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MESO-AMERICAN MEDIA:
IMPLICATIONS ABOUT STUDENT ATTITUDE.

by
Taralynn Hartsell

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, READING AND CULTURE
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
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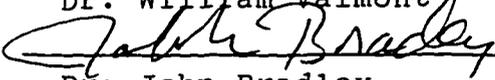
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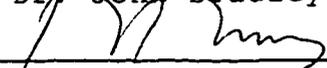
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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Evelyn Hurlburt", written over a horizontal line.

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DEDICATION

To my mom, dad, and sister
whose support I could not be without.

For All Your Love

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ABSTRACT

Despite claims that media have broad effects upon individuals' thinking and behavior, the field of media literacy research has failed to provide support of these claims with pertinent data and research. A few qualitative studies did examine how studying the mass media could help individuals become critical viewers. Yet, these qualitative studies study how the media could influence personal attitudes toward a specific culture.

Lack of research became the rationale for conducting this study. Purpose of the study was to investigate whether studying Meso-American media could heighten one's sensitivity to and knowledge about the Meso-American culture and its people. If media could teach students to become critical "users" of mass media, then studying the mass media may also help in increasing students' sensitivity to other cultures and experiences.

Eighteen students were the participants in this descriptive study of attitude change toward Meso-American media and culture. The participants were selected from available media arts courses that dealt with a non-American culture. A comparison group was also selected to contrast responses on the attitude surveys with the observed group. Five measurement instruments were used to delineate attitude change toward Meso-American media and culture. Data were analyzed by developing codes for the fieldnotes, interviews, and document analysis. Correlational t-tests were used to analyze the pre- and post-tests.

Findings revealed some important information related to media literacy education and cultural studies courses. Among the

most important outcomes of the study was the discovery that media provided students with the opportunity to become acquainted with a particular culture. This is especially true when history and culture cannot be segregated from the media themselves or from their codes. Another important finding was that media provided the visual element that touched the students emotionally. These findings have important implications for future media literacy research.

CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND INTRODUCTION

According to Carlos E. Cortes (1992), the mass media are powerful in terms of what they teach people about the dominant values, beliefs, and ideologies found within a given culture. This influence led Cortes to encourage students to become media literate, especially in a world where media technology had become a socializing force in their education. If the mass media really educate us about what to believe, one can question what the mass media teach us about the various ethnic cultures found in this society. Even more important to ask is whether the mass media can teach us to become more appreciative toward racial and cultural differences found among the people in this country. Scholars have linked media's presentation of events with the positive and negative racial attitudes found in this culture (Ross, 1994; Greenberg, 1986; Goldberg, 1955; Halloran, 1974). If their findings are correct, then applying the mass media as an instructional tool in cultural studies requires further investigation.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether college students enrolled in a Meso-American media course were able to become more sensitive to the Hispanic culture. The hypothesis is that stereotypical student attitudes toward Meso-American culture would subside as students increased their familiarity with the cultural codes that represented the Meso-American experience.

Mass media are basically cultural products that represent those who produce them. Thus, it is held that the dominant

values and beliefs that exist in society are transmitted by film or television (Brookfield, 1986; Johnson, 1994). Because media producers are not isolated from their immediate social environments, they cannot help but create, reproduce, and perpetuate the dominant notions that can be found within their own given culture (Cortes, 1992; Hobbs, 1994a; Johnson, 1994). Media literacy can help students learn how to disclose such cultural biases buried within the media. Knowledge equates control, and control leads to empowerment (Hobbs, 1994b; Manley and Reidy, 1994). Students can discover that social knowledge and possibly become advocates for change through their exposure to media literacy (Arevalo, 1994; Berger, 1983; Boozell, 1994; Greenberg, 1986; Manley and Reidy, 1994).

Definition of Terms

Before preceding into the background, method, and rationale of this study, a few terms need to be defined for clarification.

Media Literacy: A process by which students grasp a critical understanding of how the media work, how they produce meaning, and how they represent their own version of reality. This understanding is usually accomplished by analyzing media production techniques, the media industry, socio-historical conditions at the time of production, audience, and other contextual factors that may influence the final media product.

Attitude: A favorable or unfavorable predisposition toward a certain object, place, event, or belief (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975a). In other words, attitude is a learned process that predisposes an action that was either for or against an object such as, in this case, Meso-American culture (Ajzen and Fishbein,

1980; Eiser, 1984). Ambivalence is always present in terms of measuring attitude in that individuals may not have an opinion on the topic. However, because students in the Meso-American Media course had to make some kind of judgement when responding to surveys and interviews, the original definition of attitude remains in effect.

Attitude Change: A shift in the form or shape of the relationship between the holder of the attitude and the object (Eiser, 1984). Hence, in this study, the shift was in the relationship between the students and their conceptions of Meso-American culture as measured through surveys, participant observations, interviews, and document analyses.

Semiotics: The science of signs whereby students decode aural and visual messages found in the mass media and assign meaning to these messages or signs according to their own experiences.

Meso-America: Consists of Southern Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. The class viewed media products produced from these regions.

Meso-American Cultural Code: A semiotic approach used by students in the course to analyze Meso-American media artifacts. This notion consisted of ten primary message systems that have been broken down into binary opposites of positive and negative social powers (Appendix A). Participants in the course, being students, looked at the socio-cultural and historical backgrounds of The Cultural Code as they applied the notion in their own analyses of Meso-American film/video. The course objective was for participants to understand how the Meso-American Cultural Code could be used as an instrument to analyze and interpret

cultural texts.

Cultural Code: A set of semantic rules to code social realities. In other words, a classificatory system upon which all meanings are produced within a given society. These can include behavior and thought.

Primary Message Systems: An anthropological viewpoint of ten basic kinds of universal human activity. These are: 1) interaction, 2) association, 3) subsistence, 4) sexuality, 5) territoriality, 6) temporality, 7) learning, 8) play, 9) defense, and 10) exploitation or use of materials (Appendix A). Each primary message system is then separated into binary opposites of positive and negative social power that represent characteristics of The Meso-American Cultural Code. As one looks at the oppositions, positive social power evidently belongs to the autocratic or upper-class, whereas codes of lesser social power are attributed to the peasant proletariat or the lower-class.

Interaction: Interaction involves language and communication. The rational part of interaction signified logic and reason that belongs primarily to the upper-classes. In contrast, lower classes use animism that envisions everything to have a soul. For instance, water was regarded as the instrument of life by the early Mayans, and rocks were conceived to be the living souls of the earth.

Association: This message system consists of the family and its structure. The autocracy usually have the patripotestal extended families that rely heavily upon kinship to pass inheritance down to younger generations. Nuclear unstable families are common among the peasant class because males often leave home to travel

long distances to work, leaving the children and women behind.

Sexuality: Sexuality is the only code that involves oppositions between the genders. Characteristics of sexuality are similar between the autocratic and peasant classes. Machismo allows males to be the dominant gender along with all of its positive advantages in society. Women, on the other hand, have to cope with the machismo attitudes because they are considered to be spiritually superior and thus understanding of the male's inane behavior.

Territoriality: Territoriality refers to the structure of material wealth. For example, the hacienda and plantation systems normally belong to the upper-class where wealth is accumulated through land ownership and cash crops. Cash crops can be sold on the market for money such as corn, tobacco, and cocoa. Lower-classes do not have the wealth to own private land, and thus had no opportunity for cultivating cash crops. Because land is often shared among the peasant class, the only crops harvested became food for the families.

Temporality: Temporality refers to the concept of time and how time is interpreted. People living in urban industrialized areas or on plantations rely on the watch for determining the time of day. People from the autocracy depend upon the watch for meeting deadlines, work schedules, and for other personal matters.

People living in rural areas used the placement of the sun and moon for calculating time. Therefore, they are not as concerned for monitoring time in exact minutes as people in urban areas are because they have no real deadlines.

Subsistence: Subsistence refers to a person's livelihood or

method of economic support. Industrialists or plantation owners (patrons) consist of the autocracy in which wealth is abundant. Proletariat and peons are struggling in order to survive. Wealth and economic support are not that plentiful for the lower-classes. Job ceilings in urban businesses and communal land ownership in rural areas are contributors to their impoverished status.

Defense: Defense pertains to social class positioning. The autocratic rule that consist of patrons, entrepreneurs, and industrialists do not have to defend their social status in Meso-America because they predominantly own the means of production and economic wealth. Peons and the working proletariat do not have the same fortuitous life. Instead, their lives are suffused with poverty and biased injustices. Thus, rebellion against the ruling class and government officials is the only alternative open for the peasant class.

Exploitation: Exploitation or the way society uses technology to produce goods is effected by the defense category. Modernization is the mode of production among the upper-classes. On the other hand, rural areas are in a state of development and liberation. Peasants do not have current technology to produce material goods, thus they are in a state of social development as they try to enter contemporary society.

Learning: Learning represents the social element of the two classes. Formal learning is generally found among the industrialists and patrons as their children attend private schools for their education. People living in rural areas usually do not attend school. Reason for this is because most of

the time peasants had no money to build schools or hire public school teachers. Therefore, learning predominantly takes place through children's observations of adult behavior.

Play: This message system is another social code in terms of how people respond to particular events. In short, play refers to celebrations that people have. The upper-class usually have fiestas that celebrate national holidays, birthdays, promotions, etc. Therefore, fiestas are reserved for happy times to celebrate something positive. The peasantry on the other hand conduct ceremonial mourning as they celebrate the dead and missing. Often, during ceremonial mourning, mock plays about the Spanish Conquest and the autocratic rule are presented. Hence, play clearly reflect the status of the two classes.

Course's Purpose

The course objective was for participants to understand how the Meso-American Cultural Code could be used as an instrument to analyze and interpret cultural texts. Because the approach used in the course was a combination of both cultural studies and semiotics, this method made the course valuable in that the students learned basic concepts for interpreting any media product. The method was also valuable in exploring whether the students carried with them and applied their critical skills to outside interests.

The Meso-American Cultural Code is an adaptation that uses primary message systems for organization (Appendix A). Ten primary message systems are included in The Meso-American Cultural Code. These message systems represent *universal* human activities that people have in common regardless of their

cultures. By using the ten human activities as a guideline for organization, characteristics of the Meso-American culture are placed into their appropriate message system of both positive and negative social powers. For example, temporality signifies how people use time depending upon their culture. In Meso-America, people use time either formally (urban) or informally (rural) depending upon their socio-economic status. Therefore, The Meso-American Cultural Code represents the human activities that are culturally specific to Meso-America.

