See Appendix D, Tables D3 and D4.

12. *The Honeymooners*, "TV or Not TV," aired October 1, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "A Woman's Work Is Never Done," aired October 22, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "A Matter of Life and Death," aired October 29, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," aired November 26, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," aired December 24, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Oh My Aching Back," aired January 14, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Pardon My Glove," aired March 17, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

13. *The Honeymooners*, "TV or Not TV," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Funny Money," aired October 8, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Hello, Mom," aired December 3, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

positive or negative associations. So even though consumption had become normalized, thrift remained a significant factor within the show (and America by extension).

Even when *The Honeymooners* depicted positive or negative perspectives on consumption, it did so in a way that was equally normalized and often interrelated with thrift. For example, prior to Ed splitting the cost of a TV with Ralph, when Ed considered getting a new television after his first one broke, he displayed a positive view towards consumption, while at the same time demonstrating a negative view towards thrift, since he intend to have the first TV repaired.¹⁴ And Alice, who wanted a television set, thought Ralph was stingy, since Ralph believed his money was better off in the bank, thereby illustrating Alice's positive view towards consumption and negative view towards thrift, while Ralph held the opposite opinion.¹⁵

The disagreements between Alice and Ralph over material purchases demonstrated how contentious the divide between consumption and thrift could be. Through the series, Alice wanted new furniture, appliances, and modern conveniences, which Ralph resisted.¹⁶ There were, of course, exceptions, particularly when Ralph believed he benefitted from consumption. This was the case when Ralph thought he was rich after receiving a suitcase full of money.¹⁷ When Ralph believed he was rich, he was fine spending money; however, he returned to his usual, negative self towards consumption when he found out the money was counterfeit.¹⁸ Yet thrift and consumption also supported each other, as was the case when a furniture store had a sale and

14. *The Honeymooners*, "TV or Not TV," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

15. *The Honeymooners*, "TV or Not TV," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

16. *The Honeymooners*, "TV or Not TV," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Hello, Mom," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

17. *The Honeymooners*, "Funny Money," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

18. *The Honeymooners*, "Funny Money," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

Ed and Trixie bought a new dining set (showing both positive views towards consumption and thrift).¹⁹ Similarly, Ralph's attempt at a thrifty purchase of a second-hand vacuum for Alice was initially a positive portrayal of thrift that quickly shifted into a negative one, since the vacuum didn't work, which also illustrated a negative view towards consumption at the same time.²⁰ Thus, thrift and consumption had a tendency to coexist within *The Honeymooners*, suggesting that both economic factors were equally significant within the real world as well.

Just as consumption and thrift were particularly important within *The Honeymooners*, employment was also relevant. In a stark contrast to consumption and thrift, *The Honeymooners* had relatively few neutral portrayals of employment, while instead focusing on positive and negative ones, of which there were competing perspectives.²¹ There were general work related issues that the characters dealt with, such as Ralph having a difficult day at work due to a double shift, but other challenges were more substantial in scope, including when Ralph made a suggestion to his employers (he worked at a bus company) on how to improve efficiency.²² Ralph's suggestion positively depicted thrift; however, his suggestion led the company to lay him off, along with several other bus drivers, thereby portraying employment negatively.²³ To make matters worse, Ralph couldn't get a job in the meantime, compounding the negative portrayal of employment.²⁴ Ed even commiserated with Ralph, since he had been laid off before

19. *The Honeymooners*, "The Deciding Vote," aired December 10, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

20. *The Honeymooners*, "The Deciding Vote," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

21. See Appendix D, Table D5.

22. *The Honeymooners*, "Pal O' Mine," aired November 19, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

23. *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

24. *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

and understood how difficult it was.²⁵ But *The Honeymooners* ultimately ended this episode on a positive note, where Ralph's layoff ended and he returned to work.²⁶ So not only was employment dependent on each character's perspective, it was also situational.

When it came to employment, *The Honeymooners* even addressed career advancement, which also provided multiple competing perspectives on the issue. This was the case when Ed decided to take a civil service exam to get a new job position and convinced Ralph to do so as well, both of which show a positive attitude towards employment; however, neither of them passed the exam, and were stuck with their old jobs (a negative portrayal of employment).²⁷ Yet in another case, Ed wanted a promotion at his job (with the Department of Sanitation) and Ralph told him to ask for it, which led to Ed being fired, negatively depicting employment.²⁸ While Ed did get a job as a door-to-door salesman, the job went poorly, which only expanded on the negative portrayal of employment.²⁹ But Ed kept up a façade when discussing the salesman job with Ralph and Alice, claiming that the job paid well and was a complete success for him.³⁰ Ed's description prompted Ralph to consider being a salesman in his spare time; however, Alice provided a different perspective, referring to the salesman's job as "a gamble" compared to Ralph's steady work, thereby illustrating Ralph's positive view towards employment and Alice's

25. *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

26. *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

27. *The Honeymooners*, "Young Man With a Horn," aired March 24, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

28. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," aired May 26, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

29. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

30. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

negative perspective towards employment as a salesman.³¹ Regardless, Ed regained his previous job—with a promotion—while Ralph remained at the bus company.³² Thus, *The Honeymooners* depicted a variety of facets concerning employment, along with competing perspectives on this economic factor.

Other economic factors within *The Honeymooners* had more clearly delineated positions than those found concerning employment. This included bills and taxes, which were predominantly negative (though there was a neutral portrayal of taxes), necessary expenses, which had more neutral and negative depictions than positive ones, as well as financial planning and financial status, both of which had significantly more negative portrayals than positive ones.³³ The negative portrayals of bills involved scenarios where Ralph and Alice complained about the bills which, from Ralph's perspective, were always a problem because of their very existence, whereas Alice considered them a problem because they reflected how frugal she and Ralph actually were.³⁴ The neutral portrayal towards taxes included Ralph simply filing his taxes, whereas the negative perspectives included Ralph worrying about his taxes after receiving a letter from the Bureau of Internal Revenue.³⁵ In the case of both bills and taxes, the negative perspectives reflected the characters' positions on these forms of expenses, a view that audiences would have likely been able to relate to. Necessary expenses would have also been relatable.

31. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

32. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

33. See Appendix D, Tables D6, D7, D8, D9, and D10.

34. *The Honeymooners*, "TV or Not TV," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Brother Ralph," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Please Leave the Premises," aired March 10, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "The Worry Wart," aired April 7, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

35. *The Honeymooners*, "The Worry Wart," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

When *The Honeymooners* addressed necessary expenses in a neutral manner, it did so in ways that showed how these expenses were just a regular part of everyday life, such as Alice ensuring that Ralph used his allowance for his personal expenses and Alice shopping for groceries.³⁶ Yet even though necessary expenses were in part a component of the average American life, characters in the program usually held negative views towards these expenses, including Ralph getting upset over the landlord notifying tenants of a 15 percent increase in rent and Ed complaining that the “chopped meat” Trixie purchased was overly expensive.³⁷ So even though necessary expenses were just that—necessary—that did not stop the characters (or the viewing audience) from maintaining their own opinions on the matter. This was also the case for financial planning and financial status factors. The lack of neutral portrayals of financial planning and financial status factors is particularly telling—these were economic factors that the characters and the audience had particular opinions about, most of which were negative. Negative perspectives towards financial planning and financial status included Ralph failing to save enough money to go on a trip to Minneapolis, Ralph complaining about his lack of money and overall financial position, and Ralph insinuating that his job was keeping him from a potentially better life.³⁸ Even Alice’s mother contributed to the negative portrayals of financial status, as she believed that Alice would have been better off marrying a more affluent person,

36. *The Honeymooners*, “Funny Money,” in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “A Woman’s Work Is Never Done,” in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

37. *The Honeymooners*, “Please Leave the Premises,” in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “Unconventional Behavior,” aired May 12, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

38. *The Honeymooners*, “Unconventional Behavior,” in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “Funny Money,” in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “Better Living Through TV,” aired November 12, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “The Golfer,” aired October 15, 1955, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “Brother Ralph,” in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, “A Man’s Pride,” aired September 22, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

since Ralph wasn't financially successful enough by her assessment.³⁹ In effect, part of the show's ability to relate to its audience may have stemmed in part from its pessimistic view towards financial planning and financial status. These negative views gave the show greater credibility by being more realistic than it would have been if the show's characters had exemplary financial lives.

Along with the preceding economic factors, *The Honeymooners* also addressed charitableness and macroeconomic conditions. Charitableness had some neutral portrayals, and initially more positive than negative ones, though this became contested as the series continued.⁴⁰ Macroeconomic conditions were also split between both positive and negative perspectives.⁴¹ Neutral portrayals of charitableness suggest that charitableness remained a part of American economic values, including when Alice gave a gift to a neighbor and when Ralph tried to help Ed when he was out of work.⁴² Yet pragmatism dulled the significance of some charitableness, as was the case when Ralph heard that Ed was having success as a salesman.⁴³ In this instance, Ralph was particularly upset that he had allowed Ed to eat at his place, and claimed he was going to bill Ed for the food, showing a negative view towards charitableness.⁴⁴ But nevertheless, charitableness was a positively valued economic factor, including when Ralph donated money to charity when he thought he was rich after receiving the suitcase full of

39. *The Honeymooners*, "Hello, Mom," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "A Matter of Record," aired January 7, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

40. See Appendix D, Table D11.

41. See Appendix D, Table D12.

42. *The Honeymooners*, "Mama Loves Mambo," aired March 3, 1956, on CBS, in *The Honeymooners*, DVD; *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

43. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

44. *The Honeymooners*, "Mind Your Own Business," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

(counterfeit) money.⁴⁵ Macroeconomic also illustrated competing perspectives, as was the case when Ralph and Alice decided to hire a maid.⁴⁶ When they hired the maid, the maid began making demands because there was a maid shortage at the time, thereby illustrating fundamental functions of supply and demand within a macroeconomic system, which was a positive portrayal of macroeconomic conditions from the maid's perspective and a negative one from the Kramden's point of view.⁴⁷ Therefore, *The Honeymooners* presented charitableness and macroeconomic content in a way that highlighted the complexity of these economic factors, much as they were in the real world.

As *The Honeymooners* demonstrated, the preceding economic factors were fundamental components of Americans' lives. While middle class consumer culture and larger economic facets of the 1950s era informed viewers' perceptions of economic conditions and concerns, the show correlated with real-world conditions no matter what. *The Honeymooners* and the other television comedies within this study are part of a larger continuum that comprised television programming—and the economic content those shows contained—during the 1950s. The expansion of television throughout the United States during this time enabled it to function as a mass culture medium, wherein viewers actively determined what programs would be on TV through their viewing habits. Viewers selected shows they related to, which included *The Honeymooners*, and the shows depicted Americans' perceptions of economic factors during this time. This trend continued into the 1960s, as *The Beverly Hillbillies* demonstrated.

45. *The Honeymooners*, "Funny Money," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

46. *The Honeymooners*, "A Woman's Work Is Never Done," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

47. *The Honeymooners*, "A Woman's Work Is Never Done," in *The Honeymooners*, DVD.

CHAPTER VII:

THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES

The economic prosperity of the 1950s continued into the 1960s; however, there were also social and economic changes developing at the same time. Foremost, with the election of President Kennedy there was a shift in government policy towards more overt government involvement in Americans' lives.¹ At the same time, women continued their effort to acquire and keep jobs, a movement that continued to gain further traction.² Like women's rights efforts at the time, other social movements arose, including rights movements for African Americans and other minorities.³ Along these lines, a counterculture movement also developed, one that embodied the beliefs that America as a country was flagging.⁴ The combined effects of changing government structures, the Cold War, rights movements, and the counterculture movement contributed to Americans' worldviews, including their economic perceptions. And television continued to reflect Americans' economic views.

With the maturation of the television industry over the course of the 1950s, television comedy programs continued to see a similar evolution and growth into the 1960s. This was the case with the development of *The Beverly Hillbillies*, which aired its first season in 1962 and 1963.⁵ The show revolved around the Clampett family, who moved from their rural home to

1. Nash et al., *The American People*, 920-921.

2. Nash et al., *The American People*, 845; Brinkley, *American History*, 845-846.

3. Brinkley, *American History*, 812-817.

4. Nash et al., *The American People*, 972; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 1030; Brinkley, *American History*, 838-839.

5. *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD (Paramount, 2016).

Beverly Hills, California, after the discovery of substantial amounts of oil on their land, worth millions of dollars.⁶ The principal characters included Jed, the family patriarch, Jed's mother-in-law Granny, Jed's daughter Elly, and Jed's cousin Pearl and her children, Jethro and Jethrine.⁷ The other main characters were Mr. Drysdale, the Clampett's banker, and his secretary Jane, as well as Drysdale's family.⁸ This study only considers the first season of *The Beverly Hillbillies* in order to further establish how television comedies' portrayals of economic content remained a feature that continued to correlate viewers' perceptions with what was shown within the programs. In short, *The Beverly Hillbillies* corroborates how audience's beliefs were enshrined within the program and then reflected back to them as the show progressed.

Unlike the preceding programs, *The Beverly Hillbillies* was not initially well-received by critics. For example, when the show began in 1962 one reviewer was exceptionally negative about the plot of the show for its supposed lack of realism.⁹ But even with views such as that, audiences strongly supported *The Beverly Hillbillies*, which ranked among the top shows during its first season, and even into the second.¹⁰ Clearly audiences supported the show, which

6. *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; The plotline was first introduced in the premier episode, "The Clampetts Strike Oil." *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Strike Oil," aired September 26, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

7. *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; The following episodes depict most of the principal cast members. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Strike Oil," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Trick or Treat," aired October 31, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

8. *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; See the following episodes for select depictions of other members of the principal cast. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Strike Oil," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Getting Settled," aired October 3, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Meet Mrs. Drysdale," aired October 17, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Elly's First Date," aired November 21, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

9. "Beverly Hillbillies," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 3, 1962, 35, microfilm.

10. "Beverly Hillbillies," Television Reviews, *Variety*, October 2, 1963, 41, microfilm; "Nielsen Ratings," *Broadcasting*, November 12, 1962, 39, microfilm; "TvQ's Top Ten for January by Age," *Broadcasting*, February

television producer Sheldon Leonard attributed to society's support for television programs that were escapist in nature as a response to external social pressures.¹¹ Leonard was likely correct about viewers response to shows like *The Beverly Hillbillies*—what's more, his position further corroborates how viewers watched shows that fit their perceptions of the world. In effect, viewers saw what they wanted to see in TV, which included their views towards economic factors.

Like the preceding programs, integrated ads existed in *The Beverly Hillbillies*. In fact, they were extremely prevalent, alternating between advertisements for Kellogg's and Winston cigarettes on a near-weekly basis.¹² Like the other shows, *The Beverly Hillbillies* inclusion of integrated ads provided a concrete example of how integrated consumer culture was in American society, to the point that it permeated the shows on TV. But it also shows that the viewing audience had become conditioned to these ads because of how ingrained consumerism was in Americans' reality. The ads were a staple of television comedies during this time and reflected the larger economic context that informed Americans' perceptions of economic factors. This in turn tied directly into consumption.

When *The Beverly Hillbillies* addressed consumption, the show included more positive than negative portrayals, with some neutral ones as well.¹³ The context of the show's plot informed the portrayals of consumption, particularly in regards to the financial wealth of the

11, 1963, 28, microfilm; "Fall's Turnover Will Be Terrific," *Broadcasting*, July 8, 1963, 27-29, microfilm; "CBS-TV's Ratings Better Than Last Year," *Broadcasting*, December 2, 1963, 83, microfilm.

11. "The Case for 'Escape Entertainment' on Television," *Broadcasting*, February 18, 1963, 104, microfilm.

12. See Appendix E, Table E2; The following episodes provide select examples of the types of integrated ads found in the program. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Strike Oil," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Getting Settled," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

13. See Appendix E, Table E3.

Clampett family. For example, when the Clampetts first discovered how wealthy they were, Pearl told Jed that he now had the means to purchase anything—money became no concern.¹⁴ This was a positive view towards consumption, and the Clampetts' expenses, including stock (animals), first class air travel, and mink coats for Elly and Granny also positively depicted consumption.¹⁵ Even the neutral portrayals of consumption, such as Jed planning on going golfing with Mr. Drysdale, reflected how consumption was an integrated component of Americans' economic culture.¹⁶ The negative portrayals towards consumption, such as Jed refusing to give Elly and Jethrine money to purchase a football, also demonstrates that, while there were more positive portrayals of consumption than negative ones, there were still limits on what was considered acceptable forms of consumption.¹⁷ This was predicated on individual characters' perspectives, which was, in many cases, tied to thrift.

Although the Clampetts certainly had the money to make purchases as they saw fit, thrift remained one of the most significant economic factors in the show with more positive than negative portrayals, and even some neutral ones as well.¹⁸ The Clampetts maintained their rural roots to an extreme degree when they moved to Beverly Hills, including a penchant for thriftiness, such as how Jed had plans to plow the grounds around their mansion, how Granny used the swimming pool for washing clothes (she didn't know the mansion had other water

14. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Strike Oil," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD

15. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Buys Stock," aired October 24, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Home For Christmas," aired December 19, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The First Official Season*, DVD.

16. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts and the Dodgers," aired April 10, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

17. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Saves Drysdale's Marriage," aired January 23, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

18. See Appendix E, Table E4.

sources), and how Granny set about making moonshine.¹⁹ From the Clampetts' perspective, these were all positive approaches to thrift; however, in other cases, there were competing views towards thrift, such as when Jed bought stock animals as an investment and a way to be self-sufficient (a positive form of thrift from Jed's point of view).²⁰ But Mr. Drysdale, who had initially suggested that Jed buy stock (referring to investments in companies), was highly upset when he saw the animals Jed purchased, thereby showing a negative view towards thrift.²¹ Similarly, Granny continued running her moonshine operation behind the mansion (a positive form of thrift), but when a police officer later saw Elly attending to it, he informed her that it was illegal (a contrasting, negative perspective towards thrift).²² Thus, not only was thrift a deeply ingrained component in the Clampetts' economic worldview, it was one that was increasingly challenged by external perspectives. This reflected how thrift as a cultural factor was in turn increasingly challenged in the American consumer culture, where consumption trumped other, more traditional economic values. Yet *The Beverly Hillbillies* also illustrated how other economic factors worked in conjunction with consumption and thrift.

While it was not the most significant aspect of the show, *The Beverly Hillbillies* did include portrayals of employment, largely more positive than negative, and without any neutral perspectives.²³ Positive portrayals of employment included Mr. Drysdale doubling his servants'

19. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Getting Settled," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Meanwhile, Back at the Cabin," aired October 10, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Meet Mrs. Drysdale," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

20. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Buys Stock," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

21. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Buys Stock," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

22. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Plays Solomon," aired February 13, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

23. See Appendix E, Table E5.

salaries when they went to work for the Clampetts, Mr. Drysdale hiring Jed to work at his bank, and Mr. Drysdale being promised a promotion to the board of directors at his bank.²⁴ Conversely, when Pearl offered music lessons, she didn't have many customers and was forced to cut her prices, showing a negative view towards employment.²⁵ Yet competing depictions of employment also existed, including Mr. Drysdale promising Jane a raise if she got the Clampetts to take a trip to Palm Springs (a positive portrayal of employment) or firing her if she didn't (a negative perspective).²⁶ Even with a greater amount of positive portrayals of employment, *The Beverly Hillbillies* clearly demonstrated that employment related content had active character involvement—there weren't passive or neutral positions to employment, but rather clearly defined views, even if those views contrasted. But content relating to employment occurred in a larger economic context that involved other economic factors.