Media analyzed in the course consisted of media artifacts that represented the Meso-American culture. Films and videos were brought to the classroom for the eighteen students to examine using concepts from The Meso-American Cultural Code. Films viewed in class were either produced by a native Meso-American such as Alsino y El Condor, a fictional film that revolved around the events in Nicaragua during the 1970's, or by an Hispanic-American filmmaker like Todos Los Santos who first wrote an ethnographic account of the villagers in Guatemala and later produced her film about that account. Media produced by non-Meso-Americans were also shown such as Einstein's Que Viva Mexico! and Pamela Yates' documentary When the Mountains Tremble. These films are examples of the types of media the students viewed in the course using cultural codes as a method of analysis.

Background

Media literacy has been a topic of interest to many educators and to the general public for some time. Scholars have been interested in developing media literacy programs to educate

students for almost sixty years. However, these educational scholars work primarily in the field of mass media studies where content analyses of films, television, and print were the dominant focus. It has been only recently, with the expansion of computers and multimedia in educational institutions, that media have been seriously considered as educational tools (Adams, 1989; Amatuzzi, 1983; Kupisiewicz, 1984).

Today, both media theorists and classroom educators are interested in the implications that mass media have for student learning and social behavior (Amatuzzi, 1983; Considine, 1987; Singer and Singer, 1991). Instead of viewing technology as a competitor with traditional instruction, educators have increasingly become more accepting of the idea of using media in the classrooms to augment instruction and teach critical thinking (Cortes, 1992; Kupisiewicz, 1984). This acceptance has been the break that many media scholars have been looking for. With more educators finding media instruction useful, the gateway to media literacy and critical reading/viewing skills can be unlocked.

Stephen Brookfield (1986) offered three approaches that educators could use to promote media literacy in adults: 1) deconstructing and decoding media images and messages, 2) content analysis of media programs, and 3) autobiographical analysis of self-generated reflections and interpretations. Brookfield found that these three techniques helped educators and students realize the potential of media literacy as they began to recognize biases that they might have overlooked before (Hobbs, 1994b; ross, 1994).

Brookfield was not the only scholar who used media literacy

as a pedagogical approach. Carlos Cortes also offered five media-based pedagogical strategies that could help students sharpen their critical thinking skills and improve their learning at the same time. The five media teaching processes included viewing media as: 1) providers of information, 2) organizers of information and ideas, 3) creators, reinforcers, and modifiers of values and attitudes, 4) shapers of expectations, and 5) providers of models for action (Cortes, 1992). According to Cortes, an effective media literacy curriculum would incorporate these steps to ensure that students develop critical literacy skills to examine, understand, and evaluate media messages (1992). Successful completion of the five strategies could help educators and students become critical consumers of mass media as they empowered themselves with the ability to resist media's influence (Brookfield, 1986; Giroux, 1992; Graham, 1989; Greenberg, 1986; Kellner, 1988; Silverblatt, 1995). The following sections describe each of these tactics more fully.

1. Media provide information.

All presentations of information involve some sort of interpretation. Media, while providing information, also interpret through the use of various methods such as the inclusion and exclusion of certain information, and the selection of individual words and images (Cortes, 1992; Hobbs, 1994a and 1994b; Johnson, 1994; Silverblatt, 1995). In other words, media are very selective of what they present to viewers. Certain information and ideas may not be shown because these do not fit the producers' political agendas. As part of media literacy development, students need to be aware of the "interpretive

inevitability" of information presentation and how to identify those interpretive techniques (Cortes, 1992; Johnson, 1994).

2. Media help organize information and ideas.

Media can influence how a viewer will perceive information and ideas presented by the text. Through repetition and reiteration of certain themes and representations, media can create and reinforce viewers' mental schemata by influencing their individual reception, interpretation, and integration of future information and ideas (Boozell, 1994; Cortes, 1992; Ellis, 1982). To understand this effect, students need to become aware of how the media influence their way of thinking about different subjects, as well as how media reshape their ways of receiving new media input about those subjects (Arevalo, 1994; Cortes, 1992; Rucker, 1994). This would inevitably lead to change as students become critical users of mass media.

3. Media help create values and attitudes.

Media have always held a biased viewpoint when it comes to presenting values and beliefs. While the media in this country may support certain values such as the free-market economy and the democratic process, media also condemn other values and behaviors such as homosexuality and anarchist speech toward the existing government (Cortes, 1992). Assigning denotative and connotative levels of meanings can be useful for comprehending the representations of such values in the mass media. Hence, by assessing techniques used by the media industry to convey or oppose certain values and ideologies, students can sharpen their critical understanding of mass media and their culture (Cortes, 1992; Hobbs, 1994b; Johnson, 1994; Manley and Reidy, 1994;

Singer and Singer, 1991).

4. Media help shape expectations.

Media are powerful reinforcers of the status quo (Boozell, 1994; Brookfield, 1986; Cortes, 1992; Hobbs, 1994a; Johnson, 1994; Kellner, 1988; Melamed, 1983). Scholars claim that media portrayals have, in fact, matched the socio-economic hierarchy found in the United States by displaying certain middle-class values and denouncing others through media's "silence." Silence, as defined by Malcolm Sillars (1991) and Richard Campbell (1991), occurs when the media exclude oppositional voices through a production technique called elision. This absence or omission can sway public opinion as the media reports only one side to an issue. Such support helps strengthen the socio-economic hierarchy by increasing its acknowledgement among the public and its failing to provide positive role models for those who do not occupy and maintain mainstream ideologies (Cortes, 1992). Soap operas are excellent examples of how the media support the status quo by influencing viewers with what it considers to be acceptable norms. Signifiers such as brand name clothing, jewelry, mansions, three-piece suits, and cosmetics all support the social hierarchy of mainstream norm. Even when a person from a working-class background enters the narrative, she/he is automatically shown to be clean-cut, feminine or masculine in appearance, and desirous of a more prosperous life. These images or signs cannot avoid but teach merit in the status quo. If images such as these go unquestioned, change is improbable, for the status quo becomes the norm.

5. Media provide models for action.

Intentionally or not, media have provided models for action over time (Cortes, 1992). World War II is a good example of this fact where both fictional and nonfictional "filmic presentations" were used to appeal to Americans of all backgrounds to sacrifice for their country (Cortes, 1992). This example demonstrates how the media provide specific models of action. The critical step for the viewer then is to investigate why that notion of patriotism was promoted and how pro-war sympathy was popularized through media representations.

The foregoing strategies demonstrate how mass media can be used as an instructional tool. By analyzing how media messages are conveyed through the process of selection and manipulation, students can become critical viewers (Brookfield, 1986; Cortes, 1992). If media can teach students to become critical "users" of mass media, can studying the mass media also help in increasing one's sensitivity to other cultures and experiences? This is an area that requires further study.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how media literacy can affect people's perceptions toward Meso-American media and society. Therefore, research questions were designed accordingly. Research questions investigated are as follows:

1. What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?
2. How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?

3. Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of media artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?
4. Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?

Using these research questions for direction, the study investigated whether media literacy altered individuals' perceptions toward media representations of race. More specifically, the study collected evidence as to whether studying Meso-American media could help college students learn to become more responsive toward Meso-American culture.

Method

This study explored attitudinal transformations that occurred as individuals learned how to use media theory and criticism in analyzing Meso-American media products. Qualitative research methods such as participant observations, interviews, and document analyses were used in the study to substantiate changes in the attitudes of individuals who were enrolled in a *Meso-American Media* course taught by the Department of Media Arts at a Southwestern university. Field notes were taken throughout the semester to record pertinent comments made by the participants regarding their discoveries of Meso-American culture. Interviews were conducted with the students to document changes in their attitudes. Finally, document analyses of final essays that the students wrote concerning their personal observations about Meso-American media were done. This triangulation method was employed to make possible a thorough

picture of the classroom environment and the nature of the information that the students were acquiring.

Quantitative research methods were also used to document attitude change. Pre- and post-surveys were distributed to assess possible changes in students' perspectives as they learned about cultural codes and Meso-American history. After the surveys were given, a critical test was conducted. The test consisted of a viewing of a five minute film clip during which students wrote down their observations concerning their identification of cultural codes and socio-cultural meanings. In short, these two methods helped augment the observations, interviews, and document analyses made in the study.

Rationale

A lack of qualitative research regarding student attitude toward a specific group of people justifies conducting a study on Meso-American media. In addition, the dearth of qualitative research on the effectiveness of media-based courses suggests a need for this study. Unlike the one-time distribution and collection of surveys, this study investigated the behaviors, responses, and thoughts of a group of students for an entire semester (fifteen weeks). Although this study was not longitudinal, fifteen weeks is long enough to provide sufficient opportunity for the participants to undergo change and have that change assessed especially when observations, interviews, document analyses, and surveys were used as methods for data collection. As compared to the other studies performed in the area of media literacy research, it is felt that a semester is sufficient time to document attitudinal change among the

participants of this study. Therefore, this research project was designed to investigate an area that had been previously ignored by media theorists and educators--the attitudinal change among the research population regarding a particular culture as shaped by media literacy instruction. The study also employed various methods of data collection during a sufficiently lengthy time period that made possible a careful study of attitude change about Meso-American culture as a consequence of exposure to media.

This study was significant in that it investigated attitudinal changes toward an ethnic group at a more descriptive and personal level. Although many scholars advocate using media literacy to teach content areas, there is a dearth of research studies that actually investigate the effects of media literacy upon student learning and attitudinal change (Rogers, 1995). An even more important consideration is the fact that prior media research on user effect has been quantitative in nature, thus overlooking personal differences that may have been found in a classroom case study approach. Because qualitative research can offer a rich view of events that quantitative studies cannot provide, an abundance of qualitative studies on media effect would be expected. However, this is not the case. Of the few studies that investigated attitude change, quantitative methods were employed.

Deficiencies in research on attitudinal change can be demonstrated in the following few studies. At a UNESCO meeting in December, 1969, experts on a panel titled "Role of Mass Media in a Multi-Racial Society" raised and discussed the issue that

more research on delimited topics needed to be performed (The UNESCO Press, 1974; Halloran, 1974). At the same time, a Montreal Conference was organized by UNESCO and the International Panel of Consultants to discuss the need to concentrate and coordinate research on the mass media and their function in society (Halloran, 1974). The paper presented at the conference asked why such research was needed. In response, the presenters said that before any communication policy could be developed, policy-makers needed the knowledge that only that type of research could provide.

Although "experts" such as these recommend further research into user effect, little has been done. In addition, the few studies that have been performed that looked at user effect were primarily experimental in nature, thus missing the personal attention and detail that qualitative research offers. Studies on attitudinal change were introduced by UNESCO during the late 1960's. However, these studies employed quantitative methods that investigated news programming and how news reporting might sway people's perception toward Blacks in Britain. Although UNESCO did find some effect between news reporting and personal attitude, the method of research employed in the studies was primarily experimental.