Bills, taxes, necessary expenses, and financial planning are other forms of relevant economic content analyzed in this study; however, of these factors, *The Beverly Hillbillies* did not address bills at all, and only briefly explored the other factors, with an exclusively negative portrayal of taxes, split perspectives on necessary expenses between positive and negative depictions (along with some neutral ones), and an exclusively positive portrayal of financial planning.²⁷ Not including bills as a form of economic content was a tactical choice for *The*

24. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Servants," aired November 7, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Becomes a Banker," aired March 6, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Entertain," aired April 24, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

25. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Plays Solomon," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

26. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Meet Mrs. Drysdale," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

27. See Appendix E, Tables E6, E7, E8, and E9.

Beverly Hillbillies in relation to the show's larger context. The Clampetts were rich, they lived in Beverly Hills (an affluent area); and they were particularly thrifty people—therefore, bills simply weren't a concern for them. This larger context informed their view towards taxes, which was quite negative, particularly towards the "revenueur" who arrived at the Clampetts' home to discuss the source of Jed's wealth.²⁸ And even though bills were ignored and taxes barely discussed, necessary expenses were addressed in competing ways, with Mr. Drysdale giving his wife an allowance as a positive form of a necessary expense, Jed making a statement regarding the expense of in-laws staying with him (a negative position on necessary expenses), and neutral depictions of necessary expenses that included Granny going to the supermarket and Jethro offering to go shopping for Granny.²⁹ These positions show how necessary expenses were included within the show in varying ways that covered a broad spectrum of situations—in effect, demonstrating realistically how necessary expenses worked during this time. Consequently, financial planning received a positive portrayal because it was tied to the Clampetts' ideas of thrift, such as Jed purchasing stock animals as a form of positive financial planning and a positive depiction of thrift.³⁰ As a result, audiences watching *The Beverly Hillbillies* would have been able to relate to the economic content found in the show, if not all of the situations the Clampetts were involved.

28. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Pays His Income Tax," aired April 3, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

29. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Clampetts Entertain," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Servants," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Elly's First Date," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Duke Becomes a Father," aired April 17, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

30. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Jed Buys Stock," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

Aside from thrift and consumption, financial status was arguably the most important form of economic content in *The Beverly Hillbillies*, with competing positive and negative portrayals in 1962 and slightly more positive than negative ones in 1963, along with a few neutral perspectives over the course of the season.³¹ In essence, *The Beverly Hillbillies* was a show highly concerned with financial status, while also integrating aspects of class status within its depictions. While neutral positions existed, including simply discussing aspects of the Clampetts wealth (such as the incredibly large size of their mansion), the positive and negative depictions occurred far more frequently.³² The way that the show addressed the rural mindset of the Clampetts functioned as a running portrayal of competing views towards financial status. For example, the Clampetts initially didn't understand what a helicopter or a telephone were, which was a comedic exaggeration of their rural mentality, but also a negative perspective on their financial status.³³ Conversely, positive portrayals of financial status included the Clampetts sudden acquisition of oil wealth and the monetary means that came with it—in this case, positive financial status coexisted with a positive view towards consumption.³⁴ While that wasn't always the case, financial status was a complex issue that the show addressed in a multitude of ways.

Another way that *The Beverly Hillbillies* addressed financial status was the competing views of Mr. Drysdale and his family (especially the family). For example, Mrs. Drysdale

31. See Appendix E, Table E10.

32. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “Meanwhile, Back at the Cabin,” in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

33. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “The Clampetts Strike Oil,” in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

34. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “Getting Settled,” in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

disliked “riffraff,” which included people like the Clampetts.³⁵ Once again, *The Beverly Hillbillies* conflated class position with financial status, wherein Mrs. Drysdale believed herself in a superior financial position than others.³⁶ This was both a positive portrayal of the Drysdales’ financial status and a negative one of the Clampetts; however, in a similar situation, the show continued to depict the Clampett’s financial status positively because of their oil wealth.³⁷ For example, when Jed tried enrolling Jethro in school, one of the administrators didn’t believe they could afford it based on their appearance (a negative perspective on their financial status).³⁸ So financial status worked in conjunction with other sociocultural factors—in short, money conferred both positive and negative financial status to the characters in the show, but it was tied to other factors. This too would have made the portrayals found in *The Beverly Hillbillies* more realistic and relatable to viewers, as economic factors like employment and thrift (as well as others) provided different images towards individuals’ financial status as part of the social hierarchy at the time. But there were still other economic factors to consider.

The final two economic factors, charitableness and macroeconomic content, were marginal factors at best—charitableness had only positive portrayals, while macroeconomic content wasn’t even included.³⁹ There were several examples of positive views towards charitableness, such as Mr. Drysdale loaning his servants to the Clampetts, Elly giving Pearl her

35. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “The Clampetts Meet Mrs. Drysdale,” in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

36. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “The Clampetts Meet Mrs. Drysdale,” in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

37. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “Jethro Goes to School,” aired November 14, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

38. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, “Jethro Goes to School,” in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

39. See Appendix E, Tables E11 and E12.

mink coat, and Jed helping at the bank when Jane was sick.⁴⁰ In all cases, charitableness was shown realistically and positively, which indicated that charitableness was a positive economic attribute. Excluding macroeconomic content from the show was likely the result of the focus of the show, namely the Clampetts and those associated with them (such as Mr. Drysdale); therefore, since the show was explicitly structured around the microcosm of the Clampetts' lives, macroeconomics was a nonfactor.

Overall, *The Beverly Hillbillies* continued the trend of television comedies incorporating relatable and realistic forms of economic content that reveal how Americans perceived of economic conditions and the economy in general. But it was also markedly different from the preceding series. Placing this program and the other ones included in the 1950s section of this study in relation to one another is the next step to better understanding how the shows not only reflected Americans' economic realities but also how the content correlated with real-world conditions.

40. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "The Servants," in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "No Place Like Home," aired December 26, 1962, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD; *The Beverly Hillbillies*, "Elly Becomes a Secretary," aired May 22, 1963, on CBS, in *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Official First Season*, DVD.

CHAPTER VIII:

SUMMARY OF THE ECONOMIC CONTENT OF THE 1950S AND EARLY-1960S TELEVISION COMEDIES

As the previous chapters collectively illustrated, the 1950s era was one of exceptional development of the television industry and television programs. Not only did television diffuse throughout most of the nation, the television industry's reliance on program ratings meant that audiences played an integral role in selecting what programs aired and, by extension, what content would be shown on TV. Moreover, from the 1950s into the 1960s, America experienced astounding economic prosperity, ranging from the expansion of consumer culture, the diffusion of Americans into suburban housing, increased mobility from automobiles, and an overall enhancement to the standard of living as many Americans joined the middle class. The preceding program reviews depicted that audiences watched programs they found realistic and relatable based on the content found within the shows. In this way, television functioned as a remarkable medium that reflected audiences' worldviews, including their perceptions of the range of economic factors included in this study. Equally important, each of the earlier chapters analyzing the shows—*The Goldbergs*, *I Love Lucy*, *Father Knows Best*, *The Honeymooners*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies*—detailed what economic content the shows contained and how that related to audience's economic perspectives. Consumption and thrift were paramount economic factors, ones that worked independently and cooperatively. Similarly, the other economic factors—ranging from employment to macroeconomic conditions—depicted just how multifaceted economic content was in television comedies, and American viewers' minds. Yet the shows must still be compared against each other to elaborate on the change and continuity of economic factors over the course of the 1950s and into the 1960s.

The foremost factor is integrated ads. All five of the shows contained integrated ads, but to varying degrees, with *Father Knows Best* having the least amount of integrated ads, whereas *The Honeymooners* had the ads in every episode.¹ Interestingly, this discrepancy in integrated ad frequency appears in the mid-1950s, suggesting that other external factors determined the inclusion or exclusion of integrated ads from the shows. Nevertheless, the inclusion of such ads consistently over the course of this economic period indicates the degree to which consumerism had become a normalized component of the American economic and cultural landscapes. These ads promoted consumerism in a medium that the audience itself dictated the content of. So audiences accepted the ads as part of their regular television viewing.

Consumption, like the integrated ads, was a fundamental part of all five shows. *The Goldbergs*, *I Love Lucy*, *Father Knows Best*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies* exhibited an overall increase in frequency of positive portrayals of consumption by year, whereas *The Honeymooners* had a decline in positive portrayals of consumption.² Yet at the same time, there was also an increased frequency of negative perspectives on consumption in all shows except *The Honeymooners*.³ What this suggests is that depictions of consumption, in general, reflected the significance of consumption within American society in the 1950s, which had effectively developed a consumer culture during this period; however, interpretations of consumption remained varied because, as the examples of the previous chapters illustrated, consumption remained tied to individuals' perspectives and larger social and economic contexts. As a result, there were still competing views towards consumption in American society and the frequency of

1. See Appendix I, Table I1.

2. See Appendix I, Table I1.

3. See Appendix I, Table I1.

these depictions supports how integral consumption habits had become to Americans. This was also supported by the neutral portrayals of consumption, of which there were a substantial amount in these programs, with the exception of *The Beverly Hillbillies*.⁴ Thus, consumption had become a normalized component of everyday American life in the real world, just as these programs depicted, which further accounted for its dominant position within television comedies.

Along with consumption, thrift was another integral economic factor found in all of the shows. Positive portrayals of thrift increased in frequency over the course of *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy*, whereas the other three shows instead had declining amounts of positive depictions of thrift.⁵ Similarly, other than *Father Knows Best* and *The Honeymooners*, neutral depictions of thrift also declined.⁶ And even negative portrayals of thrift declined in *The Goldbergs*, *Father Knows Best*, and *The Honeymooners*, while they increased in frequency in *I Love Lucy* and *The Beverly Hillbillies*.⁷ The examples found in the preceding chapters pertaining to thrift demonstrated how thrift could relate to other economic factors and larger social contexts when found in the shows, though the overall trends in how thrift was shown reflect a change in the economic perceptions of Americans during the 1950s. Based on these trends, it is clear that Americans had perceived thrift positively in the early years of the 1950s (i.e. during the time of *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy*), but these views shifted. By the latter half of the decade and into the 1960s, thrift was not as significant a factor within the shows, suggesting that it was also declining in importance in the real world. Thrift, while still present in the shows both positively and negatively, didn't have the same degree of importance that it once had, which correlates with

4. See Appendix I, Table I1.

5. See Appendix I, Table I1.

6. See Appendix I, Table I1.

7. See Appendix I, Table I1.

the increased emphasis on consumer culture. In effect, consumption had ascended in importance in Americans' economic worldview, while thrift had declined, even as it remained a foundational component of Americans' perception of economic factors.

While consumption and thrift both illustrated clearly defined trends in Americans' economic perceptions, employment was a different scenario. There was little consistency in frequency of employment depictions—whether positive, neutral, or negative—across the shows. This in turn indicates that employment remained a significant economic factor within American society across the 1950s. Employment was an essential economic component, and therefore was depicted with in varied ways across the programs, much as the preceding chapters indicated.⁸ So even though there wasn't a readily discernible trend in employment depictions, its continued presence within the shows attests to how employment stayed in a prominent position in Americans' views of economic conditions and the economy in general.

Even though consumption, thrift, and employment were the most significant economic factors within these programs, other economic factors, including bills and taxes, played supporting roles in better elucidating Americans' economic perceptions. Both bills and taxes had decidedly negative portrayals in the shows, with few neutral and no positive ones.⁹ This is relatively unsurprising, as bills and taxes are just particular forms of expenses which, in the consumer society of 1950s America, meant that they functioned as a negative cost to Americans. The neutral portrayals of these factors in *The Goldbergs*, *I Love Lucy*, and *The Honeymooners* also indicated that bills and taxes were accepted in the early and mid-1950s; however, the lack of inclusion in the later years, coupled with the negative perspectives towards bills and taxes, also

8. See Appendix I, Table II.

9. See Appendix I, Table II.

suggests an increasing dislike of these economic factors, which is likely the result of bills—being an expense—detracted from consumerist mentality ingrained in America by the late-1950s and early-1960s.

Necessary expenses differed from bills and taxes by having a few positive portrayals, though not enough to establish an accurate trend; indeed, the evidence shows an increasing number of neutral and negative portrayals of necessary expenses across the date range for each show, even as the number of references to necessary expenses declined overall.¹⁰ What this suggests is that necessary expenses too were situational depending on individuals' interpretations and situational context. But more than that, the inclusion of necessary expenses in increasing percentage frequency in each show from *The Goldbergs* to *The Beverly Hillbillies* supports that Americans acknowledged that necessary expenses were a relevant part of everyday economic life, even if they still had positive or negative positions towards these expenses. Subsequently, the declining percentage frequency within each program by year also indicates that necessary expenses functioned as an economic subclass. Yes, necessary expenses were a part of these shows, but they lacked the significance of other economic factors, like consumption or thrift. This in turn indicates that the shows illustrated how Americans' economic perceptions also delineated importance of these economic factors. The frequency of different forms of economic content effectively illustrates what economic factors Americans considered more significant than others. The factors that were addressed with increased frequency, like consumption and thrift, were more important than those that received less attention, such as necessary expenses.

Beyond necessary expenses, the shows also dealt with financial planning and financial status. Whereas financial planning had mixed positive and negative depictions within the shows,

10. See Appendix I, Table I1.

financial status, as an indicator of wealth, instead had an increased frequency of positive depictions in *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy*, but a declining presence in *Father Knows Best*, *The Honeymooners*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies*, even as there were few neutral portrayals and a declining amount of negative ones across the shows.¹¹ Once again, the inclusion of these factors within these 1950s and early-1960s television comedies illustrates that both financial planning and financial status were relevant economic factors of the American public. The mixed amount of both positive and negative portrayals of financial planning indicates that Americans held competing views towards this economic factor over the decade, thereby suggesting a degree of ambivalence, since it was neither exceedingly supported or disliked. Similarly, financial status also reflected competing views, though it shows change over the course of the decade, since early comedies like *The Goldbergs* and *I Love Lucy* retained a positive trend in the amount of positive portrayals, unlike the later shows. Effectively, the depictions of financial status became less significant as the 1950s progressed, which in turn correlated with many Americans becoming firmly cemented within the American middle class. It is therefore not only possible but likely that as Americans solidified their individual economic positions, they became less concerned with financial status as an economic factor, which led to the decline within the television programs. Nevertheless, both financial planning and financial status remained valued—if somewhat diminished—components in the larger economic sphere.

The final two economic factors included in this study—charitableness and macroeconomic content—were also peripheral factors, with a declining amount of positive portrayals of charitableness, along with sporadic neutral and negative depictions, and very little

11. See Appendix I, Table I1.

macroeconomic content at all.¹² Yet the minimal amounts of these economic factors within the preceding shows also provide insight into Americans' economic perceptions. To start with, the inclusion of these forms of economic content within the shows at all suggests that they were considered by the viewing audience, even if only peripherally. The presence of more positive than negative portrayals of charitableness suggest that charitableness was valued, but it nevertheless remained a subsidiary form of economic content. Subsequently, the limited amount of macroeconomic content indicates that Americans' economic reality was largely insular, focusing on their daily lives in within an economic microcosm rather than in the aggregate economy of America. In this way, these shows reflected how Americans thought about economic factors and how they interpreted different economic conditions.

In order to demonstrate the continuity within television comedies to depict audience's views towards economics through the content found within the programs, the next step in this study is looking towards the late-1970s and 1980s, a markedly different economic period within the United States and, by extension, within the minds of American television viewers. To better illustrate the economic content distinctions within television comedies found between the first economic period of this study (the 1950s and early-1960s) and the second (the late-1970s and 1980s), the same progression through each of the economic factors will remain (i.e. beginning with integrated ads, then consumption and thrift, and so on). Following the analysis of the three programs studied within this second period is another chapter evaluating the relationship of the economic content in these programs to real-world economic conditions and, more importantly, the similarities and differences between each of the economic periods. This analysis answers what economic content was shown within television comedies and, because of the markedly different real world economic context in that period, it also establishes how television comedies

12. See Appendix I, Table I1.

continued to provide insight into Americans' economic perceptions and how those perceptions had changed over time. And the first show studied in that period is *Three's Company*.

CHAPTER IX:
THREE'S COMPANY

Unlike the 1950s and early-1960s, the late-1970s marked a new economic period in the United States, one wrought of economic crises and financial challenges. The foremost concern of the period was found during the Carter administration, as America faced an energy crisis due to OPEC raising the cost of oil.¹ The energy crisis exacerbated the effects of inflation at a time when the American economy had effectively stagnated, with little growth, which in turn began adversely affecting Americans' standard of living.² In short, these economic issues posed new challenges and concerns that informed Americans' economic perceptions. Yet other sociocultural factors informed Americans' worldviews, including the continued advancement of women's rights, particularly women's increased roles in the workforce.³ In terms of employment, women had increasingly, over the course of the 1970s, integrated into the mainstream workforce, particularly those with college educations.⁴ As such, changes to the employment structures in the United States by the late-1970s also played a significant part in establishing how Americans viewed economic conditions and concerns.

Even though this economic period had fundamental variances from that of the 1950s and early-1960s, television comedies remained a gauge on audience's economic worldviews. The content found within the shows engaged with audiences' notions on economic thought and

1. Henretta et al., *America's History*, 989, 998; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 1073; Brinkley, *American History*, 857, 866-867.

2. Nash et al., *The American People*, 988; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 1073; Brinkley, *American History*, 866-867.

3. Henretta et al., *America's History*, 1004-1007; Brinkley, *American History*, 845-846.

4. Brinkley, *American History*, 845-846.

economic conditions and reflected them back to themselves in a cyclical process. *Three's Company* was one of the shows involved in this system. *Three's Company* began in 1977 and ran through 1984 on ABC, and revolved around two women, Chrissy and Janet, living in an apartment with a man, Jack, who pretended to be gay so the landlords wouldn't evict him.⁵ The character of Chrissy was later substituted with Cindy, Chrissy's cousin, who, after a time, was replaced by another woman, Terri.⁶ The landlords were initially Stanley and Helen Roper, who were later replaced by apartment manager Ralph Furley.⁷ These characters comprised the principal cast of the show, though surrounding neighbors, friends, family, and strangers also entered the mix at various points, as the show traversed the daily lives of its main characters.⁸

Like the earlier programs found in the 1950s, *Three's Company* was a well-reviewed, successful program. One reviewer explained in 1977 when the series first began that the humor

5. All original episode airdates based on IMDb information. "Three's Company: Season 1," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=1> ; "Three's Company: Season 2," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=2> ; "Three's Company: Season 3," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=3> ; "Three's Company: Season 4," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=4> ; "Three's Company: Season 5," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=5> ; "Three's Company: Season 6," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=6> ; "Three's Company: Season 7," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=7> ; "Three's Company: Season 8," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=8> ; *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD (Anchor Bay Entertainment, 2014); The overarching plot of the program was introduced in the pilot episode, "A Man About the House." *Three's Company*, "A Man About the House," aired March 15, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

6. *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; The following episodes introduced Cindy and Terri. *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Cousin," aired December 16, 1980, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack Bares All," aired October 6, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

7. *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; The following episodes introduced the landlords. *Three's Company*, "A Man About the House," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The New Landlord," aired September 25, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

8. *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

was funny, but it was uncertain how well the show would develop over time.⁹ Even NBC's president supported the show, since it was meant to be a "mass-audience" program.¹⁰ This view of the program is particularly significant because it further illustrates how viewer support remained arguably the most critical factor in determining what would shows would be televised, which in turn reflected what the audiences wanted to see. Yet some considered the program part of a genre of shows that used the sex appeal of its cast to attain high ratings.¹¹ But such an assessment fails to encompass the plethora of cultural, social, and economic factors found within the program that invigorated the show's plots and enhanced its overall draw to viewers. Indeed, *Three's Company* proved itself a ratings star, placing among the highest performing shows in 1977, 1978, 1979, and even into the early-1980s.¹² Clearly, viewers supported *Three's Company*. And *Three's Company* reflected viewers' worldviews back to them, including their perspectives on economic conditions and economic factors.

As in the 1950s, the foremost economic factor is integrated ads. However, *Three's Company* marks a transition away from integrated ads—they were not present at all over the show's run.¹³ This is likely the result of two principal incidences: the maturation of the television industry and the complete integration of consumer society within the American culture.

9. "Three's Company," Television Reviews, *Variety*, March 23, 1977, 58, microfilm.

10. "Silverman Says it Once More: He's Out for Program Quality," *Broadcasting*, July 3, 1978, 61.

11. "TV Network Planners Play Cat-and-Mouse with Fall Line-Up," *Broadcasting*, August 28, 1978, 27.

12. "After the Ballyhoo, the Bottom Line," *Broadcasting*, September 19, 1977, 36; "ABC Off and Running Again, With a Bigger Head Start Than Ever," *Broadcasting*, September 18, 1978, 28; "Primetime's Season to Date," *Broadcasting*, November 6, 1978, 25; "Three's Company," Reviews of Returning Network Series, *Variety*, September 20, 1978, 63, microfilm; "ABC Goes Higher; NBC Sinks Lower," *Broadcasting*, March 26, 1979, 114; "Network Races Tighten Up," *Broadcasting*, November 12, 1979, 31-32; "Monitor," *Broadcasting*, August 6, 1979, 104; "Three's Company," TV Followups, *Variety*, October 3, 1979, 58, microfilm; "Three's Company," TV Followups, *Variety*, October 14, 1981, 318, 328, microfilm; "CBS Wins Rating Battle With 'Blue and Gray,'" *Broadcasting*, November 29, 1982, 48-49; "Premier Week Goes to CBS," *Broadcasting*, October 10, 1983, 78.

13. See Appendix F, Table F2.

Americans had become fully invested in consumer society so that shows no longer required sponsors to have their ads inserted within the program or to have the actors themselves give voice to the advertisements as part of the show. Instead, ads were now a distinct and separate feature from the program, with a clear division between the economic content insulated in the show and other economic externalities. As a result, the economic content found in *Three's Company* continued the trend of reflecting Americans' economic perceptions.

One of the foremost forms of economic content in *Three's Company* was consumption, which had generally more positive than negative portrayals, as well as a substantial amount of neutral depictions.¹⁴ Neutral depictions continued the trend of providing supplemental portrayals of consumption that reaffirmed how significant consumption was to American culture, even in television programs. This included scenarios where Jack, Janet, Chrissy, or the Ropers went to the local pub, as well as people shopping at a garage sale held by Janet and Chrissy (which, from the women's perspective, positively depicted thrift as well).¹⁵ Positive forms of consumption included the extra expenses that the main characters chose to have because they wanted to, particularly when they bought special foodstuffs (such as cakes or other distinctive foods outside of necessary expenses), when they went on dates, when the program emphasized trips to the pub, and other similar generally positive portrayals.¹⁶

14. See Appendix F, Table F3.

15. *Three's Company*, "And Mother Makes Four," aired March 24, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Date," aired October 11, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The New Landlord," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

16. *Three's Company*, "Roper's Niece," aired March 31, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack the Giant Killer," aired April 14, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack Looks for a Job," aired September 20, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

Even though the positive consumption perspectives outweighed the negative, in either case these portrayals were predicated on the individual characters' perspectives and the situational context at the time. When Jack prepared dinner at one point, Janet commented that he was cooking "something expensive"; however, Jack was indifferent because, as he stated, "you can't put a price tag on taste."¹⁷ So in this case, Janet disliked (and depicted negatively) Jack's consumption choice, whereas Jack's position was predominantly positive towards consumption. In another instance, Stanley considered investing in a real estate venture if it was "a sure thing" (which he hadn't yet decided), while Helen was highly pessimistic of the entire endeavor.¹⁸ Stanley's position was positive towards consumption, while Helen's was negative. So competing perspectives towards consumption was a common theme in *Three's Company*.

Even more than the competing representations of consumption, *Three's Company* also provided additional insight into the ways that consumption remained a semi-gendered economic factor as well as one that varied by age demographic within the program. Stanley, in general, disliked consumption and usually viewed it in a negative way, unless he saw consumption as an investment or a benefit to himself.¹⁹ Conversely, Helen thought Stanley was cheap, which was a negative perspective on thrift, while she believed that they should spend their money on things that she wanted (such as a trip to Las Vegas or clothes), thereby positively depicting consumption.²⁰ By contrast, Jack, Janet, and Chrissy usually supported (and positively depicted)

17. *Three's Company*, "Jack Looks for a Job," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

18. *Three's Company*, "Alone Together," aired October 25, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

19. *Three's Company*, "The Gift," aired January 3, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

20. *Three's Company*, "The Gift," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

consumption, as was the case when Chrissy won a bet on a series of horse races, and she, Jack and Janet spent the money on a variety of material purchases.²¹ This is a significant feature because the older generation (i.e. Stanley and Helen) portrayed consumption along traditionally gendered lines unlike the younger generation (Jack, Janet, and Chrissy). Thus consumption had division by age and, to a lesser degree, gender.

While consumption did, in many cases, function as an independent economic factor, in other cases it was tied to thrift and employment, both integral factors in *Three's Company*. There were neutral portrayals of both factors, though thrift had more positive than negative depictions, while portrayals of employment were more positive up to 1979 and then became increasingly contentious, with a divide between positive and negative perspectives.²² In some scenarios, including when Jack bought Janet a birthday cake and got it at a discount, both consumption and thrift were shown positively.²³ Conversely, Stanley choosing to not take Helen to Las Vegas because he thought it cost too much, illustrated dual negative depictions of consumption and thrift.²⁴ And in other cases, such as Jack helping Stanley buy a jacket at a discount for Helen that Stanley didn't want to pay for because of its original cost, consumption and thrift were inversely related (a negative perspective towards consumption from Stanley, but a positive one towards thrift from both Jack and Stanley).²⁵ There were also several cases where *Three's Company* directly depicted thrift. Positive portrayals included Stanley undertaking maintenance projects at

21. *Three's Company*, "The Root of All Evil," aired March 4, 1980, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

22. See Appendix F, Tables F4 and F5.

23. *Three's Company*, "Roper's Niece," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

24. *Three's Company*, "The Gift," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

25. *Three's Company*, "The Gift," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

Jack, Janet, and Chrissy's apartment, Janet, Chrissy, and Jack fixing their couch, and Jack recruiting Terri, Janet, his friend Larry, and Furley to help him decorate and renovate a restaurant.²⁶ Alternatively, there were also negative depictions, such as Stanley taking Helen to a movie she didn't want to see because he had "free passes" to it (a negative portrayal of thrift from Helen's perspective, but a positive one from Stanley).²⁷ Overall, thrift contributed additional economic complexity to the show.

Though consumption did interrelate with thrift, thrift was the dominant economic factor in the show. Indeed, thrift—with both its positive and negative depictions—was a running theme in *Three's Company*. The living arrangement between Jack, Janet, and Chrissy (and later the other women who took Chrissy's place) positively depicted thrift—they lived together to save money and ensure that rent remained financially viable for them to pay.²⁸ The living arrangement was also tied to employment, of which the show neutrally demonstrated that Jack, early in the show, was a student attempting to become a chef (who picked up "odd jobs" when not in school), while Janet worked as a florist, and Chrissy as a typist.²⁹ In this way, *Three's Company* successfully interwove employment and thrift over the course of the show in terms of providing character context—each of the principal characters understood thrift in different ways because of

26. *Three's Company*, "And Mother Makes Four," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Janet's High School Sweetheart," aired November 29, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Opening Night," aired November 16, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

27. *Three's Company*, "Stanley Casanova," aired November 22, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

28. *Three's Company*, "A Man About the House," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Extra, Extra," aired October 26, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

29. *Three's Company*, "A Man About the House," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

their unique perspective and their employment status. Yet each economic factor still remained distinct.

Since *Three's Company* was a long-running series, it successfully addressed fluctuations of employment and as a result showcased both positive and negative perspectives. Jack's particular situation illustrates both perspectives over the course of the show. Jack began as a culinary student who only had limited employment opportunities while attending school, acquiring a variety of brief jobs, including those unrelated to cooking (like bartending at a pub), contributing to both positive and negative portrayals of employment.³⁰ Both Janet and Chrissy even helped Jack get jobs, including at the flower shop and as a caterer, though the jobs didn't last.³¹ But as the show progressed, Jack completed his culinary training and acquired professional jobs in the culinary world (and even as a culinary instructor at a cooking school), positively depicting employment.³² However, many of these employment opportunities didn't last long, with Jack facing recurring joblessness (or at the very least, low-level job positions, like

30. *Three's Company*, "A Man About the House," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack Looks for a Job," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Stanley Casanova," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack Moves Out," aired May 8, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Love Barge," aired November 27, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

31. *Three's Company*, "Jack in the Flower Shop," aired January 31, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Catered Affair," aired February 6, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

32. *Three's Company*, "... And Justice for Jack," aired November 11, 1980, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack's Other Mother," aired January 20, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Teacher's Pet," aired March 3, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack Bares All," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Professor Jack," aired October 27, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Boy Meets Dummy," aired December 1, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "And Now, Here's Jack," aired March 23, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

being a busboy) that negatively portrayed employment.³³ These competing perspectives contributed significantly to the division in employment-related content between positive and negative portrayals. Even when Jack opened his own restaurant—a prominently positive employment scenario—he continued to face challenges that negatively portrayed employment, including investing a substantial amount of time and money into making the restaurant viable (it was rundown when he received it), the lack of employees (particularly trained ones) to help cook, and other related challenges.³⁴

Aside from Jack's employment conditions, the principle female characters also demonstrated both positive and negative aspects of employment. The foremost consideration in these cases was that the women maintained stable employment, unlike Jack, which added a slightly gendered quality to this economic content. Janet consistently had her job as a florist, Chrissy as a typist, and later Cindy as a typist, as well as Terri as a nurse.³⁵ This was a difference between Jack and the women that the show addressed directly when Janet's parents arrived at the apartment and Jack pretended to be married to Janet.³⁶ In this case, the parents were highly

33. *Three's Company*, "... And Justice for Jack," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Room at the Bottom," aired December 9, 1980, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Janet's Secret," aired February 3, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "A Friend in Need," aired February 16, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Critic's Choice," aired March 9, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

34. *Three's Company*, "Jack Gets His," aired November 9, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Opening Night," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Impossible Dream," aired December 14, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Apartment," aired March 22, 1983, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

35. *Three's Company*, "A Man About the House," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Cousin," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack Bares All," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

36. *Three's Company*, "Janet's Secret," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

surprised that Janet financially supported Jack, who didn't have steady employment at the time.³⁷ Of course, within their respective jobs, the women also illustrated both positive and negative employment scenarios. Positive depictions included Janet, Chrissy, and Terri receiving promotions and Janet receiving a raise.³⁸ Conversely, Jack and Janet's efforts to discourage Chrissy's decision to try selling cosmetics door-to-door, Chrissy not receiving a raise at her job, Janet being berated by an efficiency expert, and Terri's long hours at work, comprised some of the negative portrayals of employment.³⁹ And there was even further delineation by age in regards to employment perspectives, as Helen decided to try and get a job, which Janet and Chrissy supported, positively depicting employment.⁴⁰ Helen, though, didn't want to work but was trying to prove to Stanley that she could earn her own money rather than relying on the allowance Stanley gave her.⁴¹ Ultimately, Stanley decided to give Helen more money and Helen happily quit working, thereby portraying employment negatively.⁴² As this scenario demonstrated, not only did employment-related content vary by gender (the men's perspectives juxtaposed to the women's) but also by age (the different attitudes towards employment from

37. *Three's Company*, "Janet's Secret," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

38. *Three's Company*, "Janet's Promotion," aired September 27, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's New Boss," aired November 14, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Odd Couples," aired December 6, 1983, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

39. *Three's Company*, "Snow Job," aired October 2, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Professor Jack," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Hearts and Flowers," aired February 2, 1982, on ABC, in *Three's Company: the Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Out on a Limb," aired October 25, 1983, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

40. *Three's Company*, "Helen's Job," aired December 13, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

41. *Three's Company*, "Helen's Job," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

42. *Three's Company*, "Helen's Job," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

Stanley and Helen as opposed to Jack, Janet, and Chrissy), adding further complexity to the economic content in the show and thereby making the show all the more realistic to its viewers.

Along with the three principal forms of economic content—consumption, thrift, and employment—bills were the fourth fundamental economic factor in the show, with exceedingly negative depictions, as well as both positive and neutral portrayals.⁴³ Neutral portrayals, such as Chrissy paying the rent on the apartment, Chrissy and Janet having a garage sale to raise money for rent, and Furley expecting the rent money, all illustrated how bills were not only part of everyday life, but one that was regularly anticipated, even to the point that the show didn't always emphasize bills.⁴⁴ In other much more limited cases, bills were shown in a positive way, specifically when Stanley commented on how a previous tenant paid her rent on time (which was said with approval), Jack writing a bill to Furley in lieu of paying the rent for a dinner Furley attended, a doctor joking about how expensive his bill would be to Chrissy (a positive portrayal from the doctor's perspective), and Furley giving Jack, Janet, and Cindy an extension on their rent.⁴⁵ All of these cases were predicated on either someone benefiting from bills being paid or the deferral of bill paying requirements. This, however, was not the norm when *Three's Company* depicted bills. In most cases, the portrayals were negative, particularly involving the expense incurred from the bills, such as having to pay the rent, Janet noting that they were late in

43. See Appendix F, Table F6.

44. *Three's Company*, "The Gift," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Bake Off," aired February 27, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The New Landlord," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Borrowing Trouble," aired May 10, 1983, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

45. *Three's Company*, "Eleanor's Return," aired December 12, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The New Landlord," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Hospitality," aired November 13, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Cousin," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

paying the rent, acquiring additional bills in the mail, and other expenses that result from bills as shown by the principal characters.⁴⁶ Consequently, bills occasionally worked in conjunction with other economic factors. When Janet sold some jewelry to help finance the rent payment, she positively depicted thrift (even though she considered it negatively), while also depicting bills in a negative way.⁴⁷ As a result the frequent depiction of bills added another layer of realism to the economic content in *Three's Company* that enhanced how the audience would have related to the show, as well as better establishing the correlation between real-world economic conditions and concerns and those found in television comedies.

Other economic factors, including taxes and necessary expenses, were supplemental forms of economic content in *Three's Company*. In the case of taxes, there were only negative depictions, while necessary expenses had varied positive and negative depictions, along with several neutral portrayals.⁴⁸ Taxes functioned much like bills—they were negatively depicted, including Stanley getting upset that the IRS decided to audit him and Jack discussing how some of Chrissy's money she won from betting on horse races would go towards taxes.⁴⁹ But the division in the portrayals of necessary expenses largely depended on the situational context and individual characters' perspectives. For example, Stanley dislike of Helen's grocery expenses

46. *Three's Company*, "And Mother Makes Four," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "It's Only Money," aired April 21, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Date," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy Come Home," aired February 28, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Best Laid Plans," aired February 13, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Chrissy's Cousin," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Borrowing Trouble," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

47. *Three's Company*, "Roper's Niece," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

48. See Appendix F, Tables F7 and F8.

49. *Three's Company*, "Chrissy and the Guru," aired October 24, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "The Root of All Evil," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

she purchased with her allowance illustrated a negative view towards necessary expenses; however, Stanley ultimately increased Helen's allowance, thereby enabling her to make more purchases, positively depicting necessary expenses.⁵⁰ But there were also straightforward depictions, like Jack breaking his leg (a negative portrayal of necessary expenses).⁵¹ And neutral portrayals, such as Jack or Janet shopping for groceries, only added to the normalcy of the economic content found in the show, which helped ensure that audiences could relate to the contents of the program.⁵²

As the preceding economic factors indicated, financial planning and financial status, while not the most significant aspects of the show, were also supplementary economic factors that further elucidated the complex nature of Americans' economic worldviews as reflected in *Three's Company*. Both factors had competing positive and negative depictions throughout the show; there was no particular consistency because these factors were largely situational and, more importantly, tied to other economic phenomena.⁵³ When Jack, Chrissy, and Janet needed to pay the rent, Chrissy commented on the effort that it took to save the money in the first place, which illustrated a negative perspective towards both thrift and financial planning.⁵⁴ *Three's Company* also successfully depicted different forms of financial planning as part of generational differences. Stanley illustrated a positive view towards financial planning when he wanted to review his finances; conversely, when Jack went to the pub on a date, he failed to even bring

50. *Three's Company*, "Helen's Job," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

51. *Three's Company*, "The Harder They Fall," aired February 20, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

52. *Three's Company*, "The Catered Affair," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Jack to the Rescue," aired January 6, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

53. See Appendix F, Tables F9 and F10.

54. *Three's Company*, "It's Only Money," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

money with him to pay, and joked that the cost of the dinner would have to go on his tab, contributing to a negative depiction of financial planning.⁵⁵ Likewise, Janet even stated that her finances were so poor that the bank she went to suggested she take her business elsewhere, negatively depicting financial planning.⁵⁶ However, in other cases, Janet, Jack, and Chrissy did try financial planning, such as when Chrissy won money betting on horse races and decided (along with Jack and Janet) to set aside enough money to pay at least three month's rent, positively depicting financial planning; however, through their various purchases, Jack, Janet, and Chrissy ultimately spent all the money, which negatively depicted consumption.⁵⁷ Consequently, financial planning varied by case and character, though it did augment other economic factors, thereby providing additional economic content in the show.