Another study that investigated attitude change was a dissertation project that focused on the effects of motion pictures on attitudes of adults toward minority groups (Goldberg, 1955). However, like UNESCO's endeavors, Goldberg's research project was also experimental. Therefore, the study had its own limitations in terms of personal attention to individual

differences. Goldberg's data collection was based upon surveys that documented attitudinal change among a sample group of three-hundred and four participants. Although his study did report a change in the way some participants perceived minority groups after viewing the documentary film, the study was limited by its dependence upon surveys for measurement and the participants' one-time exposure to the film. Also, because Goldberg conducted the study in 1955, the findings are obsolete in that his results do not account for current opinions of today. As time progresses, people's attitudes toward certain socio-political matters also change. Although Goldberg's study revealed attitudes representative of his times, the same findings could not be applied to those today. Large-scale studies performed in the 1950's and 1960's cannot adequately explain concerns that people face today.

The UNESCO and Goldberg studies did provide evidence that media could effect personal attitude toward a specific group of people. UNESCO did find a small effect between the representation of Blacks in British news programming and its impact upon the audience watching the programs. Goldberg demonstrated that exposure to a film could affect change of attitude toward African-Americans. However, these two studies were experimental in that quantitative methods were used to ascertain attitudinal change. Hence, qualitative research methods were overlooked in the field of media literacy studies during these two time periods.

Another recommendation for the investigation on user effect came from Stephen Brookfield. Brookfield (1986) emphasized the

role of research on media effect by stating, "Research into how adults and children assimilate television encodings and how they can best be encouraged to decode them is a critical direction for the future (168)." However, like the other scholars who advocate for media literacy instruction, research on the effectiveness of such instruction has been scant (Rogers, 1995). For instance, Stephen Brookfield did not offer suggestions as to which research method should be used or even indicate what research has been conducted within the field. This has been a reoccurring problem in media literacy studies as educators talk about creating critical viewers and reform, but do not investigate how or to what effectiveness some pedagogical methods have in comparison to others.

The dearth of research about media effects on users can be attributed to the field's own interdisciplinary nature with other content areas such as sociology, psychology, history, and English. Because of the field's diversity, little systematic research on user effect as applied to media literacy instruction has been performed. Content analyses seem to be the dominant form of research within the field, while behavioral observations and student-centered research have been ignored. Bradley Greenberg at Michigan State University finds that research on minorities and media have relied upon content analyses and speculation rather than upon an assessment of its impact on users (1986). In short, a gulf exists between content and social effects research. Few studies have tried to answer how media representations of minorities effect mass media users in terms of behavioral and thought patterns (Greenberg, 1986). This gap

causes scholars such as Greenberg to suggest greater effort to conduct media effects research regarding attitudinal and behavioral postures toward certain ethnic groups.

Given what qualitative research methodology has to offer in terms of "richness" of information, one would expect an abundance of that type of qualitative research being performed in the area of media literacy (Miles and Huberman, 1984a). However, this does not seem to be the case. Although qualitative research methodology can provide data that are unobtainable by a single survey distributed to a group of participants on a one-time basis, ethnographic studies are still uncommon in the field.

Assumptions

Three assumptions were made in this study. These assumptions consisted of the generalizability of the findings, the effects of the researcher's active participation, and the effectiveness of using five distinct data collection methods.

First, generalizing the sample of this study to a larger population seemed unlikely, but not impossible. The inability to compare students across the semesters or across different courses was a problem in this study. Many factors affect student changes in attitude and behavior, and generalizing this group of participants to others was questionable without a larger sample or continued investigations. However, with the evidence presented in this study, it can be reasonably said that this sample could be contrasted to other cultural studies courses to the extent that this sample is similar to other college students enrolled in non-Western civilization courses. With this assumption, generalizing this sample to others that are similar

is possible.

Second, an assumption was made that my presence in the classroom did not affect the findings. Participant observation was an essential way of obtaining data about student behavior and dialogue outside of the interviews. Participation also provided me with the opportunity to establish rapport with the students that a complete observer could not accomplish completely. Therefore, although my presence did affect the classroom environment, a trade-off had to be made for the abundance of data that I could collect by the end of the college semester if I were an active participant.

Finally, the use of five distinct measurement instruments was considered to be an effective way to document changes in student attitude. It was assumed that five measurement instruments (observation, interviews, document analysis, surveys, and film surveys) would provide a more complete and overlapping picture of the participants than the use of any single data source. Because each of the five data sources offered different perspectives or attributes of the students, it was presumed that five sources were better than one for investigating student change.

Limitations

The study had several drawbacks that may have affected the collection of data or might have altered the findings. Factors such as time constrictions, single sample, researcher influence, and appropriateness of the measurement instruments might have affected the data collection process for this study. An explanation of the limitations should be elaborated further for

future reference.

Two weaknesses of this study were the limited time available to conduct the study and the use of one class as a sample. Students differ from one semester to another as the professor's reflections have indicated. These particular students in the Spring, 1995, class may have been a sensitive group of students who were willing to learn information about a different culture or a new way for analyzing media. Looking at different groups of students enrolled in the course would be useful to compare with this group of participants. Personal characteristics, academic and professional endeavors, and student interests were all factors in whether student success or attitude change had occurred. If this group were compared to others, it would have been possible to investigate whether differences across class groupings had an impact on student success or attitude change.

If time had permitted, having the sample of students reflect on the course a few years in the future would also be profitable to find out if the effects were lasting. Whether or not the participants of this study had incorporated certain elements of the course into their personal and professional lives would have been interesting to study.

Researcher influence might have also affected the findings in two ways. These two influences are the "Hawthorne effect" and pre-test sensitization. The Hawthorne effect occurs when participants know they are being observed and act accordingly as to what they assume the researcher wants to see. The Hawthorne effect might have been present in this study. Students' awareness of being observed might have influenced their behavior

or what they said in class. My presence in the classroom may have deterred certain students from saying something or motivated others to say things that would boost their self-image, especially when they knew I was recording their comments.

My social interactions with the participants also may have influenced the findings. Little greetings such as smiles, hellos, and "how was your weekend" type of questions influenced the way students perceived me. In effect, short and friendly conversations made students feel more comfortable with me.

Pre-test sensitization may also be a factor. Requiring the students to complete the pre-test may have caused the students to become prepared for what is expected of them in the course. The pre-tests may have also affected how the students would respond on the post-tests. In effect, the pre-tests may have compelled students to think about the issues raised by the pre-tests that would later affect their classroom performance and their responses on the post-tests.

Finally, certain measurement instruments may have also influenced the report of findings. The five measurement instruments used in this study all have their advantages and disadvantages in reporting data. One instrument may have been effective for gathering a specific type of data, but falter when trying to uncover another. Hence, design problems could have also influenced the results of this study.

All research studies have loopholes. Time constraints, restricted sample population, researcher influence, and the development of measurement instruments may have all created inconsistencies in this study. However, one must look at some of

the positive results that can be found in this study. When evaluating the overall effectiveness of this study, these findings should not be disregarded.

Summary

This chapter has summarized the purpose, rationale, and background of this study. Purpose of the study was to investigate whether studying Meso-American media could heighten one's sensitivity to and knowledge about the Meso-American culture and its people. The hypothesis is that stereotypical student attitudes toward Meso-American culture would subside as they increased their familiarity with the cultural codes that represented the Meso-American experience.

Rationale for the study came from a lack of qualitative research that investigated attitude change toward a specific group of people. A few studies have been performed that examined how media representations of British Blacks and African-Americans affected the way people would perceive these people. However, these studies were primarily experimental in that surveys were distributed to a selected sample after the members viewed a particular film or television program. Because qualitative research offers a rich view of events that quantitative research does not provide, performing a qualitative classroom case study became the rationale for this study.

The context for data collection came from observations, interviews, document analyses, and surveys distributed to students in a *Meso-American Media* course taught by the Department of Media Arts. Findings gathered from these observations would answer the question of whether analyzing media products alters

students' attitude toward Meso-American culture.

CHAPTER TWO

DISCUSSION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This study examined some of the influences that a course on *Meso-American Media* had upon student attitude toward that culture. Thus, Chapter Two will examine pertinent literature to explain the context of this study. Areas to be examined include:

1. Current reviews and research on media literacy and media literacy instruction.
2. Recent trends in attitudinal research.

Concentrating on these two areas offered an understanding of the types of research this study was based upon. Qualitative research is rich in its resources, and thus, can offer a better illustration of attitudinal changes among the participants. Although *Meso-American Media* was a course that primarily focused on semiotics and cultural criticism, the course also adopted some of the theories and applications of media literacy instruction. Also, because student attitude was the factor looked at in this study, a review of attitudinal research needed to be performed. Hence, this review should explain the foundation of this study.

Survey of Media Literacy

Media literacy is a fairly new concept in education. Although media departments have been established in American universities and college campuses, the thought of using media to instruct students in reading, writing, critical thinking, and cultural diversity is remote. Even media scholars shun at the thought of using mass media for any other purpose than for textual analyses. However, depending upon the nature of their audience, mass media have many uses. Individuals use media

according to what they need. In education, media can be an effective pedagogical instrument for instructing various content areas. This review has been divided into three sections. The first section explains some of the reasons why studying the mass media can be beneficial for students. Next, actual studies and observations performed by educators will be examined. Finally, a review of media literacy programs already established in schools and colleges will be performed. In this study, media refer to television, film, and video as opposed to print and computer technology. Although print media and computers do have an impact in education and learning, visual media are the foci in this study.

Why Study the Mass Media?

This section examines literature that emphasized the importance of consolidating media literacy into classrooms. The first scholar that supported media literacy instruction was Czeslaw Kupisiewicz. In his essay, Kupisiewicz (1984) compared three school-cum-media models to examine which model was the best to be incorporated into regular classroom instruction. The best model he considered involve intensive cooperation between media institutions and teachers (Model III). If teachers have control over content, organization, and lesson plans to best accommodate their students' needs and school curriculum, then this model would encourage both educators and media producers to collaborate in educating students (Kupisiewicz, 1984). He believed that the mass media could be a motivating factor for young people to pursue their education. Thus, Kupisiewicz believed that mass media should be incorporated into the standard school curriculum

because of its appeal and scope.

Kupisiewicz was not alone in thinking that the mass media should be incorporated into educational institutions. He was also not alone in believing that schools and the mass media should become partners rather than competitors when it came to educating students. Stephen Brookfield followed Kupisiewicz's ideal of cooperation and consolidation whereby adults became the primary focus in Brookfield's analysis.

Stephen Brookfield argues that adults could learn a great deal from critical analyses of television programming. Because Brookfield found news programming biased in their presentation of events, adults could learn analytical skills, in addition to world politics through media literacy.

Stephen Brookfield (1986) discussed the uses of mass media in adult education. He believed that through media literacy, adults could learn to be more skeptical with what they view on television and in their immediate surroundings. Brookfield found television programming biased in their selection of images and stories as he advocated adults to be more critical when consuming television's version of reality and to read between the lines.