Just like financial planning, financial status also relied on the situational context and characters' opinions on the matter. Generally speaking, Janet held a negative view of her financial status because she was relatively poor.⁵⁸ Janet's parents, too, perceived Jack and Janet's financial status negatively because of their living arrangements and Jack's lack of employment.⁵⁹ Furley also had a poor financial status, which was depicted negatively, but he tried to establish

55. *Three's Company*, "Ground Rules," aired September 13, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

56. *Three's Company*, "Dying to Meet You," aired May 5, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

57. *Three's Company*, "The Root of All Evil," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

58. *Three's Company*, "No Children, No Dogs," aired April 7, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD; *Three's Company*, "Dying to Meet You," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

59. *Three's Company*, "Janet's Secret," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

a façade of wealth which positively associated monetary wealth with financial status.⁶⁰ The association between wealth and financial status remained a strong factor in other cases as well, including when a rich suitor wanted to marry Cindy, and even offered money, real estate, and employment to Jack to get Jack to support his endeavor, all of which positively depicted the man's financial status.⁶¹ In this way, the varied depictions of financial status supported larger economic concerns within the show, such as consumption, thrift, and employment.

The degree to which financial planning and financial status were divided based on situational context and individual characters' competing perspectives was not particularly unique—charitableness also exhibited these traits with both positive and negative depictions.⁶² *Three's Company* positively depicted charitableness when Chrissy dividing her winnings from a bet on horseracing between herself, Janet, and Jack, which was in turn tied to consumption, since the money was used to fund purchases of material goods (and planning to pay the rent).⁶³ Conversely, in a statement made by Bart Furley, Ralph's brother who owned the apartment complex that the principal characters inhabited, Bart claimed that he was rich because he didn't give his money away to others freely, a negative perspective on charitableness, but a positive one towards financial status from Bart's perspective.⁶⁴ In both of these cases, charitableness functioned in conjunction with other economic factors. However, in other cases, the view

60. *Three's Company*, "Ralph's Rival," aired December 4, 1979, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

61. *Three's Company*, "Father of the Bride," aired February 10, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

62. See Appendix F, Table F11.

63. *Three's Company*, "The Root of All Evil," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

64. *Three's Company*, "Furley vs. Furley," aired February 17, 1981, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

towards charitableness depended on the characters' perspectives, such as when Helen wanted to take Jack, Janet, and Chrissy to dinner (a positive perspective towards charitableness), only to have Stanley grumble about it (a negative perspective), though he ultimately agreed.⁶⁵ In another case, the situational context determined the views towards charitableness, as Jack and Chrissy gave a guru and his entourage a donation at a bar, only to find out afterward that they didn't have enough money to cover their drinks anymore (causing the guru to give their money back).⁶⁶ So this was a case where charitableness was both a positive and negative value.

In the majority of cases, the prior economic factors were grouped as home economic concerns—concerns that reflected Americans' economic perspectives. However, *Three's Company* also ushered in a heightened degree of macroeconomic awareness, shown through principally negative depictions (though positive ones also existed).⁶⁷ When Stanley talked with Helen about why he appreciated his home, he mentioned that it was because it was in “a rising market,” where the value of his home was increasing, illustrating a positive portrayal of macroeconomic conditions.⁶⁸ While this was undoubtedly indicative of contextually larger economic concerns Americans had, particularly in regards to the value of their property and homes, the negative depictions proved even more illustrative. This included a particularly telling statement from Jack that implied that people living beyond their financial means effectively sustained the overall American economy, a concept that both Janet and Chrissy agreed with.⁶⁹ In

65. *Three's Company*, “It's Only Money,” in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

66. *Three's Company*, “Chrissy and the Guru,” in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

67. See Appendix F, Table F12.

68. *Three's Company*, “Janet's Promotion,” in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

69. *Three's Company*, “Roper's Car,” aired November 1, 1977, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

this case, Jack's opinion pointed out (in a negative way) that the American economy was built on a foundation of consumption, particularly unrestrained levels of consumption.⁷⁰ So macroeconomic conditions were in part predicated on the consumer society, which is relatively unsurprising since consumer culture had become a fundamentally ingrained American cultural feature. Similarly, when Stanley raised another tenant's rent, he claimed he did so because of the "energy shortage," thereby incorporating a real world economic issue (and a prominent American concern) directly into the program in a negative depiction of macroeconomic conditions.⁷¹

Energy concerns returned later in a discussion between Jack, Furley, and Chrissy, as Chrissy elaborated on how gas prices had become increasingly expensive.⁷² So energy concerns, a core macroeconomic issue in the late-1970s and early-1980s, remained a concern of the American viewer. And later, when Jack had his own restaurant, Angelino informed him that there was going to be a meat cutter's strike that would affect the availability of meat products.⁷³ Even though this was not a full-scale macroeconomic concern, it did represent (in a negative way) the larger concern about unionized labor strikes and their potentially detrimental effect on other business interests. Rather than avoiding these issues, *Three's Company* incorporated them directly into the show's plot and provided a reflective commentary on pressing real-world economic concerns of the viewers.

70. *Three's Company*, "Roper's Car," in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

71. *Three's Company*, "Jack's Navy Pal," aired February 7, 1978, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

72. *Three's Company*, "The Good-Bye Guy," aired March 25, 1980, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

73. *Three's Company*, "Baby, It's Cold Inside," aired January 17, 1984, on ABC, in *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD.

Three's Company demonstrated in its depictions of the preceding economic content that there was clearly a correlation between real-world economic conditions and concerns and the content portrayed in the show. More than that, the economic content reflected Americans' economic perspectives, a feature that contributed to the realism found in the show and by extension, the show's overall success. While *Three's Company* provided insight into the changing gender structures in America, particularly in regards to employment, these portrayals were fundamentally economic in nature even though they addressed other sociocultural concerns at the time. Consequently, economic content functioned both in an insular manner (by depicting economic content in positive, neutral, and negative ways) and in conjunction with other social and culture frameworks that were relevant and timely for the viewing audience. And television comedies' depictions of economic content continued in other shows, including *Cheers*.

CHAPTER X:

CHEERS

The effects of the late-1970s and early-1980s economic challenges—from the energy crisis to inflation—continued to pose a problem as the decade progressed. While President Reagan attempted to address these economic challenges by instituting supply-side economic principles, particularly tied to tax reduction in hopes of stimulating the financial markets, Americans nevertheless remained concerned about where the direction of the economy.¹ And during that same time, other concerns only highlighted the economic challenges of the United States, including decreased government support of social welfare programs, as well as a growing national debt.² Consequently, real-world conditions not only informed Americans' economic perceptions, but also the economic content found in television comedies at the time. And *Cheers* was one of those shows.

Like *Three's Company*, *Cheers* was another notable long-running success, on-air from 1982 through 1993.³ For the purposes of this study, though, only episodes into 1990 are examined. Nevertheless, *Cheers*, like the shows preceding it, delved into the complexities of economics and reflected audiences' views of broader economic conditions and perspectives. The show was based in Boston at a bar, aptly named Cheers, and examined the lives of a diverse group of Americans—a group that collectively showcased a variety of economic perspectives,

1. Henretta et al., *America's History*, 1020-1022; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 1082, 1085; Brinkley, *American History*, 874-876.

2. Nash et al., *The American People*, 989; Ayers et al., *American Passages*, 1086-1087; Brinkley, *American History*, 876-877.

3. *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD (Paramount, 2016).

including those of the customers, workers, and owners over the course of the show's run.⁴ The principal cast included Sam Malone, the proprietor of the bar for most of the series; bar employees Ernie "Coach" Pantusso, Carla Tortelli (whose surname later becomes LeBec after marriage), Diane Chambers, and Woody Boyd; Rebecca Howe, the new manager of the bar in a later season, after Sam briefly lost ownership of the bar; and the regular clientele, Norman (Norm) Peterson, Clifford (Cliff) Claven, Frasier Crane, and Lilith Sternin.⁵ The facets comprising each of these characters' lives reflects the varied views and portrayals of economic content within the show, and further illustrate how television comedies are a prescient medium of historical records, particularly regarding economics.

Given that *Cheers* was on-air for over a decade, it is unsurprising that it was positively reviewed during that time. However, that wasn't always the case. In the first season, *Cheers* was the lowest ranked prime-time program on-air.⁶ Yet the show persisted on NBC and, because of its critical success, its audience grew so that for more than half of its time on-air, it was among television's highest rated programs.⁷ Over the course of the show's run, *Cheers*' ratings continued to improve, from the low ratings found in the first season to increasingly higher ratings, which reflected the quality of the show's plots and themes.⁸ These same factors,

4. *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

5. *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

6. Brad Darrach, reported by Judy Ellis, Jo Beth McDaniel, and Frank Yvancic, "After 11 Seasons, 274 Episodes and a Record 111 Emmy Nominations, It's Closing Time," *Life*, May 1993, 54-57, 64, accessed June 20, 2018, EBSCOhost.

7. Bill Carter, "Why 'Cheers' Proved So Intoxicating," *New York Times*, May 9, 1993, microfilm; Darrach, reported by Ellis, McDaniel, and Yvancic, "After 11 Seasons," 54-57, 64.

8. "CBS Wins Rating Battle with 'Blue and Gray,'" *Broadcasting*, November 29, 1982, 48-49; "Cheers," Reviews of New Television Shows, *Variety*, October 6, 1982, 46, microfilm; "Ad Executive Finds Network TV in Good Health," *Broadcasting*, October 24, 1983, 64; "Cheers," TV Followups, *Variety*, December 14, 1983, 65, microfilm; Paramount Pictures Corporation, "Cheers," *Broadcasting*, June 11, 1984, 2-3; "CBS Wins Holiday Weeks, Edging ABC, NBC," *Broadcasting*, December 31, 1984, 110; "Cheers," TV Followups, *Variety*, October 8,

accompanied with respectable ratings, also attracted advertisers, who further augmented the show's popularity.⁹ When *Cheers* ended in 1993, critics found that the quality of the show was exceptionally high, with good plots and acting, all of which contributed to the program's appeal.¹⁰ And over the course of the show's run, economic factors not only augmented the themes and plots found within the show but provided an undercurrent of continuity, as the characters dealt with a range of economic opportunities and challenges, much as Americans did in the real world.

As with the preceding programs, integrated ads are the first economic factor analyzed in this study. And like *Three's Company*, *Cheers* did not utilize integrated ads.¹¹ Once again, the lack of integrated ads is the result of the primacy of American consumer culture. Shows like *Cheers* no longer needed to directly address viewers with particular sponsors' ads; instead, commercials (and the revenue they contributed to the program) functioned as a separate factor from the show. Effectively, there was an inverse relationship between the developmental state of the television industry and the American consumer culture. When the television medium had fully matured as it had in the 1980s, it no longer needed to actively promote consumer culture because that culture was already the predominant societal force in mainstream America. This enabled television advertisements to separate themselves from the programs because there was so much opportunity available over the air—advertisers had a dearth of time slots to run their

1986, 140, microfilm; "Cheers," TV Followups, *Variety*, October 7, 1987, 70; "Week 13 Lucky for NBC," *Broadcasting*, December 28, 1987, 14; "Week 13 Posts 40.3 Combined Rating, 36.4 Million Households," *Broadcasting*, December 26, 1988, 46; "Ratings Roundup," *Broadcasting*, December 18, 1989, 10; "Kids Soar, Adults Stumble in November Book," *Broadcasting*, December 31, 1990, 41; "Ratings Roundup," *Broadcasting*, December 17, 1990, 52.

9. "Television Wrapping Up Year With Good Fourth," *Broadcasting*, November 19, 1984, 35-36.

10. Darrach, reported by Ellis, McDaniel, and Yvancic, "After 11 Seasons," 54-57, 64.

11. See Appendix G, Table G2.

commercials, with the satisfaction of knowing that there would always be viewers to see them, which was a more economical approach towards advertising and television programming. Yet other economic factors remained integral to television comedies like *Cheers*, particularly consumption.

As usual, consumption remained one of the core economic components within the show. In *Cheers*, depictions of consumption were more positive than negative, along with a great deal of neutral portrayals.¹² These portrayals varied by situation and by character. Positive portrayals included Norm hosting a party for his coworkers at the bar, Sam placing bets on sports games, Diane going to a movie festival, and Carla purchasing a house.¹³ There were many other positive portrayals of generic forms of consumption by the main characters as they happily spent their money on goods and services, ranging from purchases at the bar to those on dates and other related circumstances.¹⁴ Overall, consumption was an integral part of the characters' identities, much as Frasier illustrated when he decided he and Lilith couldn't live away from "civilization" because he thoroughly enjoyed being part of the consumerist, material world.¹⁵ Consumption

12. See Appendix G, Table G3.

13. All original episode airdates based on IMDb information. "Cheers: Season 1," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=1> ; "Cheers: Season 2," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=2> ; "Cheers: Season 3," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=3> ; "Cheers: Season 4," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=4> ; "Cheers: Season 5," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=5> ; "Cheers: Season 6," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=6> ; "Cheers: Season 7," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=7> ; "Cheers: Season 8," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=8> ; *Cheers*, "Friends, Romans and Accountants," aired November 11, 1982, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Let Me Count the Ways," aired January 13, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "House of Horrors With Formal Dining and Used Brick," aired October 30, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

14. *Cheers*, "Old Flames," aired November 17, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Money Dearest," aired October 9, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

15. *Cheers*, "The Cranemakers," aired March 2, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

was, in general, an accepted and appreciated part of the characters' lives, a feature American viewers would have related to. What's more, neutral depictions of consumption aided the normalization of consumption, with the characters incorporating general, un-emphasized discussion of purchases of goods and services, including Norm joining a health club, depictions of the bar having a substantial amount of customers (indicating consumption from those customers), and characters going on trips (like Cliff going to Canada or Frasier and Lilith touring the United States by car).¹⁶ These depictions and others like them illustrated how consumption and consumer culture were fully integrated into the American economic mentality, where consumption was just a part of life, even as characters (and the American public) held opinions regarding different forms of consumption.

Aside from the positive portrayals of consumption, *Cheers* also negatively depicted consumption, such as when Sam and Diane were engaged, Sam became increasingly upset with the material purchases he made for Diane, ranging from the cost of the engagement ring to other related expenses.¹⁷ In other cases, characters perspectives towards consumption evolved over the course of one or more episodes. For example, Rebecca positively depicted consumption when she decided to buy a Mercedes; however, she was forced to take a pay cut and other changes she disliked about her job (all contributing to a negative depiction of employment).¹⁸ She did not want to accept those changes, but she had just purchased the Mercedes and had to pay for it, thereby combining the negative portrayal of employment with Rebecca's now-negative view

16. *Cheers*, "One for the Book," aired December 9, 1982, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "No Help Wanted," aired January 12, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Money Dearest," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "How to Win Friends and Electrocute People," aired December 15, 1988, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

17. *Cheers*, "Diamond Sam," aired January 15, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

18. *Cheers*, "How to Recede in Business," aired October 27, 1988, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

towards consumption.¹⁹ Thus, negative perspectives on consumption provided greater context into how the characters (and the show's audience) conceived of consumption in different ways.

Even with the straightforward depictions of consumption, other portrayals were more nuanced and complex, particularly when the show incorporated competing views of consumption. When Cheers hosted a contest to determine the barmaid of the year, Diane qualified as a finalist; however, Diane disliked that type of contest because of its gendered structure.²⁰ But this became an issue of consumption when Diane won the contest, which came with both a substantial monetary prize as well as a trip.²¹ So Diane's excitement to have the material gains associated with winning reinforced a positive perspective towards consumption, even though Diane believed she "sold out" by accepting her winnings, thereby suggesting that she perceived her acceptance of material consumption negatively.²² As result, viewers were left to decide their own opinions on the matter. Competing perspectives on consumption were a hallmark over the course of the show, with several varied situations, including purchases Coach made for the bar (positively depicting consumption) that Sam found frivolous (like napkins with jokes printed on them or a hybrid pool/Ping-Pong table, both of which negatively depicted consumption from Sam's perspective).²³ In another, more complex case, Sam allowed a dying man to tend the bar.²⁴ Afterwards, the man left everyone in Cheers a hundred thousand dollars in

19. *Cheers*, "How to Recede in Business," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

20. *Cheers*, "No Contest," aired February 17, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

21. *Cheers*, "No Contest," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

22. *Cheers*, "No Contest," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

23. *Cheers*, "The Tortelli Tort," aired October 14, 1982, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "King of the Hill," aired January 24, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

24. *Cheers*, "Where There's a Will," aired December 22, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

an addendum to his will, which caused an extensive argument by the crowd on how to split the money.²⁵ This argument illustrated the negative effects of avarice and consumption. When the man gave control over dividing the money to Sam, Sam considered how the money could benefit himself, Diane, and others as he saw fit, which illustrated that Sam perceived the money as a positive means for consumption.²⁶ Diane, however, believed the money would only cause further strife and wanted the will burned, showing that she had a negative view towards consumption and the materialist effects of monetary wealth.²⁷ This again demonstrates that not only was situational context important in understanding consumption, but each character evinced a particular perspective on consumption and thereby depicted consumption issues in relatable ways that engaged with the audience.

Aside from consumption, thrift remained a prevalent economic factor, one that also had more positive portrayals than negative ones, as well as some neutral depictions.²⁸ Once again, perspectives on thrift varied by situation and by character. Carla particularly showcased consumption on multiple occasions, including when she tried to convince a professor that he was the father of her unborn child in order to get him to support the kid, which Carla demonstrated as a positive form of thrift; however, Carla's fabrication also illustrated a negative perspective on thrift because of her dishonesty.²⁹ In a slightly different case, Carla utilized her pregnancy to try and get better tips at the bar to pay her rent which was due, which the show depicted as a positive

25. *Cheers*, "Where There's a Will," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

26. *Cheers*, "Where There's a Will," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

27. *Cheers*, "Where There's a Will," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

28. See Appendix G, Table G4.

29. *Cheers*, "Father Knows Last," aired January 20, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

form of thrift.³⁰ And in a later episode when Cliff asked Carla to go to a gala event, Carla positively portrayed thrift by encouraging Cliff to pay her in cash and goods (including a VCR, a dress, and a television) for her time.³¹ And when Carla looked for a house to purchase, she did so after having saved her money for a long period of time, thereby positively depicting thrift; however, that positive portrayal was diminished by Carla still not having enough money saved, indicating a negative view towards thrift as well as financial status.³² Carla's portrayals of thrift and its interrelationship with other economic factors provided ample material illustrating the competing effects of thrift in realistic circumstances, ones that the American public would have been able to relate to.

Even though different characters illustrated thrift in varied ways, some portrayals of thrift were far more direct. This included negative depictions of thrift, such as a conman successfully leaving the bar without paying his bill.³³ *Cheers* also included positive depictions, like Norm perusing for coupons in a newspaper, the Cheers staff expecting to be paid for an employee meeting, or Norm expecting that Frasier and Lilith buy him a drink before he would talk with them.³⁴ But while thrift could (and did) function independently, in other cases, depictions of thrift interrelated with other economic factors. For example, when Norm forgot his and his wife Vera's anniversary, he stole an ashtray from the bar and decided to purchase some cigarettes to

30. *Cheers*, "Homicidal Ham," aired October 27, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

31. *Cheers*, "Cliffie's Big Score," aired January 30, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

32. *Cheers*, "House of Horrors With Formal Dining and Used Brick," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

33. *Cheers*, "The Boys in the Bar," aired January 27, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

34. *Cheers*, "Diane's Nightmare," aired October 31, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Relief Bartender," aired March 27, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Call Me Irresponsible," aired April 13, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

go with it, thereby depicting both consumption and thrift in positive ways.³⁵ In another case, Sam lent Dianne several hundred dollars to fund her purchase of a rare book, thereby evincing both charitableness and consumption in positive ways.³⁶ However, Diane continued to make additional purchases that Sam thought were lavish (like a lobster sandwich and a cashmere sweater), which depicted the competing views towards consumption—positive from Diane’s perspective and negative from Sam’s.³⁷ But Diane conflated thrift with her purchase of the sweater claiming she bought it at a slight discount, which indicated that her positive portrayal of consumption was also augmented by a positive one towards thrift at the same time.³⁸ And in another episode, Sam, Diane, Carla, and Cliff invested in a new business that Norm thought would grow substantially, and that their share purchases would greatly appreciate in value, which positively depicted both consumption and thrift.³⁹ By ensuring that thrift remained intertwined with other economic factors (particularly consumption), *Cheers* effectively demonstrated how these economic factors were part of the collective economic landscape in which Americans lived, thereby making the show’s economic depictions all the more relatable.

The setting of *Cheers* was predominantly at the bar. Consequently, it is unsurprising that the most significant form of economic content in the show was that of employment, which was largely depicted more negatively than positively and, once again, had some neutral portrayals.⁴⁰

35. *Cheers*, “Woody Goes Belly Up,” aired October 3, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

36. *Cheers*, “I Will Gladly Pay You Tuesday,” aired November 7, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

37. *Cheers*, “I Will Gladly Pay You Tuesday,” in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

38. *Cheers*, “I Will Gladly Pay You Tuesday,” in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

39. *Cheers*, “Tan N’ Wash,” aired November 6, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

40. See Appendix G, Table G5.

Neutral portrayals included general discussions of employment without any particular emphasis on positive or negative perspectives, such as Norm discussing being an accountant, Cliff talking about working for the USPS, and Diane working at the bar (without other commentary or context).⁴¹ Even though these neutral portrayals existed in *Cheers*, they weren't the most significant aspect of employment-related economic content and functioned as depictions of employment that further enhanced the show's ability to relate to its audience. As a result, the positive and negative depictions of employment encapsulated the ever-fluctuating conditions of employment at the time. Negative portrayals of employment consisted of scenarios like Diane quitting her job at the bar because she couldn't get time off, Diane repeatedly being late to work, Cliff getting suspended from his job because he let Norm help him deliver mail, and Sam selling Cheers to a "big corporation."⁴² Positive portrayals, on the other hand, included Cliff getting a raise, Diane being rehired at the bar, Sam hiring Woody to work at the bar after Coach died, and Sam getting hired back at Cheers after selling the place.⁴³ The preceding portrayals of employment illustrate how it was tumultuous with both positive and negative aspects in the show, just as in the real world.

Besides the preceding positive and negative depictions of employment, Norm presented an in-depth and overarching running theme about the challenges and opportunities associated

41. *Cheers*, "Diane's Perfect Date," aired February 10, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "No Contest," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Proposal," aired September 25, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

42. *Cheers*, "Personal Business," aired October 20, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "I'll Be Seeing You (Part 2)," aired May 10, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Mail Goes to Jail," aired February 7, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Home Is the Sailor," aired September 24, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

43. *Cheers*, "Manager Coach," aired November 24, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Rebound (Part 2)," aired October 4, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Birth, Death, Love and Rice," aired September 26, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Home Is the Sailor," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Our Hourly Bread," aired March 10, 1988, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

with employment over the course of the show. The show established early on that Norm was an accountant, but he had perennial problems keeping a job, as his employment status constantly fluctuated between bouts of employment and stints of idleness, which reflected employment in respectively positive and negative ways.⁴⁴ Norm's employment challenges (i.e. negative depictions of employment) took many forms, including having a poor-quality résumé and getting fired after finding employment.⁴⁵ Conversely, Norm's few employment successes (comprising positive portrayals of employment) included Sam hiring Norm as his accountant, Rebecca trying to get Norm a job, and Norm have so much success at work after becoming a painter that he hired employees.⁴⁶ And Norm also experienced gray areas in employment, showing both positive and negative aspects, including when he received a promotion at a corporation but was required to fire others as part of his new role, which he disliked.⁴⁷ In another similar case, Norm was in the running for an executive position at work (a positive perspective on employment), but he didn't get the position because his boss thought Norm's wife did not fit in with the other

44. *Cheers*, "Sam's Women," aired October 7, 1982, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Now Pitching, Sam Malone," aired January 6, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Diane's Perfect Date," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Someone Single, Someone Blue," aired March 3, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Show Down (Part 2)," aired March 31, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "No Help Wanted," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Fortune and Men's Weight," aired February 2, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Coach Buries a Grudge," aired February 16, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Norman's Conquest," aired February 23, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Peterson Crusoe," aired December 13, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Our Hourly Bread," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

45. *Cheers*, "Diane's Perfect Date," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Show Down (Part 2)," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

46. *Cheers*, "No Help Wanted," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Don't Paint Your Chickens," aired February 23, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Two Faces of Norm," aired October 26, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

47. *Cheers*, "The Executive's Executioner," aired March 7, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

employee's wives, which caused Norm to quit (a negative portrayal of employment).⁴⁸ Likewise, Norm later claimed he had a lucrative CPA job, which positively portrayed employment; however, Norm exaggerated his position, causing Diane to encourage Norm to be proactive and try to enhance his position at work by getting recognition from his employers.⁴⁹ Norm and Diane's effort failed though, negatively depicting employment.⁵⁰ But in this case, Norm was not unhappy; he claimed that he liked his position in the company as what he referred to as a "benchwarmer."⁵¹ This was a positive perspective from Norm and one that further depicts the highly nuanced representations of employment found in *Cheers*.

While employment was an overarching economic component of the show, *Cheers* also included subsidiary economic factors that lent further authenticity to the economic situations found in the program and added other layers of complexity to the economic landscape found in the show, much as it was in the real world. This included factors of bills and taxes, which both had some neutral perspectives shown and were principally portrayed in negative ways.⁵² In both cases, neutral portrayals showed a general acceptance of the existence of bills and taxes without particular emphasis, including Sam wanting Norm to ensure that there were no problems when he filed his taxes, as well as when Carla decided to send Cliff a bill for damage he caused to her shoes.⁵³ But the negative portrayals of both bills and taxes instead emphasized a general dislike

48. *Cheers*, "The Peterson Principle," aired February 13, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

49. *Cheers*, "Norm's First Hurrah," aired March 26, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

50. *Cheers*, "Norm's First Hurrah," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

51. *Cheers*, "Norm's First Hurrah," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

52. See Appendix G, Tables G6 and G7.

53. *Cheers*, "No Help Wanted," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Cliffie's Big Score," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

of both economic factors, such as Norm making an oblique statement about taxes cutting into his paycheck, Norm making an impassioned speech about how the rich attempt to circumvent the tax system while the average person still had to pay, Carla getting audited by the IRS, and the assorted times that bills showed up for a variety of goods and services (especially people's bar tabs), leading to further negative depictions within the show.⁵⁴ Overall, *Cheers* demonstrated the constant dislike that the characters had towards bills and taxes, a factor that would have been equally present in the real world, once again demonstrating the correlation between real-world context and the economic depictions found in the show.

Though bills and taxes were mostly negatively depicted, necessary expenses weren't included at all in the program.⁵⁵ This, however, is likely an aberration due to the locale in which the show was centered. By focusing on the bar and its customers, factors that included what could be conceived as necessary expenses were instead factors of employment. For example, when Sam decided to try and restructure the bar's employment system and take a more supervisory role, he decided to hire another bartender.⁵⁶ Hiring another bartender effectively comprised an expense for the bar and therefore was a component of being self-employed, as Sam was; therefore, this was really an employment factor, not a necessary expense.⁵⁷ And ultimately,

54. *Cheers*, "Sam's Women," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Show Down (Part 2)," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Sammy and the Professor," aired January 4, 1990, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Belles of St. Clete's," aired May 2, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Rescue Me," aired May 9, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Woody Goes Belly Up," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Triangle," aired January 23, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Dark Imaginings," aired February 20, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Simon Says," aired March 5, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Paint Your Office," aired November 5, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Please Mr. Postman," aired February 2, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Don't Paint Your Chickens," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

55. See Appendix G, Table G8.

56. *Cheers*, "Relief Bartender," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

57. *Cheers*, "Relief Bartender," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

the expense of the other bartender illustrated both positive and negative perspectives towards employment, as Sam was initially optimistic about his restructuring endeavor (a positive portrayal), while Norm advised against the expense since Sam couldn't afford it (a negative depiction). Similarly, when Coach purchased napkins or Sam ordered pretzels for the bar, these purchases, too, were employment-related.⁵⁸ In these cases, employment-related content preempted necessary expenses, and instead provided further insight into the economic intricacies of self-employment at the time.

Aside from the preceding economic factors, *Cheers* also portrayed financial planning and financial status in both positive and negative ways that lacked any particular consistency over the course of the show.⁵⁹ In some cases, financial planning heavily relied on individual characters' perspectives to elucidate the positive and negative portrayals within the show, such as when Frasier wanted to discuss a prenuptial agreement with Lilith.⁶⁰ From Frasier's perspective, this was a positive view towards financial planning, while Lilith in turn perceived it negatively.⁶¹ Many of these portrayals also related to other economic factors. Woody's positive depiction of financial planning by trying to financially support his family was the result of his family's impoverishment, a negative perspective on financial status.⁶² Similarly, when Sam wanted to restructure the bar's employment hierarchy to take a supervisory role, he negatively depicted

58. *Cheers*, "The Tortelli Tort," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Crane Mutiny," aired October 29, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

59. See Appendix G9 and G10.

60. *Cheers*, "Bidding on the Boys," aired November 19, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

61. *Cheers*, "Bidding on the Boys," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

62. *Cheers*, "Fools and Their Money," aired December 19, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

employment and Norm's comment that Sam couldn't afford such a change also portrayed financial planning negatively.⁶³

Depictions of financial status functioned in a similar manner to financial planning, where characters' individual perceptions varied, even to the point of offering competing views of the same situation. Diane's financial status early in the show illustrated this quite clearly, when the bar's regular customers (such as Cliff) learned that Diane's mother was rich.⁶⁴ Cliff and the others didn't understand why Diane wasn't rich, to which she explained that she didn't simply want money given to her, a response that the guys didn't understand.⁶⁵ In this case, Diane took pride in her meager financial position, thereby showing her financial status in a positive manner.⁶⁶ By contrast, Cliff and the others inability to appreciate Diane's position indicated a negative view toward Diane's financial status based on their competing perspective.⁶⁷ Furthermore, financial status was also comparative, wherein one character judged their financial position against another, such as when Sam negatively perceived his financial status because his brother had attained a greater degree of wealth than he had.⁶⁸ This was a negative portrayal of Sam's financial position, but a positive one of his brother's.⁶⁹ However, other financial status depictions were more direct, such as a lady Coach was dating (and later engaged to) breaking

63. *Cheers*, "Relief Bartender," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

64. *Cheers*, "Someone Single, Someone Blue," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

65. *Cheers*, "Someone Single, Someone Blue," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

66. *Cheers*, "Someone Single, Someone Blue," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

67. *Cheers*, "Someone Single, Someone Blue," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

68. *Cheers*, "Show Down (Part 1)," aired March 24, 1983, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

69. *Cheers*, "Show Down (Part 1)," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

things off because she won a couple million dollars and was now more affluent than him.⁷⁰ In this instance, financial status was an insular factor, unrelated to other economic concerns. Consequently, these varied—and sometimes complex—depictions of financial status provide insight into how the characters in *Cheers* (and the real-world audience by extension) conceptualized of financial status and related economic factors.

Even though financial planning and financial status added to the complex and varied economic content found in *Cheers*, these factors weren't primary concerns. Charitableness, however, was an economic factor addressed with a great deal of frequency over the course of show, and was depicted in far more positive ways than negative ones.⁷¹ The vast majority of positive depictions of charitableness were quite simple, consisting of Sam providing individuals with drinks for free or different characters picking up other people's tabs as an act of generosity.⁷² But other positive portrayals had greater nuance, such as Sam and Diane offering to have a collection fund made to help Carla support and raise her unborn child, as well as Cliff, after receiving a raise, offering Norm a loan since he had been out of work for a long time.⁷³ So charitableness was occasionally related to other economic factors, like the interrelated positive depictions of employment and thrift when Cliff financially assisted Norm.⁷⁴ And in other cases,

70. *Cheers*, "Coach in Love (Part 1)," aired November 8, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Coach in Love (Part 2)," aired November 15, 1984, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

71. See Appendix G, Table G11.

72. G11, *Cheers*, "The Boys in the Bar," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Coach in Love (Part 1)," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Whodunit?" aired January 3, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "If Ever I Would Leave You," aired February 28, 1985, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Young Dr. Weinstein," aired November 13, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Cheers: The Motion Picture," aired April 2, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

73. *Cheers*, "Father Knows Last," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Manager Coach," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

74. *Cheers*, "Manager Coach," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

the portrayals of charitableness evolved over time in the show, including when Sam positively depicted charitableness by donating his old baseball jersey to a public auction, only to have people return it repeatedly to the auction after being purchased and, ultimately, returned to Sam, thereby showing a negative perspective on charitableness.⁷⁵ Thus, *Cheers* successfully insinuated portrayals of charitableness over the show's run, providing further insight into the economic values of the time.

When *Cheers* addressed the preceding forms of economic content, it did so from a multitude of perspectives, ranging from those of the bar's patrons to its employees. The amount of economic perspectives in this show was remarkable, and likely contributed to why *Cheers* addressed macroeconomic content repeatedly, though it was done so in exclusively negative ways.⁷⁶ These negative depictions included commentary about the poor labor market conditions, negative discussions from Diane and Carla about a wealthy, conservative politician with extensive corporate ties, talks about how poor the housing market was, and even discourse on the adverse effects of inflation on the value of both bonds and the dollar.⁷⁷ Instead of avoiding larger socioeconomic context, *Cheers* dealt with it directly, including Cliff's outspoken opinion about how America as a country had been declining since the end of the Reagan administration.⁷⁸ As a result, macroeconomic content further elucidated how Americans' perceived larger economic

75. *Cheers*, "Take My Shirt, Please," aired January 9, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

76. See Appendix G, Table G12.

77. *Cheers*, "Personal Business," in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Strange Bedfellows (Part 1)," aired May 1, 1986, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "A House Is Not a Home," aired April 30, 1987, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "The Art of the Steal," aired November 30, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Cheers*, "Sam Ahoy," aired December 14, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

78. *Cheers*, "The Gift of the Woodi," aired April 6, 1989, on NBC, in *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD.

conditions and concerns, while also providing more detailed and complex understandings of the correlation between the economic content in *Cheers* and real-world conditions, thereby showing the correlation between the economic content in television comedies and contemporary America.

Cheers continued the trend of illustrating economic content that resonated with its audience while also correlating with real-world economic conditions and concerns. The diversity of its characters and their economic perspectives only enhanced the realism of the show's economic content. In short, *Cheers*, like *Three's Company* before it, contained economic content that reflected and reinforced Americans' views towards the economy and other economic factors. And like *Cheers*, *Roseanne* further depicted Americans' economic perceptions in the late-1980s.

CHAPTER XI:

ROSEANNE

By the late-1980s, Americans continued to deal with similar economic challenges to those found earlier in the decade, particularly the tenuous financial system that remained, even as Reagan's efforts to stimulate the economy took effect. During this time, the shift towards a service-oriented economy was largely complete, as production industries had substantially declined by the 1980s, creating greater employment challenges for blue-collar workers.¹ Nevertheless, while Americans remained concerned about real-world economic conditions, television comedies continued to address an array of economic factors within their programs. *Roseanne* was no different. For the purposes of this study, only the first two seasons of *Roseanne* are addressed, which include the years 1988 through 1990.² *Roseanne* took place in the fictional Lanford, Illinois, and involved the everyday lives of the Conner family, consisting of Dan and Rosanne, their children Rebecca (Becky), Darlene, and D.J., and Jackie, Roseanne's sister.³ Other family members, friends, and the like existed in supporting roles.⁴ *Roseanne* was somewhat unique in that it refocused on a mix of blue-collar and middle class American values—a concept that helped the show attain a greater degree of realism that audiences related to.⁵ *Roseanne*, like the many sitcoms before it, continued to reflect audience's views towards

1. Nash et al., *The American People*, 999-1002; Brinkley, *American History*, 857, 875-877.

2. All original episode airdates based on IMDb information. "Roseanne: Season 1," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094540/episodes?season=1> ; "Roseanne: Season 2," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094540/episodes?season=2> ; *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD (Mill Creek Entertainment, 2013).

3. *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

4. *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

5. *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

economics and economic conditions through the show's themes and plots, which in turn illustrated the complex perspectives towards economic factors at the time.

Much like the programs that preceded it, *Roseanne* was a popular and well-liked program. *Roseanne* was successful because its plotlines were relatable and realistic to its audiences.⁶ *Roseanne* was successful because of the normalcy of the situations within it and how that in turn reflected American culture and society.⁷ This meant that the show's content fit with the perspectives of its viewers, and thereby reflected their beliefs, a factor that Roseanne Barr wanted to see from television programs.⁸ And *Roseanne*'s ability to relate to its audience undoubtedly contributed to its highly successful ratings, continually placing in among the top ten highest rated programs on-air.⁹

Similar to the other programs from the late-1970s and 1980s, *Roseanne* didn't contain any integrated ads.¹⁰ By this point, it is clear that consumer culture was just another component within American society, including in the television medium. Since the television medium had fully developed by this period, integrated ads had become nonexistent. Instead, consumer culture permeated American society and the media, including television comedies. Nevertheless, other

6. Richard Zoglin, reported by Elaine Dutka, "Sharp Tongue in the Trenches: Roseanne Barr's Caustic Humor Sparks TV's Newest Hit," *Time*, December 5, 1988, 88.

7. Ron Givens, with Janet Huck, "A Real Stand-Up Mom," *Newsweek*, October 31, 1988, 62-63; Viacom, "Get Real! Get Roseanne," *Broadcasting*, December 17, 1990, 31.

8. Zoglin, reported by Dutka, "Sharp Tongue in the Trenches," 88; Givens, with Huck, "A Real Stand-Up Mom," 62.

9. "Week 13 Posts 40.3 Combined Rating, 36.4 Million Households," *Broadcasting*, December 26, 1988, 46; "Early Returns on the TV Season: NBC Wins Again," *Broadcasting*, November 21, 1988, 19-21; "Ratings Roundup," *Broadcasting*, December 25, 1989, 10; "Ratings Roundup," *Broadcasting*, December 18, 1989, 10; "Ratings Roundup," *Broadcasting*, December 17, 1990, 52.

10. See Appendix H, Table H2.

economic factors, such as consumption and thrift, remained particularly significant within *Roseanne*.