Stephen Brookfield's essay was very thorough. He began his paper by discussing theories and concepts that media scholars have used to explain social, political, and aesthetic consequences that media could have upon consumers. Brookfield's analysis was also very current as he used television programs that were still in broadcast. This made it easier for educators to obtain copies of the programs so they could verify Brookfield's arguments and observations in their classrooms.

However, Stephen Brookfield was not the only educator interested in teaching adults to become media literate. Lanie Melamed was also concerned with the impact of television in adults' lives.

Lanie Melamed found media a worthwhile tool to educate adults about their culture. She also presented techniques that educators could use to approach media literacy in their classrooms. In her essay, she (1983) explained why media literacy was a skill that needed to be taught and how educators could approach this topic with their students. Being critically aware of what the mass media could do to us and whose interests mass media actually served were areas that needed further investigation. Thus, Lanie Melamed found that keeping media literacy in the backdrop could only harm individuals who were constantly faced with images and messages being broadcasted by the mass media.

Joseph R. Amatuzzi discovered in his study the need to link home television with school practices (1983). He believed that children could benefit from both environments if children were allowed to transfer and apply their knowledge to what they have accumulated from television viewing for completing classroom assignments. Although Amatuzzi was not primarily concerned with the effects of television upon children, he was concerned with how schools could better accommodate children's needs by implementing media education into their curricula (1983). Currently, he found a disparity between what the schools were doing and how children used media at home. Amatuzzi hoped that a partnership could be established between home and school instead

of competing for the best way to educate children.

Finally, Dennis Adams and Mary Hamm found television to be a useful tool for motivating students to learn by offering alternative ways of teaching (1989). Reading television scripts, writing in television viewing logs, and producing their own video projects could stimulate children and adults to read and write, knowing that they could apply their media knowledge to school practices. Although television had been blamed for the decline of educational and social standards, Dennis Adams and Mary Hamm view television as a potentially positive force in future education.

All five scholars have the same concern about educating students with alternative means of instruction. They also found media literacy helpful in improving students' analytical skills. Finally, television seemed to be the agreed upon media form to educate students about critical viewing skills because of its access and appeal. However, the question was whether media literacy instruction actually worked and did students learn from the analysis of media content. The next segment will describe some of the attempts to apply media literacy instruction into the classroom and what findings have been collected.

Activities, Learning, and Results

There are many ways to teach children and adults about the media. Because critical viewing skills are learned, it can be difficult for people to become critical viewers without prior experiences in analyzing media content. Only a few critical concepts are needed for viewers to become fully aware of the subtleties behind mass mediated messages.

Two classroom teachers demonstrated the effects that media literacy can have upon student behavior and attitude. By using qualitative methods for analyses, they were able to demonstrate the benefits of using media to instruct English. Barbra S. Morris and Margo Sorenson were these two instructors. Morris (1989) demonstrates in her essay how her college students became critical thinkers as they complete classroom assignments dealing with television analyses. Her intention was to discover whether students living in a technological world could become informed critics if they were required to critically analyze television content presented before them. The results were quite amazing. Although the activities were simple and did not require much thought, the students began to question television content without the help of Morris.

Barbra S. Morris introduced the idea of media literacy to her students through three kinds of analyses (1989). First, students were to document their viewing habits by keeping detailed written logs of program content. Although the students were at first frustrated with writing logs because of time constraints and by the abundance of information to record, they began to realize that television was not just a mere transmitter of pictures. Instead, they realized that television was a cultural transmitter and perpetuator of dominant values (Morris, 1989). Thus, written logs offered students the chance to investigate how certain televised images were produced by reviewing the detailed accounts.

The second step was through group dialogue of television programming (Morris, 1989). In this stage, students began to

share their logs and discuss how images provoked certain emotions and responses. As the discussions develop, students began to direct the dialogue as they listened closely and critically to each other's observations and reflected on how production techniques could evoke certain viewer responses.

The final approach that students used to analyze television content was writing essays documenting and interpreting details of television programs (Morris, 1989). Here, students used the logs to separate features of content from one other. Also, the logs provided a good quantitative source where numbers and facts could be applied to their essays such as how many commercials used African-Americans as central characters. In time, Morris claimed that the students found themselves active critics, responding thoughtfully to all kinds of television content (37). Thus, Morris discovered that the television generation could become active viewers when given the opportunity to study a medium they enjoyed.

Barbra S. Morris' study had an interesting result. If students were not given the time to analyze mass media critically, they would become the couch potatoes that educators have claimed them (the television generation) to be. Morris' research demonstrated that students were interested in learning more about television as they became informed of how television elicited specific viewer responses through production techniques. In addition, her investigation showed that it took little effort to educate students about media literacy because the interest was already there. Although these students may not get the overall picture of what media literacy entailed, their "reading" of

television would certainly never be the same.

This fact was also true in Margo Sorenson's study in which her seventh-grade students would never view television in the same way with their newly acquired knowledge (1989). The purpose behind her study was to see whether teachers could help increase students' awareness of different communication techniques by applying the ideas students found in television to their own writings (Sorenson, 1989).

A study was performed at Sorenson's middle school where four seventh-grade English teachers taught a three-week unit called "Television Communication and Critical Thinking." They believed that analysis of television advertising, news, and programming could help students become more dynamic writers as well as discriminating readers. In a sense, this project attempted to kill two birds with one stone by teaching students how to develop both their critical viewing and writing skills.

The unit was effective in that the students successfully completed the program with a better understanding of the media and improved critical skills. The students were more aware of the subtleties behind television and were more eager to write about what they have discovered from the lessons (Sorenson, 1989). The students began to question whether television controlled people or if people controlled television. Although their opinions diverged on this question, the students were more fully aware of how television could manipulate content to provoke specific viewer responses (Sorenson, 1989). Although these two cases dealt with television literacy and viewing skills, the examples demonstrated that media literacy was an effective tool

in changing students' understandings about gender roles, race, commercialization, and the fragmentation of information and images.

Finally, David S. Considine (1987) offered alternative ways to motivate students to read and write. He finds the visual language stimulating and exciting, offering students different modes of learning. Considine's essay was complete with examples that primary teachers have used in their classrooms to incite their students to read and write. Although the examples were more theatrical than media related, the essay provided teachers with other alternatives if visual media were not available.

Considine discovered the benefits of using visual media from his own observations of classroom instruction. He found that workshops dealing with visual arts encouraged students to become more active in reading and writing (Considine, 1987). He also discovered that if visual aids were brought into the classroom, students would read and write more because they could envision the story and the organization of their papers. Hence, like Morris and Sorenson, Considine believed that media literacy could help students learn to apply their analytical skills to other subject areas, while at the same time, become more discrimination about the mass media.

Work in Progress

Although more educators are becoming interested in media literacy, only a few countries have taken action to implement media literacy into their educational institutions. A national media literacy program has not yet been mandated in any country. Most of the media education programs are either introduced as

pilot projects or through district implementation. However, such programs are needed if media education is ever to be introduced.

There are many media education programs that are currently in function. Each program has its own methodological approach, curriculum content, and difficulties. This section is a compilation of four essays that approach this issue of program implementation.

Dahl (1983) was one such person who believed highly in media education. He documented how the Norwegian media education program unfolds, reported its successes and downfalls, and explained how Norwegian educators could have eluded possible loopholes during implementation. His report was thorough, thus giving educators a good illustration of what an effective media education program should be like.

Finland also has a media education program of its own. Minkkinen and Nordenstreng (1983) discussed the planning, organization, and considerations that went into Finland's program. The Finland program seemed to be more successful than Norway's because Minkkinen and Nordenstreng did not dwell too much on the program itself. The major part of their essay discussed why mass media could be an important educational tool to produce critical students to avoid media's commercial exploitation.

Gerald Berger (1983) directed his attention towards Switzerland's media education curriculum. Like Minkkinen and Nordenstreng's analysis of Finland, Berger did not find many problems that evolved during the implementation of Switzerland's media education program. He did a good job at breaking down the program's phases to demonstrate how and when certain media

concepts would be taught to students depending upon their age and grade level.

Finally, the first province in North America to mandate media literacy into its school curriculum was Ontario, Canada. Tom McConaghy (1989) discussed the mandate by reviewing central players and the compilation of a resource guide to help Ontario English teachers handle media studies in their classrooms. Although the Ontario program was for secondary students and not primary, Tom McConaghy believed that the mandate would cause media literacy to be enacted across all grade levels.

These four essays illustrated how media education programs were planned, organized, and administered. Establishing a media program can be difficult. However, these four programs have successfully implemented media literacy into their curricula by applying media theory and criticism. Studying the mass media can be beneficial as long as the media are used correctly and with good intention.

Media literacy is a broad field of study. This review analyzed only three major areas of media education. Nevertheless, the review was important for understanding the basis of this study. During the search for literature, studies that dealt with the media and culture were nonexistent. None of the essays have accurately documented attitude change among the students involved or approach the possibility of using media to study different cultures. Thus, the literature on media literacy instruction is incomplete leaving me to investigate another area that included attitudinal change research.

Survey of Attitudinal Research

Attitudinal research concerning mass media effect was quite limited. Only a few studies have been performed that actually documented changes in individual attitude toward media representations of ethnicity and culture. Most of the research that did investigate attitude change were found in the field of special education. Attitudes toward the deaf, blind, physically challenged, and individuals with learning disabilities have been extensively researched (Margo, 1983; Shoemaker, Burnett, Hosford, and Zimmer, 1981; Stephen and Joan Safran, 1986). This literature review on attitudinal research has been divided into two sections. Research conducted in the field of special education was the first area examined. Two sources that dealt exclusively with attitude change toward ethnic minorities represented in media was evaluated next. Although these two areas were distinct and unrelated, both did use surveys and other quantitative measures to report attitude change among their participants.

Attitudinal Research in Special Education

From all of the literature reviewed, only two studies used media as an apparatus for altering people's attitudes toward the physically challenged. Bonnie C. Margo cited a study performed by Westervelt and McKinney in 1980 that investigated attitude changes toward the physically challenged (1983). In the study, two researchers examined the effects that a film had upon non-handicapped children's attitude toward their physically challenged peers. The film viewed had positive portrayals of physically challenged children engaged in physical education

courses. Westervelt and McKinney (1983) discovered that fourth graders increased their sensitivity toward their handicapped peers through the viewing of such positive portrayals. After viewing the film, Westervelt and McKinney noticed the fourth graders paying closer attention to their physically challenged peers. Hence, the study demonstrated that positive representations of physically challenged individuals altered how people would respond to them and their physical challenges.