In the case of both consumption and thrift, there were more positive portrayals than negative ones, along with some neutral perspectives as well.¹¹ *Roseanne* positively depicted consumption when Dan purchased a figurehead he wanted for the boat he was building, as well as when the kids spent money they received from Dan and Roseanne at a bowling alley.¹² Likewise, the show addressed thrift positively when Roseanne saved coupons for shopping, when Roseanne and Dan planned to fix the sink (which was clogged) on their own, and when Dan's father made the statement that his friends helped him get discounts on some of his purchases.¹³ And neutral portrayals of both consumption and thrift helped to further inculcate the concept that both of these factors were part of everyday life, including when Darleen took batteries out of a flashlight to use in a radio, when Roseanne cut DJ's hair, or when Dan worked on his truck (all neutral portrayals of thrift), while neutral depictions of consumption included Roseanne buying herself perfume, along with Roseanne and her coworkers going bowling.¹⁴ Thus, consumption and thrift remained a core component of Americans' daily lives.

As the preceding examples demonstrated, consumption and thrift acted as independent economic factors in certain contexts. Yet in other instances, consumption and thrift were

11. See Appendix H, Tables H3 and H4.

12. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," aired October 18, 1988, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Lover's Lane," aired December 6, 1988, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

13. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "D-I-V-O-R-C-E," aired November 1, 1988, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Father's Day," aired February 7, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

14. *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," aired October 25, 1988, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "D-I-V-O-R-C-E," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Saturday," aired January 10, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Lover's Lane," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

intertwined. For example, when the Conners went shopping at the mall they were positively depicting consumption; however, Jackie added further nuance to the situation by saying that there was a sale going on at the time, suggesting that the Conners, while supporting consumption, were also being thrifty in a positive way.¹⁵ And this was something that was shown repeatedly in *Roseanne*, including when Jacky purchased a travel bag on sale and shared the news with the family, thereby positively portraying both consumption and thrift.¹⁶ As *Roseanne* depicted, both consumption and thrift remained integral factors in Americans' daily lives.

Even though consumption and thrift were particularly important within *Roseanne*, employment was fundamentally the most significant economic factor of the show, with competing positive and negative portrayals, of which there were slightly more negative than positive ones, as well as some neutral depictions.¹⁷ Neutral depictions included simply addressing employment without exceptional amounts of discussion, such as Roseanne working at a factory, general discussions about work from Dan or Roseanne, or other cases where Roseanne worked from home on other jobs (such as selling magazine subscriptions over the phone).¹⁸ These cases highlighted how significant employment was because it was a running theme in the background of the show. However, even more significantly, the positive and negative portrayals reflected audiences' perspectives on employment.

15. *Roseanne*, "Mall Story," aired February 21, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

16. *Roseanne*, "House of Grown-Ups," aired October 10, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

17. See Appendix H, Table H5.

18. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Dan's Birthday Bash," aired January 3, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Inherit the Wind," aired September 12, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Guilt by Disassociation," aired September 26, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

Roseanne prominently displayed a heightened concern about employment status, particularly the difficulty of finding or keeping work. This was the case when Dan was looking for employment (he worked in the construction industry) and Roseanne was pessimistic about his chances of getting hired.¹⁹ There were also positive depictions of employment, such as when Dan had steady work.²⁰ But the negative perspectives illustrated the challenges of employment, ranging from simply having a tiring and difficult workweek like Roseanne and having to return home and do chores on the weekend to Roseanne and her coworkers having to put in overtime because a machine broke in the factory and they had to make up for it, in order to protect others from being wrongly fired or laid off.²¹ These were real employment concerns, ones that explained why viewers related to *Roseanne*. What's more, *Roseanne* didn't back away from severely negative portrayals of employment, including Roseanne and her coworkers quitting their jobs when their new boss placed exceedingly high demands on them to increase production.²² After that, Roseanne had difficulty finding another job (a negative perspective on employment), while her previous coworkers found employment elsewhere (positive perspectives).²³ These depictions showed the actual difficulties associated with employment and remained relatable to viewers and a timely depiction of employment challenges associated with real world economic conditions of the time.

19. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

20. *Roseanne*, "The Slice of Life," aired March 7, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

21. *Roseanne*, "Saturday," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Workin' Overtime," aired March 14, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

22. *Roseanne*, "Let's Call It Quits," aired May 2, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

23. *Roseanne*, "Guilt by Disassociation," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

Other economic factors, including bills, taxes, necessary expenses, and both financial planning and financial status functioned in relation to consumption, thrift, and employment. Bills had a small amount of neutral portrayals, while the vast majority was negative; similarly, taxes had one outlying positive portrayal, with negative perspectives comprising the rest.²⁴ In the case of bills, such concerns worked in conjunction with consumption, as was the case when Dan and Roseanne had a small amount of extra money that they were planning on spending.²⁵ The very idea of spending that money on extra items they wanted depicted consumption positively; however, their consumption choices were mitigated by the amount of bills they had, which was shown negatively (i.e. the bills weren't welcome expenses).²⁶ Similarly, Dan and Roseanne discussed how they should pay the bills with the money they had, a positive portrayal of thrift, rather than providing further support of consumer habits.²⁷ In this way, the concern of bills was tied to other economic factors. Likewise, in the case of taxes, Dan and Roseanne strongly disliked both having to pay their taxes and the tax system itself, providing negative perspectives towards taxes.²⁸ But perhaps more than that, the taxes were also tied directly towards Dan and Roseanne's view of their financial status, which they viewed negatively as shown through Roseanne's diatribe that the tax system exploited the poor while the rich found loopholes to avoid paying.²⁹ However, both Dan and Roseanne addressed the camera directly out of character at the end of the episode and stated that they actually supported the IRS, providing a positive

24. See Appendix H, Tables H6 and H7.

25. *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

26. *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

27. *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

28. *Roseanne*, "April Fool's Day," aired April 10, 1990, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

29. *Roseanne*, "April Fool's Day," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

view towards the tax system.³⁰ While this is clearly an outlier, it also shows that *Roseanne* was not fully promoting an anti-tax stance but rather showing some of the potential problems and perspectives that Americans had regarding the tax system.

Just as there were principally negative depictions of bills and taxes, necessary expenses were also depicted negatively, along with some neutral portrayals.³¹ Neutral portrayals in the case of necessary expenses, like other economic factors, just demonstrated how these expenses were a part of everyday American life, including Roseanne grocery shopping or Darleen having to go to the hospital because of appendicitis.³² But *Roseanne* also clearly demonstrated how even though necessary expenses were part of daily life, they weren't necessarily appreciated. Roseanne complained about these expenses, including when she had to return a defective backpack for one of her kids, as well as the cost associated with having kids.³³

While financial planning was not one of the most significant aspects of *Roseanne*, shown in mostly positive ways (with some negative and neutral portrayals), financial status was one of the most important economic factors of the show, with more negative perspectives than positive ones (and once again, some neutral depictions).³⁴ When Dan and Roseanne discussed how to pay their bills in the most economically effective way, they positively showed financial planning.³⁵ The positive portrayal of financial planning worked in conjunction with the negative perspectives

30. *Roseanne*, "April Fool's Day," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

31. See Appendix H, Table H8.

32. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "The Slice of Life," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

33. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

34. See Appendix H, Tables H9 and H10.

35. *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

on bills—financial planning effectively mitigated the negative aspects of bills and showed that, with financial preparation, bills could be effectively addressed.³⁶ Similarly, financial planning was also tied to employment—including when Roseanne considered (and ultimately did) quit her job at the factory.³⁷ In this case, Roseanne worried about losing the benefits associated with her job (demonstrating a positive view towards financial planning), and she worried about the expenses and costs associated with caring for her family, which she was no longer certain about (a negative view towards financial planning).³⁸ In effect, financial planning added to the realism of the economic scenarios found in *Roseanne*, making the show even more relatable for audiences.

Beyond financial planning, financial status was highly emphasized in the show. Financial status, too, was directly related to other economic factors, while still illustrating a unique economic concern, one that Americans at the time themselves worried about to a heightened degree. This concern, shown in negative ways within *Roseanne*, manifested itself in a variety of forms, such as Roseanne considering herself and her family poor, Dan's father considering him a "handy man" who couldn't properly support his family, and Jackie and Roseanne worrying that their pay of eight dollars an hour at the factory wasn't enough for them to live on.³⁹ Of the few positive and neutral depictions of financial status, including Dan trying to show his dad that he was economically successful by having cashews in his house (a neutral portrayal) or Roseanne attempting to host a formal dinner to impress a well-to-do family (depicting a positive financial

36. *Roseanne*, "We're in the Money," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

37. *Roseanne*, "Let's Call It Quits," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

38. *Roseanne*, "Let's Call It Quits," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

39. *Roseanne*, "Life and Stuff," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Father's Day," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Let's Call it Quits," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

status façade), these perspectives only made it clear that the Conners weren't entirely pessimistic about their financial status, as the negative portrayals otherwise suggest.⁴⁰ These financial status concerns were, along with employment, the most significant economic factors in the show, which was indicative of the real-world economic concerns at the time.

The final two economic factors, charitableness and macroeconomic conditions, were largely inconsequential within *Roseanne*, having only neutral perspectives on charitableness and no macroeconomic content.⁴¹ In the case of charitableness, it was just included as part of daily life, but only to a very minor degree, such as when the Conners donated various things to a PTA "rummage sale."⁴² In the case of these donations, charitableness wasn't overly emphasized and, perhaps more importantly, Roseanne used the donations as an excuse to get rid of things she no longer wanted in her house (particularly knickknacks accumulated by Dan over the years).⁴³ So the charitableness in this case was mitigated by Roseanne's ulterior motives. Charitableness just wasn't an important part of the Conners' (and by extension, Americans') lives in the late-1980s. And the exclusion of macroeconomic content also indicates that larger regional or national economic concerns weren't a priority for the Conners, who instead were focused on the home economic front, particularly in the forms of employment and financial status. While both employment and financial status were, at the time, particularly important factors in real-world macroeconomic conditions, *Roseanne* instead shows how many Americans perceived these issues as principally microeconomic factors. The larger economic picture wasn't part of families'

40. *Roseanne*, "Father's Day," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD; *Roseanne*, "Becky's Choice," aired February 28, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

41. See Appendix H, Tables H11 and H12.

42. *Roseanne*, "Canoga Time," aired January 17, 1989, on ABC, in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

43. *Roseanne*, "Canoga Time," in *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD.

immediate and pressing economic issues. In this way, the lack of macroeconomic content still speaks to Americans' economic mentalities of the time.

Roseanne, like the shows before it, demonstrated how the economic content found in television comedies correlated with real-world economic conditions and concerns, which in turn reflected Americans' economic ideologies. As a result, *Three's Company*, *Cheers*, and *Roseanne* collectively provide insight into the economic mindsets of Americans during this tumultuous economic period. What's more, the shows further encapsulate both the evolving nature of Americans' economic perceptions, as well as the continued prevalence of other economic factors, particularly consumption, thrift, and employment. Analyzing the change and continuity in television economic content is the next step.

CHAPTER XII:
SUMMARY OF THE ECONOMIC CONTENT OF THE LATE-1970S AND 1980S
TELEVISION COMEDIES

The late-1970s and 1980s programs, *Three's Company*, *Cheers*, and *Roseanne* continued the trend of incorporating diverse forms of economic content into their plots and themes. While each show effectively reflected viewers' economic worldviews, they did so as part of a larger continuum illustrating distinct facets of real-world economic conditions and concerns, ranging from the energy crisis to economic stagnation. The economic content found in the shows correlated with the context of American economics concurrent to the shows' airdates, at a time when the television industry had fully developed across the United States. As the preceding chapters illustrated, the ratings and reviews of the shows indicated not only their popularity among American audiences but also that viewers related to the contents found in the shows, making the depictions of economic content all the more relevant. Comparing these shows together further demonstrates not only how television comedies continued depicting economic conditions over time, but also how the frequency of economic content types changed over the years.

Each of the three preceding chapters readily illustrated that integrated ads were not included in the programs.¹ Instead, as the chapters indicated, consumer culture had already been fully established in the United States. Commercials functioned separately from the television programs, and the television medium itself had already spread across the United States, reaching most Americans. This was a distinct change from the 1950s, where integrated ads instead

1. See Appendix I, Table I2.

augmented television's role as both a mass culture medium and a vehicle for consumer culture. While consumer culture remained, by the late-1970s, it was a fully-formed component of American society.

Since America had already become a bastion for consumer culture, it is unsurprising that consumption remained a significant economic factor in the 1980s programs, with far more positive portrayals than negative ones, accompanied by a strong presence over the course of the decade, including substantial neutral depictions as well.² Even though characters within the 1980s programs had different perspectives towards consumption, it remained a normalized factor of everyday life. Consumption, in this sense, was a critical economic component. Likewise, thrift remained prevalent through all shows, with relatively similar trends over the course of the late-1970s and 1980s, exhibiting some neutral depictions, but many more positive than negative portrayals overall.³ The inclusion of both thrift and consumption reflects American economic values. As the larger economic context indicates, and the reviews of the shows directly demonstrate, audiences viewed *Three's Company*, *Cheers*, and *Roseanne* not only as forms of entertainment but also relatable depictions of economic content. So even though depictions of consumption and thrift were predicated on the characters and context involved in the portrayals, the greater degree of positive depictions suggests that these economic factors remained significant to viewers in a generally positive way. In effect, consumer culture reinforced the importance of consumption and thrift. Employment, however, marked a substantial shift in the late-1970s and 1980s.

2. See Appendix I, Table I2.

3. See Appendix I, Table I2.

In the case of employment, depictions in the late-1970s and 1980s evolved substantially, beginning with a greater amount of positive depictions than negative ones; however, in the early-1980s, portrayals of employment became increasingly contentious, with a split between positive and negative depictions (accompanied with neutral depictions over the course of the decade).⁴ This suggests that in the late-1970s and the early-1980s—the very years that America faced economic crises—the heightened degree of positive depictions would suggest that Americans were more positively responsive towards having (and keeping) employment than in more stable economic periods, like the 1950s or later in the 1980s. But this statement should still be qualified—the portrayals of employment remained largely tied to the characters and contexts of the shows, suggesting that the increased division between positive and negative depictions as the 1980s progressed also resulted from larger economic contexts and the interrelationship of employment with other economic factors. So not only did employment correlate with real-world economic conditions and concerns, but the depictions in each show also functioned as insular features, showing positive and negative attributes associated with employment (such as job security, employment satisfaction, and other related components or the lack thereof). As a result, employment was a far more significant factor in the 1980s than the 1950s, likely the result of the change in economic climate between the two distinct economic periods.

Other economic factors, including bills, taxes, and necessary expenses remained present in the 1980s. In the case of bills and taxes, depictions were almost exclusively negative, while necessary expenses were shown with some neutral portrayals, but otherwise more negative than positive (and they weren't included in *Cheers* at all).⁵ These factors provided greater insight into

4. See Appendix I, Table I2.

5. See Appendix I, Table I2.

Americans' economic perceptions, and established a more complete representation of the economic conditions and concerns of the time. In the case of necessary expenses, there was a general decline in the frequency of depictions over the course of the late-1970s and 1980s, which further suggests that necessary expenses were becoming increasingly less relevant as time progressed. Bills and taxes remained complementary economic factors that showed how Americans still disliked these forms of expenses, though the characters in the 1980s programs evinced a greater degree of distaste for bills and taxes than in the 1950s, further suggesting a change in Americans' economic attitudes between the two economic periods. Nevertheless, the inclusion (or exclusion) of these economic factors created a more realistic and relatable economic context within the shows for the audience to see.

Financial planning and financial status remained peripheral economic features, with fluctuating positive and negative portrayals, though financial status did lean towards a greater amount of negative portrayals in the latter years of the 1980s.⁶ But even though these were subsidiary economic factors, both financial planning and, to a greater degree, financial status provided a different insight into Americans' economic perceptions during a different economic period. In the 1980s, real-world economic tumult added a different degree of significance to concerns over financial planning or financial status, as compared to the reasonably stable and economically prosperous 1950s. Consequently, the selected television comedies indicated that the relative economic instability of the late-1970s and 1980s encouraged a different approach towards financial planning and financial status than the 1950s did, one that more readily tied financial planning and financial status to other economic factors, particularly consumption, thrift, and employment. But interestingly, television programs in both economic periods depicted

6. See Appendix I, Table I2.

competing views towards financial planning and financial status, suggesting that different economic contexts found in each respective economic period shaped viewers' attitudes toward of financial planning and financial status. As a result, both economic factors persisted as essential components that offered a more complete picture of how television comedies' economic content correlated with real-world conditions and concerns, as well as the views of American audiences.

Charitableness, like the other subsidiary factors, provided another measurement of economic values in the 1980s, just as it did in the 1950s. In the 1980s, depictions of charitableness began with relatively divided depictions from the late-1970s to 1981, but after that, portrayals were largely more positive than negative. The inclusion of charitableness should not be underestimated. Even though it was not a critical economic factor, its inclusion in television comedies aided the shows' realism and provided additional economic insight. And portrayals of charitableness, like the preceding economic factors, occurred in two distinct economic periods—the 1950s, where economic stability and overall affluence promoted financial prosperity, whereas the late-1970s and 1980s dealt with greater strains on the economic system (such as inflation and limited economic growth), thereby providing charitableness with differing contextual information between the two economic periods.. Moreover, the continued presence of charitableness establishes another degree of continuity with the 1950s. Rather than it being absent, charitableness further shows that all of these economic factors remained into the 1980s, though to varying degrees of significance. By contrast, macroeconomic content found in the 1980s programs was far more important than that in the 1980s because it readily demonstrated the far more negative than positive perspectives towards macroeconomic conditions.⁷ As a result, the macroeconomic content ascended to a greater place of importance in the minds' of viewers, as the 1980s' shows reflected. What's more, the negative views further

7. See Appendix I, Table I2.

corroborate with the adverse economic conditions of the late-1970s and 1980s that informed not only viewers' economic perceptions, but the content of the shows by extension. Consequently, macroeconomic content added greater complexity and authenticity to the television comedies' plots and themes, particularly in conjunction with the other economic factors.

Collectively, the eleven forms of economic content analyzed in this study established continuity between the 1950s and the 1980s. All forms of economic content were present in both periods, to one extent or another. But the variances in terms of the frequencies and forms of economic content between the two economic periods established that both periods correlated with their respective real-world economic conditions and concerns, along with the evolution of Americans' economic perceptions.

CHAPTER XIII:

CONCLUSION

Real-world economic conditions had changed substantially from the 1950s to the 1980s. Where the 1950s found Americans prospering in a period of economic affluence, the 1980s saw economic stagnation that adversely affected Americans' standard of living. Where the 1950s had a growing middle class enhanced by suburban lifestyles and consumer culture, the early-1980s had growing national debt and mounting inflation. And culturally, Americans progressed from a period in the 1950s of relatively rigid social and gender structures to greater progressiveness found in the 1970s and 1980s. In short, the 1950s and early-1960s and the late-1970s and 1980s represented two distinct economic periods in American history, where the real-world social and economic conditions informed Americans' economic perspectives. And during this time, television comedies' economic content correlated with these real-world economic conditions and concerns, thereby enabling these programs to chart the change and continuity found in Americans' economic worldviews.