A different finding occurred in the Safran study that used videotaped presentations of blind speakers as attitudinal change agents. Stephen and Joan Safran (1986) did not find a significant difference in the undergraduates' attitudes toward a blind or sighted speaker. However, the results did indicate an effect on the retention of material for those undergraduates who completed the Attitude to Blindness Survey (ABS) as compared to the movie opinion poll given to the control group (Stephen and Joan Safran, 1986). This difference could be attributed to the different expectations that the experimental and control groups have as a result of pre-test conditions. In other words, those who took the questionnaire about blindness were influenced significantly when they saw a blind speaker present the material. The ABS could have heightened the experimental group's awareness of the blind experience, thus causing an increase in the retention of material. To put it differently, as one became sensitized then he/she would pay closer attention. In this case, undergraduates in the experimental group did increase their responsiveness toward the blind speaker after taking the Attitude to Blindness Survey.

Attitudinal Research in Media

Investigating attitude change has attracted a great deal of attention from psychologists and sociologists in recent years (Klineberg, 1974). The word *attitude*, as defined by social scientists Thomas and Znaniecki, is the "state of mind of the individual toward a [specific] value." This word had also been used by German experimental psychologists as a *mental set* that prompted a readiness in individuals to respond to a specific stimuli in a particular way (Klineberg, 1974). G. W. Allport later combined these two approaches to explain attitude as a "mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (Klineberg, 1974). This later definition was regarded as the most accurate explanation of attitude today.

Attitude change was even more difficult to define. However, researchers used the change process model to study attitude change. Lasswell suggested that the major determinants of the effect should be seen as "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect (Klineberg, 1974)." In other words, one must analyze the change process to understand the effect. The change process involve agents such as the communicator or source, the communication or message, the channel or medium, the receiver or audience factor, and the destination or effect. Thus, according to Otto Klineberg, using the change process model could help researchers determine whether an effect had actually taken place.

There were two sources that dealt exclusively with changes in attitudes toward ethnic minority groups after viewing

particular media products. The first documentation was a dissertation project titled The Effects of Two Types of Sound Motion Pictures on Attitudes of Adults toward Minority Groups. The study used statistical measures to determine whether certain media products could influence attitude transformation. The second source, Race as News, was a series of studies that surveyed media representations of minorities in Great Britain by examining whether these representations influenced attitude formation. These two sources were evaluated in the next section because of their applicability to my study on Meso-American media.

The first study was a dissertation project performed in 1955 by a graduate student named Albert Goldberg at Indiana University. His investigation examined whether two types of films could have a different effect upon the attitudes of adults toward ethnic minority groups. Questions he had were whether films, shown without comment or discussion, could change attitudes toward minority groups, and also whether some types of films may be more effective in altering opinions.

Participants in the study were divided according to two groups given different treatment of films. In Group A, participants watched Boundary Lines and Picture in Your Mind that used a generalized approach to prejudice and intergroup hostility by using color, abstract design, and dramatic music and narration. In contrast, individuals in Group B viewed The High Wall that looked at a realistic enactment of a social situation involving minorities with black and white photography, synchronous sound, and human characters.

The findings to this experiment were quite interesting. Goldberg (1955) discovered that participants in Group B scored lower on the ethnocentrism scale after viewing The High Wall. When Goldberg stratified Group A by gender, education level, and age, this group also scored lower on the ethnocentrism scale. As Goldberg stratified the sample groups even further according to their organizations (church groups v. students), reduction on the ethnocentrism scale also occurred after watching the two types of films (1955). According to Goldberg's study then, changes in attitudes toward minority groups could occur after viewing different types of minority representations.

The work, Race as News, was the first in a series of studies that examined newspaper portrayals of ethnic minorities in a multi-ethnic society. One project conducted by a group of individuals from the Center for Mass Communication Research at the University of Leicester, performed an analyses on the handling of race in Britain's national press between 1963 to 1970. Paul Hartmann, Charles Husband, and Jean Clark (1974) examined newspapers in the British press that had articles concerning race relations. Themes identified in the papers concerning race in Britain were immigration, relations between whites and minorities, discrimination and hostility between groups, crime, unemployment, and housing (Hartmann, Husband, and Clark, 1974). Most of the so called social "problems" were associated with minorities as opposed to the whites. Data collection concerning attitude came from people's responses to the attitude surveys. From this data, the researchers discovered that people's conceptions toward race were dependent upon what

information was made available to them by the media. Findings from the study are described in the following outline:

1. People did use the mass media as a source of information and ideas about minorities and the racial situation.
2. Little was shown to suggest that the mass media have a direct influence on white attitudes, if attitude was taken to mean feelings of hostility or friendship, liking or disliking toward minorities.
3. Most important link between attitude and the mass media was that attitudes influenced the way people react to and recall media content. People with more hostile attitudes see the press as being too favorable toward minorities, while those who were less hostile tended to see minorities being treated unfairly by the press.
4. A degree of correspondence was established between the ideas frequently cited by the participants and what had actually been said or shown by the media.
5. Race was widely thought of as a "problem," a conception typically derived from the media such as threat from the large number of immigrants, the possibility of trouble, and the discrimination and hostility toward minorities.

These findings supported Johan Galtung's hypothesis that negativity was one of the factors that make an event newsworthy, and thus, used extensively by the media (Barkin and Gurevitch, 1991; Birkhead, 1991; Campbell, 1991; Galtung and Ruge, 1965;

Glasser and Ettema, 1991). In short, the mass media are a business. If negative events sell products to consumers, then the media industry will take advantage of that predicament. The problem here was skewed information. If the people of Britain were using the media to obtain information as Hartmann, Husband, and Clark demonstrated, then the citizens were receiving biased accounts to the actual racial situation.

These last few studies on attitude change toward minorities were relevant to this investigation on attitude change toward Meso-American culture. Although the investigation was not as large-scale as the Goldberg and Hartmann et al. studies were, the investigation still examined whether the mass media could be used as a tool to alter individual attitudes toward an ethnic minority group. Therefore, with the few qualitative studies that have been performed in media literacy research and the few qualitative studies that looked at attitudinal change of a specific group of people, the two fields served as the framework for this study on Meso-American media and its effect upon college students.

Summary

Chapter Two has reviewed literature related to the present areas of investigation and discussion located in media literacy studies and media literacy instruction. Chapter Two also summarizes current research and trends found in attitudinal research and how these studies are relevant to this dissertation project. The literature review has revealed that the topic of attitudinal change toward a specific group of people is not a major concern for media literacy educators. Most of these scholars in the field of media literacy have made broad claims

about the effects of media upon individuals. However, they fail to provide support of these claims with pertinent data and research. A few qualitative studies look at how studying the mass media could help individuals become critical viewers. Yet, these qualitative studies do not look at how the media could influence personal attitudes toward a specific culture.

The only area that did examine attitude change toward a specific group of people was attitudinal research that focused on media as the treatment. However, these studies were experimental in nature and not qualitative. Once again, qualitative research has been overlooked as a source for determining attitude change toward a specific culture through the analysis of media.

The following chapter, Chapter Three, will explain the research design and methodology used for this study on Meso-American media. Chapter Four will present the findings, followed by a summary of the implications in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design and procedures that were used in this descriptive study of attitude changes during a *Meso-American Media* course. Although some quantitative methods were used in this study, the investigation was predominantly qualitative. Qualitative methods such as observation, interviews, and document analyses helped further the investigation of attitudinal change among the students in the course. The purpose of this chapter is to:

1. Describe the *Meso-American Media* course that was used as the basis of this study.
2. Describe the participants and course instructor.
3. Explain the qualitative and quantitative measures used.
4. Discuss how the measurement tools were developed.
5. Explain the methods used for the analysis of data.

This study incorporated methods found in both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. A reason for combining these two types of methods stemmed from the limitations found in each method. As the review of literature had shown, attitudinal research to date has relied solely upon quantitative measures to document the effects of media on attitudes. Methods such as surveys, observations of behavior, and physiological measures were commonly used in attitudinal research (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975a). However, these types of measures have not evaluated process. Although quantitative studies could be designed to investigate process, qualitative methods allowed me to look at

the change process more closely. Thus, qualitative methods were also employed. A characteristic of qualitative research was defining the process rather than the outcome (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982a). This approach was useful in performing case studies of classroom environments. Qualitative strategies that were similar to those used by Bogdan and Biklen (1982a) allowed me to show how expectations were translated into daily activities of participants. Because attitude change was the factor under study, qualitative measures were needed to record students' behaviors, thoughts, opinions, and attitudes about Meso-American culture as students became more familiar with the subject matter. Also, because student voice was an important issue in this study, qualitative methods in the form of interviews and individual case studies were indicated.

Target Course

The course *Meso-American Media* was taught by an assistant professor in the Department of Media Arts at a Southwestern university. The professor was originally from El Salvador and classified himself as a *mestizo* meaning half Indian and half Spanish. Participants in the study consisted of the eighteen students who were enrolled in the professor's class. The following description should help to visualize the course content and what the participants learned throughout the semester. The description was taken from the course syllabi and schedule produced by the professor.

Meso-American Media explored Meso-American culture by viewing media products produced by native filmmakers. The media texts investigated were film and video. Although other media

artifacts exist in Meso-American culture, visual media were the primary focus of this investigation. The professor's approach toward analyzing these media forms was quite unique in that he adopted a student-centered strategy toward learning. He wanted the students to apply the Meso-American Cultural Code in the analysis of cultural objects (films and videos) produced within Meso-American culture. The professor's primary objective was to have students learn how to apply the cultural code as a methodological instrument in the analysis and interpretation of cultural texts. The instructor did not necessarily want students to change in their perspective toward Meso-American society in general, but wanted them to become semioticians in the analysis of media texts. The professor's objective was to have students learn how to use a semiotic form of analysis (coded opposition) in investigating and interpreting cultural texts produced by other countries than just Meso-America. In short, the professor did not intend to change the students' viewpoints, but to offer them a tool so that they could analyze differences found in visual media that were produced by other countries and cultures.

The instructional approach was diverse. Learning occurred through readings, listening to lectures, participating in discussions, watching audiovisual presentations, and participating in individual research that required students to write a critical essay. The final and only written assignment was an essay in which students had to use at least three categories of the Meso-American Cultural Code to analyze a filmic or visual text. Hence, this research project allowed participants to study the historical and socio-cultural

backgrounds in which the text was produced to make their own critical arguments. The final writing assignment also granted participants empowerment over their own argument development, text selection, and research.

The course schedule of topics was also diverse. A course syllabi was developed for the students and distributed to them on the first day of class. However, I began noticing that the schedule was not closely followed after the first few weeks. As the semester progressed, screenings, readings, and topics of discussion were flip-flopped because of one reason or another such as late delivery of films and the professor's own personal emergencies. The following course schedule is a more accurate schedule of events that I extrapolated from my own personal notes taken on a session by session basis.

Course Schedule

DAY ONE, January 12

Introductions; pre-tests distributed and completed; overview of syllabi.

DAY TWO, January 17

Review map of Meso-America; locate different countries and principalities during the pre-Conquest period; survey crops and staples for sustenance; overview some cultural artifacts belonging to the peoples of the pre-Conquest period; screen Mayan Lords of the Jungle; reader was not available to students.

DAY THREE, January 19

Discuss Mayan video; review the reading Heritage of Conquest and Kirchoff's contribution toward defining culture; screen Todos Los Santos "Cuchumatan"; discuss the video; reader was not

available to students.

DAY FOUR, January 24

Primarily lecture with professor surveying different theoretical concepts and anthropologists such as Boas, Taylor, Kirchoff, and Benedict; begin talking about linguists and semiotics (Ferdinand de Saussure); discuss the relationship between culture and language like Sapir-Whorf's, Geertz's, and Levi-Strauss's contributions to the field; screen Danzante; discussion of video in terms of how dance becomes an expression of culture; reader was not available to students.

DAY FIVE, January 26

Summarize the anthropologists and linguists discussed on Tuesday; delve into ideology theory that includes hegemony (Gramsci), Marxism (Bordieu & Hall), and British Cultural Studies (Hall); review the three categories for developing a method to study culture: 1) Physical or concrete reality (looking at the socio-economic context of culture), 2) Cultural Symbols and Representations (look at collective icons), and 3) Semantic Rules to Code Social Reality or the underlying Classificatory System (Cultural Codes); screen Todos Los Santos "The Return"; reader was not available to students.

DAY SIX, January 31

Discuss Todos video; lecture more on history and review past lectures; talks about the results of the Conquest on the native peoples; begin discussing the effects of socio-economic context on peasant class; reader was not available to students.

DAY SEVEN, February 2

Discuss the socio-economic context of Meso-America; discuss the

plantation and hacienda systems and their effects on the people; screen Que Viva Mexico!; discussion of film as it applies to Meso-American history and culture; reader was not available to students.

DAY EIGHT AND NINE, February 7 & 9

Missing notes because I was away at an instructional technology conference. All I know about those two days was that the professor screened two of his video productions titled Politics in Mesoamerica and Religion in Mesoamerica.

DAY TEN, February 14

Proposals were due today; discussed professor's dissertation chapter dealing with cultural codes of the patripotestal family, religion, exploitation, play, and interaction; screen professor's video Sexuality in Meso-America; discussion of video; students tend to like this video best from the professor's trilogy.

DAY ELEVEN, February 16

Screen Alsino y El Condor.

DAY TWELVE, February 21

Analysis of film; talk about semiotic application; look at denotative and connotative meanings; identify the signifiers and signifieds in the film.

DAY THIRTEEN, February 23

Screen Danzon.

DAY FOURTEEN, February 28

Professor reads a student essay that analyzed the film Danzon; during the reading, the professor points out organizational strategies for the students' final essays.

DAY FIFTEEN, March 2

A graduate student lectures on Alsino y El Condor; professor is at a conference; the graduate student also gives tips on how to organize the final essays.

DAY SIXTEEN, March 7

Discuss Stuart Hall's article on ideology; talks about mass society and cultural studies; mentions Althusser and power structures.

DAY SEVENTEEN, March 9

Screen When the Mountains Trembles.

DAY EIGHTEEN, March 21

Discuss the film; identify signifiers and signifieds in film; talk about the root of conflict in the films; discuss some of the filmic styles employed in the film for drama; propaganda v. information.

DAY NINETEEN, March 23

Screen Maria's Story.

DAY TWENTY, March 28

Compares When the Mountains Tremble and Maria's Story; schedules student presentations.

DAY TWENTY-ONE, March 30

Screen Los Hijos de Sanchez.

DAY TWENTY-TWO, April 4

Discuss film; look at the different codes, levels of meanings, and the signifiers and signifieds; discuss the uses of machismo and marianismo elements.

DAY TWENTY-THREE, April 6

Screen The Official Story (student selection).

DAY TWENTY-FOUR, April 11

Analyze the film; review some historical facts and cultural traits; the film is non-Meso-American (Venezuela); begin student presentations with Alan and Tojiro on Cabeza de Vaca.

DAY TWENTY-FIVE, April 13

Continue student presentations with Cassie on Cisco Kid and Mary on Macario.

DAY TWENTY-SIX, April 18

Continue student presentations with Emilia on Que Viva Mexico!, Yuki on Erendira, Margo and Henry on Water for Chocolate.

DAY TWENTY-SEVEN, April 20

Continue student presentations with Lance on Water for Chocolate, Larry on Bring me the Head of Alfredo Garcia, and Lisa on Frida.

DAY TWENTY-EIGHT, April 25

Continue student presentations with Carmela and Cyril on Romero, and Sarah and Becca on Salvador.

DAY TWENTY-NINE, April 27

Continue student presentations with Enrique on Chiapas and Mexico for Sale, Tim on Media War in El Salvador, and Carl on The Milagro Beanfield War.

DAY THIRTY, May 2

Final day; essays turned in; post-tests distributed and completed; farewells.

By viewing filmic texts, reading critical essays, discussing elements of cultural film style and codes, and completing written essays, the students attempted to apply the concept of the cultural code in their analyses and criticisms. In return, the professor believed that these students would recognize how

cultural codes could be used as methodological instruments in understanding a culture's classificatory system for behavior.

Research Sample

The target population consisted of students enrolled in the *Meso-American Media* course during the Spring semester of 1995 at a Southwestern university (Appendix B). The sample included fifteen media arts students, one psychology student, one general fine arts student, and one Latin American studies student. All of the students were seniors, with the exception of one media arts junior. Of the fifteen media arts majors, eleven were working toward their Bachelor's of Fine Arts degrees and four were working toward their Bachelor's of Arts degrees. Cultural background also varied among the participants. Two students were Hispanic/Latino-American, two were from Japan, one student was from Panama, one was from Greece, and the rest were of European background. The stratification by gender was balanced with nine women and eight men. A more thorough picture of the participants can be seen in Appendix B.

There are several reasons why this was a pertinent group to study. First, the students had obtained upper-division standing, meaning that the participants were either juniors or seniors. With two years of college education behind them, the students had a sufficient amount of information to disclose regarding selection of majors, academic obstacles, and familiarity with media theory and criticism.

Second, about a third of the students enrolled in the course were from ethnic minority populations (either from the Hispanic or Asian communities) making the sample diverse. This factor

made an interesting comparison-contrast study to non-Meso-American students in investigating whether cultural experience might be a factor in what the students obtained from the course.

Meso-American Media, being an elective course, provided information regarding student choice. Because the course was not a requirement for graduation, it is likely that the students enrolled in the course because of personal and/or academic interests. This factor may have skewed the study based upon the fact that these students already had an interest in Meso-American culture. However, a quarter of the students lacked interest because: 1) they could not find another course offered during that semester and time period, 2) they wanted to enroll in another course but it was full, and finally, 3) they liked how the *Meso-American Media* course required only one writing assignment, and 4) they liked how the professor evaluated his students. The professor had a reputation for rarely giving grades lower than a "C." Therefore, the course had a combination of students who enrolled because of personal interests, those who could not find an alternative, and those who wanted an "easy course."

Finally, the small enrollment increased the opportunities for interviews and discussions in the class. As a participant observer, I found this to be an important factor. Because of the small class size, there were opportunities for interchange and disclosure between the students and me. Relationships became partnerships because I shared my knowledge and expertise in the field with the students who were trying to learn the material. This opportunity made the study more complete. These

opportunities made it possible for me to develop a set of case studies regarding the class members. The case studies permitted a relatively thorough picture of where the students were at the beginning of the semester regarding their attitudes and how they changed throughout the semester. In short, the small sample size allowed better communication between the students and me and a more effective exchange of ideas, thoughts, and opinions that the students may have.

Course Instructor

The professor who taught the course was fairly new to the university. He came to the Department of Media Arts during the fall semester of 1990. I attended one of his preliminary lectures for the department as he applied for the position as an Associate Professor. He served his years as an Assistant Professor at California State University in the Department of Communication. He was also an instructor at a Northwestern university in the Department of Radio, Television and Film, a department from which he received his Ph.D. in the late 1980's. His areas of specialty include communication and development, cultural studies, media aesthetics, film and video post-production, and Meso-American cultural history. Because his undergraduate university degree was completed in San Salvador, El Salvador, and because he was El Salvadoran himself, most of his publications, video works and acting dealt with Meso-American issues. Thus, he has had extensive personal and professional experiences with Meso-American culture.

This particular course was a pet project of the professor. He introduced the course to the department to demonstrate how

important semiotics can be as a method of media analysis. In addition, because the department had only one other course that dealt with a non-Western culture, *Meso-American Media* was seen as an opportunity to expand the department in terms of courses.

The course was taught during the Spring, 1994, semester under an experimental status. Because this was the first time *Meso-American Media* had been offered, a lot depended upon its success. I spoke with three students who had taken the course during that first semester, and all three had positive things to say. While they were not so positive in terms of course content, they did comment favorably about how the course was taught and the methodological approaches that the professor used to encourage students to direct their own learning. Spring, 1995, was the second semester the course was offered. Because of the positive experiences that the students reported about the 1995 semester, this course became a permanent offering in the department and continues to be the professor's favorite project.

Comparison Sample

A comparison group was selected to see whether a difference in approach could have had an effect upon answering questions on the pre- and post-tests. This comparison sample was comprised of students enrolled in a Media Arts Writing course. There were two reasons why this class was chosen. First, the upper-division status of the class required a student population similar to those in the *Meso-American Media* course--seniors and juniors. Second, the class size was similar to that of *Meso-American Media*. The student population differed by only three students in that fifteen students were enrolled in the writing course as

compared to the eighteen in *Meso-American Media*. Furthermore, the demographics across the two courses were similar. The stratification by gender was balanced and a few Hispanic students were also enrolled. Because this was a media arts writing course, all of the students were media arts majors. The only difference with the media writing course sample was that it had more juniors (9) than seniors (6) as compared to the one junior in *Meso-American Media*. Therefore, because these two classes were similar in their student populations, the writing course appeared to be an appropriate comparison group when it came time for analyzing the surveys.