As the preceding chapters demonstrated, all eight of the programs included in this study were exceptionally popular with audiences. Critics' and reviewers' statements on these shows functioned as a proxy of what American audiences believed about the programs, thereby indicating how relatable and, for the most part, realistic these shows were. The larger economic context found in each period further frames not only what economic considerations viewers had but also how the programs correlated with the real world. Thus, as the programs depicted, the principal economic content of the 1950s revolved around consumption and thrift as both individual factors and, in other cases, factors that supported one another or competed against each other, depending on the situational context. The other economic factors were significant in

their supporting roles of better illustrating how Americans viewed economic conditions and concerns at the time. By the 1980s, though, there was a shift in focus. Consumption and thrift remained important, but these factors were already well-established as part of American consumer culture; however, employment took on a greater relevance in this period of economic crisis. Employment became possibly the most important economic component in television comedies at the time, while the subsidiary economic factors further established how Americans perceived economic conditions and concerns. In both economic periods, bills, taxes, and necessary expenses were not as important as consumption, thrift, and employment; however, these factors provided insight into Americans' economic mentalities at the time, including a nearly constant distaste for bills and taxes, while necessary expenses fluctuated. Similarly, financial planning and financial status further detailed Americans' economic views, with fluctuating and divided perspectives in both periods. Charitableness remained relevant in both periods, but once again remained a subsidiary economic factor. On the other hand, macroeconomic content was substantially more significant in the late-1970s and 1980s than in the 1950s, again indicative of the change in real-world economic context. Consequently, the distinct ways that each economic period depicted economic content in television comedies (the positive, neutral, and negative portrayals) established not only how Americans' economic perceptions changed over time, but also how, in both economic periods, television's economic content correlated with real-world economic conditions and concerns.

While this study established a foundation for analyzing economic content in television programs, it is just that, a foundation. The analytical concepts applied here could advance the analysis of other television comedies, or even other genres of television. Or, in a different case, rather than studying economic content, other forms of social or cultural content could be studied.

Television programming is part of a continuum. Even though each show functions independently, television programs collectively establish a tapestry of human knowledge and experience, beliefs and ideals. Television comedies' economic content is just a small, but important, part of that. For a complete evaluation of the relationship Americans had with the television medium in general, and economic content found in its programs in particular, an Annales approach should be utilized. This would account for a broader range of social, psychological, and cultural factors that influenced Americans' mentalities, not only towards economic concerns, but also the television medium and real-world conditions. What's more, analyzing the *longue duree* could also entail reviewing mediums of entertainment that preceded television, including radio, film, and theater. In short, there are multitudes of ways to continue analyzing Americans' perceptions of economic content found in entertainment media.

The argument of this study was necessarily multifaceted because of the complex nature of analyzing economic content spanning the course of several decades' worth of television comedies, as well as the divisions found between real-world economic context and that of the television shows. But nevertheless, the argument is formulaic—each part, while distinct, is critical in proving and validating the next. As the preceding chapters demonstrated, there are four key components to this thesis: (1) the geographic diffusion of television and Americans' adoption of it established television as a mass culture medium; (2) television comedies contain economic content that correlates with real-world economic conditions found in America; (3) the larger economic contexts of real-world America combined with the reviews of each show establish that television comedies reflected Americans' economic perceptions and projected them back to the audiences as part of an ongoing cycle of mutual reinforcement; and (4) changes in the frequency and type of economic depictions from the 1950s and early-1960s and the late-1970s

and 1980s further corroborates the correlation found between television comedies' economic content, real-world economic conditions and concerns, and viewers' economic mentalities.

The first point of this thesis, that TV was a mass culture medium, is one that has already been well-established by historians and other social scientists, but this study provides a different interpretation of what television's role as a mass culture medium actually means by focusing specifically on television comedies and economic content. The earlier chapters demonstrated that television comedies undoubtedly had economic content, while reviewers' statements gave particular insight into why audiences watched those shows. And these reviews added even greater significance to television comedies' economic content correlating with real-world economic conditions and concerns because that in turn further explains why audiences held the economic views they did. Audiences' economic perceptions were a product of the real-world but were shown in a condensed format in television comedies. So these television programs not only depicted how audiences perceived economics and economic factors, nor did they only correlate with real-world economic conditions, they were an accurate economic historical record, one that reflected the aggregate economic thoughts, attitudes, and conditions found in America in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Perhaps Boorstin was right, and images did indeed supplant reality in twentieth century America. Or perhaps not. The preceding television programs were, of course, just a series of images, but they're images with meaning. And the meaning, in these cases, was not only assigned by the viewers but was also the product of the viewers' thoughts in the first place. And these thoughts were the result of the larger, *real* economic contexts found in America in the latter half of the twentieth century. So maybe images didn't really supersede reality. Maybe they're just reality in a different form.

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The Goldbergs. "Molly the Matchmaker." Aired 1956 season. In *The Ultimate Goldbergs*. DVD.

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APPENDIX A: *THE GOLDBERGS* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Source for all Appendix A tables: *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD (Shout! Factory, 2010). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table A1. Number of *The Goldbergs* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1949	5
1950	1
1951	1
1952	2
1953	1
1954	22
1955	10
1956	29
Total	71

Table A2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1949	100.00
1950	100.00
1951	100.00
1952	100.00
1953	100.00
1954	100.00
1955	10.00
1956	0.00

Table A3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1949	20.00	60.00	40.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	100.00	0.00
1954	31.82	36.36	13.64
1955	30.00	40.00	20.00
1956	20.69	17.24	27.59

Table A4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1949	40.00	40.00	60.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	100.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	27.73	4.55	4.55
1955	20.00	20.00	10.00
1956	31.03	6.90	3.45

Table A5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1949	0.00	0.00	20.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	13.64	4.55	22.73
1955	30.00	0.00	10.00
1956	6.90	13.79	13.79

Table A6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1949	0.00	0.00	0.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	0.00	4.55	9.09
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table A7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1949	0.00	0.00	0.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	10.00	0.00
1956	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table A8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1949	0.00	20.00	0.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	3.45	0.00

Table A9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1949	0.00	0.00	0.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	4.55	0.00	0.00
1955	20.00	10.00	0.00
1956	10.34	3.45	3.45

Table A10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1949	0.00	0.00	0.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	9.09	4.55	9.09
1955	0.00	0.00	10.00
1956	6.90	0.00	6.90

Table A11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1949	20.00	40.00	20.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	50.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	9.09	4.55	9.09
1955	10.00	0.00	0.00
1956	10.34	0.00	0.00

Table A12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *The Goldbergs* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1949	0.00	0.00	0.00
1950	0.00	0.00	0.00
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX B: *I LOVE LUCY* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own. Calculations include both *I Love Lucy* and *The Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show*.

Source for all Appendix B tables: *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD (Paramount, 2015). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table B1. Number of *I Love Lucy* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1951	12
1952	36
1953	30
1954	30
1955	30
1956	26
1957	18
1958	5
1959	5
1960	1
Total	193

Table B2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1951	100.00
1952	100.00
1953	100.00
1954	100.00
1955	100.00
1956	100.00
1957	100.00
1958	80.00
1959	80.00
1960	100.00

Table B3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1951	50.00	33.33	25.00
1952	38.89	16.67	36.11
1953	46.67	23.33	36.67
1954	30.00	33.33	23.33
1955	26.67	16.67	26.67
1956	65.38	53.85	38.46
1957	55.56	33.33	61.11
1958	80.00	0.00	60.00
1959	60.00	40.00	60.00
1960	0.00	100.00	0.00

Table B4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1951	16.67	8.33	8.33
1952	38.89	2.78	22.22
1953	36.67	3.33	30.00
1954	53.33	0.00	36.67
1955	33.33	10.00	33.33
1956	57.69	0.00	46.15
1957	72.22	0.00	66.67
1958	80.00	0.00	40.00
1959	80.00	0.00	80.00
1960	100.00	0.00	0.00

Table B5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1951	33.33	8.33	8.33
1952	13.89	11.11	13.89
1953	13.33	6.67	13.33
1954	30.00	3.33	23.33
1955	26.67	13.33	20.00
1956	34.62	3.85	26.92
1957	33.33	5.56	22.22
1958	60.00	0.00	40.00
1959	20.00	0.00	20.00
1960	100.00	0.00	100.00

Table B6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1951	0.00	8.33	8.33
1952	0.00	0.00	8.33
1953	0.00	0.00	3.33
1954	0.00	0.00	3.33
1955	0.00	0.00	16.67
1956	0.00	0.00	7.69
1957	0.00	0.00	5.56
1958	0.00	0.00	0.00
1959	0.00	0.00	0.00
1960	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table B7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	0.00	0.00	3.33
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	0.00	0.00
1957	0.00	0.00	0.00
1958	0.00	0.00	0.00
1959	0.00	0.00	0.00
1960	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table B8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1951	0.00	0.00	8.33
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	3.33	3.33	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	0.00	0.00
1957	0.00	0.00	11.11
1958	0.00	0.00	0.00
1959	0.00	0.00	20.00
1960	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table B9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1951	0.00	16.67	8.33
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	3.33	0.00	3.33
1954	10.00	0.00	13.33
1955	3.33	0.00	3.33
1956	0.00	0.00	11.54
1957	5.56	0.00	11.11
1958	0.00	0.00	0.00
1959	0.00	0.00	0.00
1960	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table B10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	5.56	0.00	5.56
1953	3.33	0.00	3.33
1954	10.00	0.00	16.67
1955	6.67	0.00	6.67
1956	0.00	0.00	3.85
1957	11.11	0.00	5.56
1958	20.00	0.00	20.00
1959	0.00	0.00	0.00
1960	100.00	0.00	0.00

Table B11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	2.78	2.78	0.00
1953	3.33	0.00	0.00
1954	6.67	0.00	0.00
1955	10.00	0.00	0.00
1956	7.69	0.00	3.85
1957	11.11	0.00	0.00
1958	20.00	0.00	0.00
1959	20.00	0.00	0.00
1960	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table B12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *I Love Lucy* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1951	0.00	0.00	0.00
1952	0.00	0.00	0.00
1953	0.00	0.00	0.00
1954	0.00	0.00	3.33
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	0.00	3.85
1957	0.00	0.00	0.00
1958	0.00	0.00	0.00
1959	0.00	0.00	0.00
1960	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX C: *FATHER KNOWS BEST* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Source for all Appendix C tables: *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD (Shout! Factory, 2008). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table C1. Number of *Father Knows Best* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1954	13
1955	13
Total	26

Table C2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1954	7.69
1955	7.69

Table C3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1954	15.38	53.85	15.38
1955	30.77	15.38	23.08

Table C4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1954	23.08	7.69	7.69
1955	7.69	7.69	0.00

Table C5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1954	30.77	7.69	7.69
1955	15.38	15.38	15.38

Table C6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1954	0.00	0.00	7.69
1955	0.00	0.00	23.08

Table C7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table C8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1954	0.00	7.69	0.00
1955	0.00	7.69	7.69

Table C9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1954	7.69	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	7.69

Table C10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table C11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1954	0.00	7.69	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	7.69

Table C12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *Father Knows Best* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX D: *THE HONEYMOONERS* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Sources for all Appendix D tables: *The Honeymooners*, DVD (Paramount, 2003); “The Honeymooners: Alternate Versions,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0042114/alternateversions>. Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table D1. Number of *The Honeymooners* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1955	14
1956	25
Total	39

Table D2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1955	100.00
1956	100.00

Table D3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1955	42.86	42.86	57.14
1956	20.00	56.00	32.00

Table D4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1955	57.14	42.86	35.71
1956	32.00	36.00	12.00

Table D5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1955	14.29	0.00	35.71
1956	24.00	8.00	20.00

Table D6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1955	0.00	0.00	14.29
1956	0.00	0.00	12.00

Table D7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	0.00	4.00	8.00

Table D8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1955	0.00	14.29	14.29
1956	4.00	4.00	8.00

Table D9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00
1956	4.00	0.00	8.00

Table D10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1955	7.14	0.00	42.86
1956	4.00	0.00	8.00

Table D11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1955	14.29	0.00	7.14
1956	4.00	8.00	4.00

Table D12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *The Honeymooners* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1955	7.14	0.00	7.14
1956	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX E: *THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Source for all Appendix E tables: *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Complete First Season*, DVD (Paramount, 2016). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table E1. Number of *The Beverly Hillbillies* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1962	14
1963	22
Total	36

Table E2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1962	100.00
1963	95.45

Table E3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1962	35.71	0.00	14.29
1963	45.45	4.55	22.73

Table E4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1962	78.57	7.14	21.43
1963	40.91	0.00	27.27

Table E5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1962	21.43	0.00	7.14
1963	18.18	0.00	4.55

Table E6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1962	0.00	0.00	0.00
1963	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table E7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1962	0.00	0.00	0.00
1963	0.00	0.00	4.55

Table E8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1962	0.00	7.14	7.14
1963	4.55	4.55	0.00

Table E9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1962	7.14	0.00	0.00
1963	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table E10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1962	35.71	14.29	35.71
1963	31.82	0.00	4.55

Table E11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1962	14.29	0.00	0.00
1963	13.64	0.00	0.00

Table E12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *The Beverly Hillbillies* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1962	0.00	0.00	0.00
1963	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX F: *THREE'S COMPANY* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Sources for all Appendix F tables: All original episode airdates based on IMDb information.

“Three’s Company: Season 1,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=1> ; “Three’s Company: Season 2,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=2> ;

“Three’s Company: Season 3,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=3> ; “Three’s Company: Season 4,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=4> ;

“Three’s Company: Season 5,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=5> ; “Three’s Company: Season 6,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=6> ;

“Three’s Company: Season 7,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=7> ; “Three’s Company: Season 8,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=8> ;

Three’s Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984, DVD (Anchor Bay Entertainment, 2014).

Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table F1. Number of *Three’s Company* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1977	20
1978	24
1979	23
1980	18
1981	25
1982	25
1983	23
1984	10
Total	168

Table F2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *Three’s Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1977	0.00
1978	0.00
1979	0.00
1980	0.00
1981	0.00
1982	0.00
1983	0.00
1984	0.00

Table F3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1977	45.00	30.00	35.00
1978	37.50	8.33	25.00
1979	34.78	17.39	26.09
1980	44.44	11.11	11.11
1981	16.00	36.00	20.00
1982	36.00	12.00	24.00
1983	43.48	17.39	8.70
1984	40.00	30.00	40.00

Table F4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1977	80.00	10.00	35.00
1978	62.50	16.67	25.00
1979	60.87	21.74	56.52
1980	44.44	22.22	16.67
1981	28.00	12.00	24.00
1982	48.00	8.00	36.00
1983	65.22	17.39	30.43
1984	60.00	0.00	30.00

Table F5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1977	25.00	10.00	15.00
1978	33.33	16.67	16.67
1979	39.13	21.74	34.78
1980	33.33	5.56	50.00
1981	40.00	4.00	44.00
1982	44.00	8.00	48.00
1983	17.39	8.70	17.39
1984	20.00	0.00	20.00

Table F6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1977	0.00	0.00	40.00
1978	4.17	4.17	20.83
1979	8.70	8.70	26.09
1980	5.56	11.11	11.11
1981	0.00	0.00	12.00
1982	0.00	8.00	28.00
1983	0.00	4.35	4.35
1984	0.00	0.00	10.00

Table F7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1977	0.00	0.00	0.00
1978	0.00	0.00	4.17
1979	0.00	0.00	0.00
1980	0.00	0.00	5.56
1981	0.00	0.00	0.00
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	0.00	0.00	0.00
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table F8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1977	5.00	5.00	15.00
1978	4.17	4.17	4.17
1979	0.00	8.70	4.35
1980	0.00	5.56	0.00
1981	0.00	4.00	0.00
1982	0.00	4.00	0.00
1983	0.00	4.35	0.00
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table F9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1977	10.00	5.00	25.00
1978	4.17	0.00	0.00
1979	8.70	0.00	4.35
1980	11.11	5.56	0.00
1981	0.00	4.00	8.00
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	4.35	4.35	4.35
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table F10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1977	0.00	0.00	15.00
1978	4.17	0.00	4.17
1979	13.04	0.00	4.35
1980	5.56	0.00	16.67
1981	16.00	0.00	12.00
1982	16.00	4.00	4.00
1983	4.35	0.00	4.35
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table F11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1977	5.00	5.00	5.00
1978	4.17	0.00	4.17
1979	4.35	4.35	0.00
1980	11.11	0.00	11.11
1981	4.00	0.00	4.00
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	8.70	0.00	0.00
1984	20.00	0.00	0.00

Table F12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *Three's Company* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1977	5.00	0.00	5.00
1978	0.00	0.00	4.17
1979	0.00	0.00	0.00
1980	0.00	0.00	5.56
1981	0.00	0.00	0.00
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	0.00	0.00	0.00
1984	0.00	0.00	10.00

APPENDIX G: *CHEERS* TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Sources for all Appendix G tables: All original episode airdates based on IMDb information.

“Cheers: Season 1,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=1> ; “Cheers: Season 2,” *IMDb*, accessed

April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=2> ; “Cheers: Season 3,”

IMDb, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=3> ;

“Cheers: Season 4,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=4> ; “Cheers: Season 5,” *IMDb*, accessed

April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=5> ; “Cheers: Season 6,”

IMDb, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=6> ;

“Cheers: Season 7,” *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=7> ; “Cheers: Season 8,” *IMDb*, accessed

April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=8> ; *Cheers: The*

Complete Series, DVD (Paramount, 2016). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table G1. Number of *Cheers* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1982	12
1983	22
1984	22
1985	25
1986	26
1987	26
1988	21
1989	26
1990	14
Total	194

Table G2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1982	0.00
1983	0.00
1984	0.00
1985	0.00
1986	0.00
1987	0.00
1988	0.00
1989	0.00
1990	0.00

Table G3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1982	16.67	41.67	8.33
1983	40.91	9.09	27.27
1984	54.55	59.09	27.27
1985	48.00	52.00	32.00
1986	30.77	50.00	23.08
1987	57.69	30.77	42.31
1988	33.33	47.62	28.57
1989	42.31	23.08	34.62
1990	42.86	28.57	14.29

Table G4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1982	16.67	8.33	8.33
1983	45.45	9.09	22.73
1984	36.36	4.55	4.55
1985	36.00	0.00	12.00
1986	38.46	0.00	11.54
1987	34.62	0.00	26.92
1988	42.86	4.76	28.57
1989	30.77	0.00	11.54
1990	42.86	0.00	28.57

Table G5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1982	8.33	16.67	25.00
1983	31.82	13.64	36.36
1984	31.82	0.00	40.91
1985	24.00	0.00	44.00
1986	34.62	30.77	38.46
1987	42.31	19.23	50.00
1988	52.38	23.81	47.62
1989	38.46	11.54	46.15
1990	14.29	7.14	28.57

Table G6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	0.00	4.55	4.55
1984	0.00	0.00	4.55
1985	0.00	0.00	12.00
1986	0.00	3.85	11.54
1987	0.00	3.85	7.69
1988	0.00	0.00	4.76
1989	0.00	0.00	15.38
1990	0.00	0.00	14.29

Table G7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1982	0.00	0.00	8.33
1983	0.00	0.00	4.55
1984	0.00	4.55	4.55
1985	0.00	0.00	0.00
1986	0.00	0.00	0.00
1987	0.00	0.00	0.00
1988	0.00	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	0.00	0.00
1990	0.00	0.00	7.14

Table G8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	0.00	0.00	0.00
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00
1985	0.00	0.00	0.00
1986	0.00	0.00	0.00
1987	0.00	0.00	0.00
1988	0.00	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	0.00	0.00
1990	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table G9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	4.55	0.00	0.00
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00
1985	8.00	0.00	0.00
1986	0.00	0.00	7.69
1987	3.85	0.00	3.85
1988	0.00	0.00	4.76
1989	3.85	3.85	7.69
1990	7.14	7.14	7.14

Table G10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1982	8.33	0.00	0.00
1983	9.09	0.00	22.73
1984	0.00	0.00	13.64
1985	4.00	0.00	12.00
1986	3.85	0.00	19.23
1987	7.69	0.00	0.00
1988	9.52	4.76	9.52
1989	15.38	0.00	11.54
1990	28.57	0.00	21.43

Table G11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1982	8.33	0.00	0.00
1983	18.18	0.00	0.00
1984	9.09	0.00	4.55
1985	24.00	0.00	4.00
1986	15.38	0.00	3.85
1987	11.54	0.00	3.85
1988	9.52	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	0.00	0.00
1990	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table G12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *Cheers* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1982	0.00	0.00	0.00
1983	0.00	0.00	4.55
1984	0.00	0.00	0.00
1985	0.00	0.00	0.00
1986	0.00	0.00	3.85
1987	0.00	0.00	3.85
1988	0.00	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	0.00	11.54
1990	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX H: ROSEANNE TABLES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Sources for all Appendix H tables: All original episode airdates based on IMDb information. “Roseanne: Season 1,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094540/episodes?season=1> ; “Roseanne: Season 2,” *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094540/episodes?season=2> ; *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD (Mill Creek Entertainment, 2013). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes.