Time Line

The study covered a period of one semester of college coursework during the spring of 1995. A semester at the Southwestern university consisted of fifteen weeks and depending upon the schedule, courses either had thirty or forty-five sessions. *Meso-American Media* had thirty sessions. The participant observation was performed twice a week from 5:00p-7:00p Tuesdays and Thursdays. Two sessions (February 7 and 9) were not observed because of a conference I had to attend. However, I was present for the other twenty-eight sessions held throughout the semester. Screenings of *Meso-American* films were usually held during the Tuesday session and discussions/lectures were reserved for after the screening on Thursday. As a participant observer, I viewed the media while listening to and participating in the discussions throughout the semester. The final exam period for the university was between May 4 and May 12. However, the last day of class for *Meso-American Media* was

May 2. Therefore, *Meso-American Media* did carry into the finals' week. Students' critical essays were due on that day of May 2. Thus, my participant observation was completed on that date. Document analyses of student essays occurred during the summer after the professor graded the essays and decided on final grades.

Conducting the study over a period of one semester was appropriate as compared with the limited time lengths allotted to other attitude change studies. As the review of literature has indicated, most of the studies performed were on a one-time basis where surveys were distributed before and after a brief one session treatment. Some of the qualitative research that had been performed on the effects of media literacy were vague regarding their time length. However, it appears that no more than four weeks have been dedicated to researching student change in any of the studies that I have reviewed. Although my study was not longitudinal in nature, four months of observation appeared to provide an adequate time length to determine whether students might change their perspectives toward media analysis and *Meso-American* culture. In short, the four month period used in this study made it much more robust when compared to a four week qualitative study or a one-time quantitative investigation.

Data Collection

Over the course of the semester, data were collected through various means. Descriptive data were gathered to document changes in students' attitudes toward *Meso-American* culture. The following sections describe specific approaches that were used in this study to collect information to be used later for

interpretation and analysis.

Object of Study

The intent of this study was to investigate changes in student attitude toward Meso-American culture. More specifically, the object was to study students' awareness and sensitivity of their own pre-conceived stereotypes of Meso-American people in light of aspects of Meso-American culture learned about in the course. In part, the study looked at student attitude toward a specific culture before learning new information about that culture.

There are a number of factors that can cause attitude shifts to occur. Receiving new information from other people or through the mass media can produce a change in an individual's cognitive component of her/his attitude (Triandis, 1971). Another way to produce an attitude shift is to force a person to behave contrary to her/his existing attitudes. Regardless of what instrument is employed, the *source* is the first influence on attitude change. A source can be in the form of a person, a group, a newspaper, a television station, or the object of the attitude itself (Triandis, 1971). This source produces a *message* that is delivered to an *audience* that either adheres to the message or ignores its influence (Triandis, 1971). Thus, depending upon the nature of the intended audience, the effect might include changes in an audience's attention, comprehension, retention, or action (Triandis, 1971).

The *Meso-American Media* course was assumed to be the cause of such attitudinal changes in this study. The *source* that offered students the information regarding this content area was

the professor. Through lectures and screenings, the professor delivered messages that influenced the audience's (i.e. students') attitude toward Meso-American culture. The media arts course then, in a sense, became the "treatment" as students learned new information presented by the professor.

Qualitative Measures

Part of the study consisted of techniques commonly used in the field of qualitative research to obtain a more in-depth perspective of the participants. A case study approach was used to document changes in student perspective and behavior within the classroom. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982b), a case study is the detailed examination of one setting, one single subject, one single depository of documents, or one event. Thus, the case study method was an appropriate technique to collect data in this classroom situation because observing student-teacher, student-student, and student-content interaction was important for ascertaining whether an attitude change had occurred (Platt, 1988).

Activities I performed in part of this research were observing and interviewing the participants, participating in classroom and individual dialogues, and using students' critical essays for document analyses. Wolcott (1992) clearly explained these three processes as "experiencing, enquiring, and examining." He said that by taking an active role in the culture or setting, the researcher could acquire much more information than being a "mere observer" (1992). Because of this suggestion, I took an active role in the research process by becoming a student in the *Meso-American Media* course. The following

sections gives a more elaborate explanation of the steps I undertook as a participant observer.

Participant Observation. The role in the classroom that I assumed was overt (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982c; Cassell, 1988). That meant my interests in using the classroom as a research project were known to the members, including the instructor. I did not give the students a complete picture of my research project in terms of what I intended to do and what specific outcomes I expected to find. However, students were told of the methods I would use to gather my information. They were also informed that I would be investigating the learning processes used by the students to acquire information regarding Meso-American culture by analyzing its media texts. In addition, they knew that I intended to record the amount of learning that had occurred from the beginning of the semester. Nevertheless, they did not know about my intention to document changes in their attitudes toward Meso-American culture. The students were led to believe that learning processes were the object of study, not attitudinal changes that the students experienced as the course progressed.

Fieldnotes taken from observations were the main source for data collection. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982d), fieldnotes are data collected during the course of a study including the actual notes, interview transcripts, official documents, pictures, and other relevant materials. In this case, fieldnotes included observations made of students' responses and behaviors toward the subject matter being discussed. Content of the fieldnotes was divided between descriptive data and

reflective notes based upon my role as an observer. Descriptive data included information such as portraits of the participants, reconstructions of dialogues, descriptions of the physical setting (classroom), accounts of particular events, and descriptions of activities performed in the class (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982d). The simplest way to organize this information was to develop and follow observational guides made for each classroom session so that I would have to record information I saw and heard based only upon these categories (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982b).

Only one general observation guide was needed. The observation guide was developed by using similar codes that Miles and Huberman (1984b) suggested. The guide was developed two weeks into the course as I became familiar with the class procedures and its participants. After making notes about behaviors and dialogues that were emanating during class sessions, I was able to develop a guide that categorized actions into eight codes for easier documentation (Appendix C). Observational codes that emerged were: 1) patterns of behavior, 2) teacher-student interaction, 3) performance, 4) classroom interaction and social environment, 5) confounding variables, and 6) researcher influence. Dialogue codes were also created to indicate the attitudes or feelings that the students might have concerning particular issues. Dialogue codes such as personal reflection, critical evaluation, and cultural understanding were developed to record students' comments. In short, these observational and dialogue codes became the criteria for observing and recording notes on a daily basis.

The eight coding categories were also used for my own personal memoirs so that I could organize the day into an outline of events and dialogue (Miles and Huberman, 1984b). The memoirs became my journals to record reflective data. These notes were made after the class had concluded. During review of the descriptive data, I jotted down my own comments alongside of the fieldnotes. Then I elaborated the fieldnotes into longer passages whereby information concerning my reflections of the analysis, the method being used, ethical dilemmas or conflicts that I may have encountered, my current frame of mind, and further points of clarification were recorded (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982d). In the end, this data collection process helped me develop a thorough picture of the *Meso-American Media* course in terms of its cultural setting, what was being learned, how the students responded to the information, and the actual learning that occurred over the course of the semester.

Interviews. Methods for conducting the study's interviews consisted of selecting a sample population, developing an interview schedule, and organizing responses into recognizable categories (Burgess, 1988). The interviews were given to all eighteen students in the class. Interviews were primarily informal, but an interview schedule was developed ahead of time to avoid rambling and to ensure that specific topics were covered within a given amount of time (Measor, 1985, Moyser, 1988; Wright, 1979). Because the interview needed order before any information could be interpreted, I followed Burgess' (1984 and 1988) and Spradley's (1979) recommendation to develop an interview schedule beforehand to ensure thoroughness.

The interview schedule consisted of various types of questions to help make the interviews more complete. Descriptive questions were used to obtain general information from the informants such as their education, career, hometown, and so on. Structural questions were used to find out how the informants organized their knowledge of a particular subject. Contrast questions were helpful for differentiating distinct situations such as, "How have cultural codes affected your analysis of films that dealt with a foreign culture and race?" Another type of question that I used was the comment. A comment elicits information from a respondent by having the interviewer make statements rather than ask direct questions (Snow, Zurcher, and Sjoberg, 1982). An example of an evaluative comment could be "Yes, I was quite unaware of the situation down in Guatemala. I learned a lot from this film, and I suspect you have to." In this example, I was linking my own personal experiences to the topic of El Salvador without indicating my own feelings about the topic. Such evaluative comments can be used to secure information about feelings, meanings, and interpretations that may not be obtainable through direct questions. Overall, comments are less threatening because they do not make interviewees feel obligated to respond to a field of acceptable answers (Snow, Zurcher, and Sjoberg, 1982).

Comments were incorporated into my interviews. Instead of reading the questions verbatim, I approached these questions in a statement-like manner to lessen constraints the students might have felt. This allowed the informants to respond freely based upon their own frame of reference and not based upon what they

thought I wanted to hear. These types of questions were be essential for obtaining a complete representation of the participants.

The purpose of the interviews was to find out whether the *Meso-American Media* course helped these students learn to become increasingly aware of and sensitive toward ethnic and gender-related issues. I wanted to find out whether cultural codes as a pedagogical approach could aid in students' understanding and sensitivity toward differences. Hence, I drafted questions that began with general concerns and moved to more specifics as the interviews progressed.

Because some of the questions in the three interviews were complex and required some background before the students could answer them, building rapport with the participants in the beginning of the semester was crucial (Burgess, 1984; Dyhle, Hess, and LeCompte, 1992; Measor, 1985). Access was not a concern because I was a participant observer in the classroom already. Second, because the students were aware that I was there to examine their thoughts on learning and not on their classroom performance, the situation helped establish rapport immediately when they were interviewed (Burgess, 1984; Measor, 1985; Moyser, 1988). Therefore, because a trusting relationship was critical, the first few interviews served as a "getting-to-know-one another" type of interaction. As the semester progressed, I was able to ask students to reflect over their experiences and how learning about Meso-American media might have changed them personally. A tape recorder was used during the more formal and longer interviews. Thus, building a trusting

relationship from the onset was considered important.

Responses to the interviews were then divided into categories for more effective analysis. Coding categories were developed after the interviews were completed (Miles and Huberman, 1984b; Rawlings, 1988). Categories included (a) academic background and interest, (b) experience with media criticism, (c) reflections of the cultural code as an instrument, (d) thoughts regarding Meso-American culture, and (e) reflections on using Meso-American media to learn about a foreign culture. By looking for common themes that evolved across the interviews, data could be organized into categories for easier comparison.

Three distinct interviews were completed for each student over the course of the semester. Two were tape-recorded and one was not. Interviews that were tape-recorded were later transcribed onto paper for convenience. The final interview (not tape-recorded) was described in terms of a set of notes that I had taken while listening to the interviewees' responses.

The initial interview lasted approximately ten minutes and was intended to collect background information such as interests, goals, and personal experiences with different cultures (Appendix D). This information helped me determine whether experiences and interests might have affected the amount of attitudinal change that took place for each student. In other words, I was trying to answer whether students who had an extensive backgrounds in Meso-American culture would indicate a stronger attitude shift than those who had little or no prior knowledge.