Table H1. Number of *Roseanne* Episodes by Year

Year	Number of Episodes
1988	8
1989	27
1990	12
Total	47

Table H2. Percent of Episodes Containing Integrated Ads in *Roseanne* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)
1988	0.00
1989	0.00
1990	0.00

Table H3. Percent of Episodes Containing Consumption in *Roseanne* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Consumption - Positive	Consumption - Neutral	Consumption - Negative
1988	50.00	50.00	12.50
1989	37.04	14.81	18.52
1990	16.67	8.33	8.33

Table H4. Percent of Episodes Containing Thrift in *Roseanne* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Thrift - Positive	Thrift - Neutral	Thrift - Negative
1988	62.50	37.50	25.00
1989	48.15	7.41	11.11
1990	33.33	0.00	0.00

Table H5. Percent of Episodes Containing Employment in Roseanne by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Employment - Positive	Employment - Neutral	Employment - Negative
1988	37.50	12.50	37.50
1989	25.93	25.93	40.74
1990	25.00	25.00	25.00

Table H6. Percent of Episodes Containing Bills in Roseanne by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Bills - Positive	Bills - Neutral	Bills - Negative
1988	0.00	12.50	12.50
1989	0.00	0.00	0.00
1990	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table H7. Percent of Episodes Containing Taxes in Roseanne by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Taxes - Positive	Taxes - Neutral	Taxes - Negative
1988	0.00	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	0.00	0.00
1990	8.33	0.00	8.33

Table H8. Percent of Episodes Containing Necessary Expenses in Roseanne by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Necessary Expenses - Positive	Necessary Expenses - Neutral	Necessary Expenses - Negative
1988	0.00	12.50	37.50
1989	0.00	3.70	11.11
1990	0.00	0.00	8.33

Table H9. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Planning in Roseanne by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Planning - Positive	Financial Planning - Neutral	Financial Planning - Negative
1988	25.00	0.00	0.00
1989	7.41	3.70	7.41
1990	16.67	0.00	0.00

Table H10. Percent of Episodes Containing Financial Status in *Roseanne* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Financial Status - Positive	Financial Status - Neutral	Financial Status - Negative
1988	0.00	12.50	12.50
1989	7.41	3.70	14.81
1990	0.00	0.00	8.33

Table H11. Percent of Episodes Containing Charitableness in *Roseanne* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Charitableness - Positive	Charitableness - Neutral	Charitableness - Negative
1988	0.00	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	3.70	0.00
1990	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table H12. Percent of Episodes Containing Macroeconomic Content in *Roseanne* by Year

Year	Percent of Episodes (%)		
	Macroeconomic Content - Positive	Macroeconomic Content - Neutral	Macroeconomic Content - Negative
1988	0.00	0.00	0.00
1989	0.00	0.00	0.00
1990	0.00	0.00	0.00

APPENDIX I: COMPARISON BETWEEN TELEVISION COMEDIES

Note: Percentage calculations are based on the number of episodes by year containing the specific form of economic content. All calculations are my own.

Sources for all Appendix I tables: All original episode airdates for *Three's Company*, *Cheers*, and *Roseanne* based on IMDb information. "Three's Company: Season 1," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=1> ; "Three's Company: Season 2," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=2> ; "Three's Company: Season 3," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=3> ; "Three's Company: Season 4," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=4> ; "Three's Company: Season 5," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=5> ; "Three's Company: Season 6," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=6> ; "Three's Company: Season 7," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=7> ; "Three's Company: Season 8," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0075596/episodes?season=8> ; "Cheers: Season 1," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=1> ; "Cheers: Season 2," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=2> ; "Cheers: Season 3," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=3> ; "Cheers: Season 4," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=4> ; "Cheers: Season 5," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=5> ; "Cheers: Season 6," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=6> ; "Cheers: Season 7," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=7> ; "Cheers: Season 8," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083399/episodes?season=8> ; "Roseanne: Season 1," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094540/episodes?season=1> ; "Roseanne: Season 2," *IMDb*, accessed May 9, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094540/episodes?season=2> ; *The Ultimate Goldbergs*, DVD (Shout! Factory, 2010); *I Love Lucy: The Complete Series*, DVD (Paramount, 2015); *Father Knows Best: Season One*, DVD (Shout! Factory, 2008); *The Honeymooners*, DVD (Paramount, 2003); "The Honeymooners: Alternate Versions," *IMDb*, accessed April 30, 2018 <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0042114/alternateversions> ; *The Beverly Hillbillies: The Complete First Season*, DVD (Paramount, 2016); *Three's Company: The Complete Series 1977-1984*, DVD (Anchor Bay Entertainment, 2014); *Cheers: The Complete Series*, DVD (Paramount, 2016) *Roseanne: The Complete Series*, DVD (Mill Creek Entertainment, 2013). Refer to the bibliography for a complete list of episodes for all programs.

Table I1. Economic Content Comparisons of 1950s and Early-1960s Television Comedies

Integrated Ads (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	100.00				

Integrated Ads (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1950	100.00				
1951	100.00	100.00			
1952	100.00	100.00			
1953	100.00	100.00			
1954	100.00	100.00	7.69		
1955	10.00	100.00	7.69	100.00	
1956	0.00	100.00		100.00	
1957		100.00			
1958		80.00			
1959		80.00			
1960		100.00			
1961					
1962					100.00
1963					95.45
Consumption - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	20.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	50.00			
1952	0.00	38.89			
1953	0.00	46.67			
1954	31.82	30.00	15.38		
1955	30.00	26.67	30.77	42.86	
1956	20.69	65.38		20.00	
1957		55.56			
1958		80.00			
1959		60.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					35.71
1963					45.45
Consumption - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	60.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	33.33			
1952	0.00	16.67			

Consumption - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1953	100.00	23.33			
1954	36.36	33.33	53.85		
1955	40.00	16.67	15.38	42.86	
1956	17.24	53.85		56.00	
1957		33.33			
1958		0.00			
1959		40.00			
1960		100.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					4.55
Consumption - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	40.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	25.00			
1952	0.00	36.11			
1953	0.00	36.67			
1954	13.64	23.33	15.38		
1955	20.00	26.67	23.08	57.14	
1956	27.59	38.46		32.00	
1957		61.11			
1958		60.00			
1959		60.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					14.29
1963					22.73
Thrift - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	40.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	16.67			
1952	0.00	38.89			
1953	0.00	36.67			
1954	27.73	53.33	23.08		
1955	20.00	33.33	7.69	57.14	

Thrift - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1956	31.03	57.69		32.00	
1957		72.22			
1958		80.00			
1959		80.00			
1960		100.00			
1961					
1962					78.57
1963					40.91
Thrift - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	40.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	100.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	2.78			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	4.55	0.00	7.69		
1955	20.00	10.00	7.69	42.86	
1956	6.90	0.00		36.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					7.14
1963					0.00
Thrift - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	60.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	22.22			
1953	0.00	30.00			
1954	4.55	36.67	7.69		
1955	10.00	33.33	0.00	35.71	
1956	3.45	46.15		12.00	
1957		66.67			
1958		40.00			

Thrift - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1959		80.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					21.43
1963					27.27
Employment - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	33.33			
1952	0.00	13.89			
1953	0.00	13.33			
1954	13.64	30.00	30.77		
1955	30.00	26.67	15.38	14.29	
1956	6.90	34.62		24.00	
1957		33.33			
1958		60.00			
1959		20.00			
1960		100.00			
1961					
1962					21.43
1963					18.18
Employment - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	11.11			
1953	0.00	6.67			
1954	4.55	3.33	7.69		
1955	0.00	13.33	15.38	0.00	
1956	13.79	3.85		8.00	
1957		5.56			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					

Employment - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Employment - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	20.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	13.89			
1953	0.00	13.33			
1954	22.73	23.33	7.69		
1955	10.00	20.00	15.38	35.71	
1956	13.79	26.92		20.00	
1957		22.22			
1958		40.00			
1959		20.00			
1960		100.00			
1961					
1962					7.14
1963					4.55
Bills - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00

Year	Bills - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)				
	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	4.55	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Year	Bills - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)				
	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	8.33			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	9.09	3.33	7.69		
1955	0.00	16.67	23.08	14.29	
1956	0.00	7.69		12.00	
1957		5.56			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Year	Taxes - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)				
	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			

Taxes - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Taxes - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		4.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Taxes - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	3.33	0.00		

Taxes - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		8.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					4.55
Necessary Expenses - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	3.33	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		4.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					4.55
Necessary Expenses - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	20.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	3.33	7.69		
1955	0.00	0.00	7.69	14.29	
1956	3.45	0.00		4.00	
1957		0.00			

Necessary Expenses - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					7.14
1963					4.55
Necessary Expenses - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	7.69	14.29	
1956	0.00	0.00		8.00	
1957		11.11			
1958		0.00			
1959		20.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					7.14
1963					0.00
Financial Planning - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	4.55	10.00	7.69		
1955	20.00	3.33	0.00	0.00	
1956	10.34	0.00		4.00	
1957		5.56			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			

Financial Planning - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1961					
1962					7.14
1963					0.00
Financial Planning - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	16.67			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	3.45	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Financial Planning - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	8.33			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	0.00	13.33	0.00		
1955	0.00	3.33	7.69	0.00	
1956	3.45	11.54		8.00	
1957		11.11			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00

Financial Status - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	5.56			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	9.09	10.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	6.67	0.00	7.14	
1956	6.90	0.00		4.00	
1957		11.11			
1958		20.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		100.00			
1961					
1962					35.71
1963					31.82
Financial Status - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	4.55	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					14.29
1963					0.00
Financial Status - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			

Financial Status - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1952	0.00	5.56			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	9.09	16.67	0.00		
1955	10.00	6.67	0.00	42.86	
1956	6.90	3.85		8.00	
1957		5.56			
1958		20.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					35.71
1963					4.55
Charitableness - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	20.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	2.78			
1953	0.00	3.33			
1954	9.09	6.67	0.00		
1955	10.00	10.00	0.00	14.29	
1956	10.34	7.69		4.00	
1957		11.11			
1958		20.00			
1959		20.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					14.29
1963					13.64
Charitableness - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	40.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	50.00	2.78			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	4.55	0.00	7.69		

Charitableness - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		8.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Charitableness - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	20.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	9.09	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	7.69	7.14	
1956	0.00	3.85		4.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Macroeconomic Conditions - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.14	
1956	0.00	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			

Macroeconomic Conditions - Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Macroeconomic Conditions - Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
1956	0.00	0.00		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00
Macroeconomic Conditions - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)					
Year	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1949	0.00				
1950	0.00				
1951	0.00	0.00			
1952	0.00	0.00			
1953	0.00	0.00			
1954	0.00	3.33	0.00		
1955	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.14	
1956	0.00	3.85		0.00	
1957		0.00			
1958		0.00			
1959		0.00			
1960		0.00			

Year	Macroeconomic Conditions - Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)				
	<i>The Goldbergs</i>	<i>I Love Lucy</i>	<i>Father Knows Best</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i>
1961					
1962					0.00
1963					0.00

Table I2. Economic Content Comparisons of Late-1970s and 1980s Television Comedies

Year	Integrated Ads (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	0.00		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Consumption – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	45.00		
1978	37.50		
1979	34.78		
1980	44.44		
1981	16.00		
1982	36.00	16.67	
1983	43.48	40.91	
1984	40.00	54.55	
1985		48.00	
1986		30.77	
1987		57.69	
1988		33.33	50.00
1989		42.31	37.04
1990		42.86	16.67

Year	Consumption – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	30.00		
1978	8.33		
1979	17.39		
1980	11.11		
1981	36.00		
1982	12.00	41.67	
1983	17.39	9.09	
1984	30.00	59.09	
1985		52.00	
1986		50.00	
1987		30.77	
1988		47.62	50.00
1989		23.08	14.81
1990		28.57	8.33
Year	Consumption – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	35.00		
1978	25.00		
1979	26.09		
1980	11.11		
1981	20.00		
1982	24.00	8.33	
1983	8.70	27.27	
1984	40.00	27.27	
1985		32.00	
1986		23.08	
1987		42.31	
1988		28.57	12.50
1989		34.62	18.52
1990		14.29	8.33
Year	Thrift – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	80.00		
1978	62.50		
1979	60.87		
1980	44.44		
1981	28.00		
1982	48.00	16.67	
1983	65.22	45.45	

Year	Thrift – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1984	60.00	36.36	
1985		36.00	
1986		38.46	
1987		34.62	
1988		42.86	62.50
1989		30.77	48.15
1990		42.86	33.33
Year	Thrift – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	10.00		
1978	16.67		
1979	21.74		
1980	22.22		
1981	12.00		
1982	8.00	8.33	
1983	17.39	9.09	
1984	0.00	4.55	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		4.76	37.50
1989		0.00	7.41
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Thrift – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	35.00		
1978	25.00		
1979	56.52		
1980	16.67		
1981	24.00		
1982	36.00	8.33	
1983	30.43	22.73	
1984	30.00	4.55	
1985		12.00	
1986		11.54	
1987		26.92	
1988		28.57	25.00
1989		11.54	11.11
1990		28.57	0.00

Year	Employment – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	25.00		
1978	33.33		
1979	39.13		
1980	33.33		
1981	40.00		
1982	44.00	0.00	
1983	17.39	31.82	
1984	20.00	31.82	
1985		24.00	
1986		34.62	
1987		42.31	
1988		52.38	37.50
1989		38.46	25.93
1990		14.29	25.00
Year	Employment – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	10.00		
1978	16.67		
1979	21.74		
1980	5.56		
1981	4.00		
1982	8.00	16.67	
1983	8.70	13.64	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		30.77	
1987		19.23	
1988		23.81	12.50
1989		11.54	25.93
1990		7.14	25.00
Year	Employment – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	15.00		
1978	16.67		
1979	34.78		
1980	50.00		
1981	44.00		
1982	48.00	33.33	
1983	17.39	36.36	

Year	Employment – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1984	20.00	40.91	
1985		44.00	
1986		38.46	
1987		50.00	
1988		47.62	37.50
1989		46.15	40.74
1990		28.57	25.00
Year	Bills – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	8.70		
1980	5.56		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Bills – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	8.70		
1980	11.11		
1981	0.00		
1982	8.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	4.55	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		3.85	
1987		3.85	
1988		0.00	12.50
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00

Year	Bills – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	40.00		
1978	20.83		
1979	26.09		
1980	11.11		
1981	12.00		
1982	28.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	4.55	
1984	10.00	4.55	
1985		12.00	
1986		11.54	
1987		7.69	
1988		4.76	12.50
1989		15.38	0.00
1990		14.29	0.00
Year	Taxes – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	0.00		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	8.33
Year	Taxes – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	0.00		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	

Year	Taxes – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1984	0.00	4.55	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Taxes – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	0.00		
1980	5.56		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	8.33	
1983	0.00	4.55	
1984	0.00	4.55	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		7.14	8.33
Year	Necessary Expenses – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	0.00		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00

Year	Necessary Expenses – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	8.70		
1980	5.56		
1981	4.00		
1982	4.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	12.50
1989		0.00	3.70
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Necessary Expenses – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	15.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	4.35		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	37.50
1989		0.00	11.11
1990		0.00	8.33
Year	Financial Planning – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	10.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	8.70		
1980	11.11		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	4.55	

Year	Financial Planning – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		8.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		3.85	
1988		0.00	25.00
1989		3.85	7.41
1990		7.14	16.67
Year	Financial Planning – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	0.00		
1980	5.56		
1981	4.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		3.85	3.70
1990		7.14	0.00
Year	Financial Planning – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	25.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	4.35		
1980	0.00		
1981	8.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		7.69	
1987		3.85	
1988		4.76	0.00
1989		7.69	7.41
1990		7.14	0.00

Year	Financial Status – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	13.04		
1980	5.56		
1981	16.00		
1982	16.00	8.33	
1983	4.35	9.09	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		4.00	
1986		3.85	
1987		7.69	
1988		9.52	0.00
1989		15.38	7.41
1990		28.57	0.00
Year	Financial Status – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	0.00		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	4.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		4.76	12.50
1989		0.00	3.70
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Financial Status – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	15.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	4.35		
1980	16.67		
1981	12.00		
1982	4.00	0.00	
1983	4.35	22.73	

Year	Financial Status – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1984	0.00	13.64	
1985		12.00	
1986		19.23	
1987		0.00	
1988		9.52	12.50
1989		11.54	14.81
1990		21.43	8.33
Year	Charitableness – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	4.35		
1980	11.11		
1981	4.00		
1982	0.00	8.33	
1983	8.70	18.18	
1984	20.00	9.09	
1985		24.00	
1986		15.38	
1987		11.54	
1988		9.52	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Charitableness – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	4.35		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	3.70
1990		0.00	0.00

Year	Charitableness – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	0.00		
1980	11.11		
1981	4.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	4.55	
1985		4.00	
1986		3.85	
1987		3.85	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Macroeconomic Conditions – Positive (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	0.00		
1979	0.00		
1980	0.00		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00%
Year	Macroeconomic Conditions – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	0.00%		
1978	0.00%		
1979	0.00%		
1980	0.00%		
1981	0.00%		
1982	0.00%	0.00%	

Year	Macroeconomic Conditions – Neutral (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1983	0.00	0.00	
1984	0.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		0.00	
1987		0.00	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		0.00	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00
Year	Macroeconomic Conditions – Negative (Percent of Episodes by Year) (%)		
	<i>Three's Company</i>	<i>Cheers</i>	<i>Roseanne</i>
1977	5.00		
1978	4.17		
1979	0.00		
1980	5.56		
1981	0.00		
1982	0.00	0.00	
1983	0.00	4.55	
1984	10.00	0.00	
1985		0.00	
1986		3.85	
1987		3.85	
1988		0.00	0.00
1989		11.54	0.00
1990		0.00	0.00