The second interview (Appendix E) lasted between twenty to forty minutes and was the most important. This interview was

intended to answer the research questions I had developed for this study on attitude change. Sample questions asked during this interview were: 1) whether students thought Meso-American filmmakers represented their culture better than Americans (including those Meso-Americans born in the U.S.), 2) whether they have noticed any differences between Meso-American and American media, 3) whether they found cultural codes useful as instruments for media analysis, 4) whether their interest levels increased, decreased, or remained about the same and why, 5) as well as the knowledge they gained as a direct result from the course. The second interview was the groundwork for the whole study in terms of what students thought about the course (treatment) and what they have learned (attitude change).

Finally, the third interview (Appendix F) lasted about five minutes and consisted of several reflection questions. Most of these questions asked the participant's to summarize their experiences in class and assess whether the students achieved their goals. Thus, the final interview served as the end-of-the-semester evaluation of the course and what they have learned.

Document Analysis. A document analysis was completed using the students' analytical and evaluative essays. Students were required to use three categories of the cultural code that they learned throughout the semester and apply these categories to a cultural analysis of a Meso-American film or video. Research projects had three components:

- 1) A research concept whereby the students identified and described the artifact of analysis, identified the three categories from the Meso-American Cultural Code,

and provided a description of how these categories may be applied in their analysis of the artifact.

- 2) A theoretical framework and methodology whereby the students included a discussion of the socio-cultural and historical background of the three categories and the methodological steps proposed for the analysis of the artifact.
- 3) An analytical and interpretive essay that discussed the findings in the context of how these cultural codes were useful to perform a cultural analysis of a film.

These essays were collected during the last week of class when students presented their findings.

One major purpose of the document analysis was to determine whether students were consistent in their comments, interviews, and answers on the surveys as to what they actually believed at the end of the semester. The document analysis served to detect contradictions and inconsistencies between responses and beliefs. It was important to determine the degree to which students who said that they were critical of the mass media were in fact aware of the stereotypes and biases obscured within the media. Document analysis of these essays written by the entire sample of eighteen students was done to provide an indication of the extent to which attitudes guided their behaviors.

Quantitative Measures

The only quantitative measure used in this study was the single-response survey based upon an ordinal scale. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975a and 1975b) and Shavelson (1988a), the

single-response survey is the best method for detecting attitude shifts. This method required the subject to make judgments about her/himself or about some other person, object, or event through a questionnaire (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975a). This measure was verbal in nature as participants recorded their responses onto questionnaires (Heinich, Molenda, Russell, 1993; Mager, 1984). The important aspect of this method was that it required participants to make a judgment based upon a concept, a physical object, an institution, a trait, or a behavior (Anastasi, 1968; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975b). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975b) recommended that the response format "be a measurement procedure whereby a person assigns some concept to a position on a bipolar evaluative dimension." In other words, judgments must be limited and defined by labels such as "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree (Heinich, Molenda, Russell, 1993; Shavelson, 1988a)." By requiring participants to narrow their responses according to the labels, a more precise account could be made of their judgment toward an object or concept (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975b). Because of these factors, the attitude survey distributed in the *Meso-American Media* course was prepared as a single-response format (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975a; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975b; Heinich, Molenda, Russell, 1993).

The attitude survey was distributed to members of the course (Appendix G). The survey was used to document any changes in how the students perceived Meso-American culture and its media. A pre-test was given to students during the first and second days of the semester before they received any course information or the syllabus. The reason for this decision was that students

would have had minimal exposure to course content that may have influenced their responses. If students had no conception of what Meso-America was all about, then their answers on the survey would not be biased by such knowledge. This, in effect, gave a more accurate account of how much the students knew about the course and its topics of discussion before coming to the course as compared to after.

To post-test student attitude, the survey was again distributed and used on the final day of class where attendance was mandatory. This was an appropriate time to collect responses because students had completed all of their learning by then and had finished their final essays. Also, participants had a better understanding of what Meso-America and its cultural codes were about and how those related to media criticism.

The survey was also used with the members of the comparison group. Instead of analyzing the two sample groups with a one-way analysis of variance, responses by the two populations were analyzed using a within-subject design method. Basically, the method was a t-test using two dependent samples (Shavelson, 1988b; Spector, 1981). Relationships were then determined with the help of other measures such as direct observation, questionnaires, and other relevant documentation (Spector, 1981).

Film Surveys. Another quantitative measure took the form of film surveys (Appendix H). Students were required to watch a five minute film clip and answer some questions pertaining to the clip that they had just watched. Film surveys were distributed immediately after the students took their pre-tests. Things that these students looked for in this clip were socio-historical

meanings relevant to Meso-America, identifying cultural codes, and other information relevant to the course. Responses were used to help identify what the students knew about Meso-American culture and its media, how critical they were of social meanings, and whether they could identify stereotypes. These data showed what kind of media backgrounds the students had prior to the course. The same film clip was also shown to the students after their post-tests and they were asked to answer the same set of questions. This measure helped distinguish where students were in terms of media criticism at the beginning of the semester and how different they reacted to the same set of questions at the end of the semester in May.

To more thoroughly document changes in student attitude, both qualitative and semi-quantitative measures were used. Quantitative research allowed quick gathering of data that could be compared with responses given before the treatment and after it. At the same time, qualitative research provided a "rich" picture of the cultural setting that added to the information found through/in the surveys. These two research methodologies helped determine whether students enrolled in the Meso-American course learned to become more sensitive toward cultural complexities found in the community.

Development of Measurement Tools

A number of methodological approaches were used in this study to collect the necessary data. Qualitative methods consisted of observations, interviews, and document analyses. Quantitative methods included pre- and post-tests and film surveys. Each evaluative tool was developed for its own purposes

to answer the four research questions stated in Chapter One. The following sections describe the reasons, rationale, and processes behind each method and why each was chosen as a tool for data collection.

Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes for the project were quite consistent. Notes were taken during every class session except for the week of February sixth to the tenth when I was unavailable. There were a total of thirty meetings including the first and last sessions. For each of these session, notes concerning classroom environment, course content, student behavior, verbal responses, and student interactions with the professor and/or me were recorded. Attendance was also recorded as I became familiar with student names (Appendix I). Those students who came late or left class early were also noted on the attendance sheet. A reason for chronicling attendance was to see whether missed days affected student success in the course. In other words, if a student missed six days and came to class late every other day, then a course grade of a "C" would be expected.

Observation Guide

An observational guide was developed three weeks into the semester as I became familiar with classroom patterns or routines (Appendix C). Instead of designing the guide prior to observation, I opted to locate routines first. These patterns became coding categories that served as a checklist when I reviewed my daily notes. The guide was divided into two categories. The first was behavioral categories such as patterns of behavior, teacher-student interaction, performance, classroom

environment, and confounding variables that may influence the study. Attitudinal categories, the second group, included personal reflections, critical evaluation, and cultural understanding. Thus, the guide was divided into two categories for separating data.

The review process consisted of several stages. When I reviewed daily notes, the coding categories were used as a checklist to ensure that all the relevant information was recorded. After each review, I used different colored highlighters to separate information between professor's interactions and responses, student responses, student behaviors, and my own reactions and behaviors. By separating information with colored highlighters I was able to see the emergence of patterns. I also found these visible colors useful for locating information among pages of notes. Furthermore, although notes were taken primarily during class time, personal memos were written after each day. Once the class session had finished, I would take ten to fifteen minutes to review the notes and write down any other miscellaneous information that I found relevant concerning the students. Other things performed during this stage were filling in missed information or flushing out observations that could be useful later in the study. In short, fieldnotes consisted of actual note-taking, reviewing, adding, and looking for behavioral and attitudinal data.

Interviews

Three different interviews were conducted throughout the semester. Interviews were used as a way to obtain personal information that the surveys, participant observation, and

document analyses could not provide. Interviews were also useful instruments for building rapport and trust among the participants. I found these factors crucial for obtaining students' thoughts and feelings of the course. If the trust was not there, neither was the information. Hence, the interviews were used for obtaining information that I could not have gotten otherwise if I were simply just to observe the students or look at their responses on the surveys.

The first interviews were conducted primarily over the phone and lasted about ten minutes. For some students, I was able to interview them in person, which was a much better situation. Students seemed to trust me more if they saw my face than when they just heard my voice over the phone. I really did not expect too much from these initial interviews except to establish some basic rapport with the students and collect background information. Therefore, the initial interviews consisted of questions that asked participants about their personal goals, experiences with other cultures, and what they hoped to gain from this course. Such reasons could affect whether students succeed in such a course. If their intentions for enrolling in the Meso-America Media course were because they could not find another class, then their success and classroom behavior might be greatly affected. The following descriptions offer a picture of what students were like in terms of persona, personal interests, and ethnicity. If a student's ethnic background was not mentioned in the short biographies (e.g., Hispanic or Japanese) that student was from a white or Caucasian ethnic background. Student names have been changed to assure confidentiality. Names have been

randomly selected and randomly assigned to each of the eighteen participants with their ethnicity in mind.

Becca:

As a media arts senior, Becca planned to take some time off after graduation and then apply to law school. She never really thought about her future until I asked her, but communication law seemed to be her next move. This was her first time in an ethnic studies course, although she did enroll in a few women studies courses before. In terms of cultural experience, Becca had quite a bit of contact with the Hispanic population because of where she lived--Houston, Texas. Ethnic minorities were bussed to her high school to increase the minority population. As a result, she became the minority at her school because of the busing situation. Her closest experience interacting with people from other cultures was through the Guadalajara Program where she took courses in Mexico for a while. Her experience with this program helped her decide to enroll in *Meso-American Media*. Being a Texan also helped in her decision because she grew up with a lot of Mexican influence. Thus, this course was a great opportunity to expand her cultural awareness. This was the one thing she hoped to obtain from this course, especially when her ethnicity may become the minority one day. She best explained this reasoning as,

Being from Texas and stuff, the Southwest, one thing that is important is what the professor said one day that we're going to be the minority soon. And I think we are. So, we need to know about other cultures. I really believe that, because if you don't you will be closed-minded to anything

else. And I think it is very important to learn about that culture, in particular being where I am from and will end up in the United States. Texas, California, and Arizona. If I am in any of those places, that is something you need to know. God, being able to understand Spanish somewhat, when they speak slowly is such a plus. It's important. Not that this is a Spanish class...I am not learning Spanish, but I am learning the culture more and more.

Tim:

This media arts senior wanted to work in television someday. He planned to start with cameras and then move his way up toward directing. Tim had little contact with people from other cultures. Nogales was the closest he got to experiencing a foreign culture. He did take an anthropology course that dealt with prehistoric peoples of the Southwest. However, in terms of personal contact, Tim had few. He had seen basic stuff about the cultures on television, but nothing more. He did take Japanese and German cinema courses before, so he reasoned why not take Meso-American Media. He was also in the professor's video production class, so this relationship also aided in his decision. His real intention was to expand what he knew about Meso-American culture apart from hearsay and what he had seen in media. He wanted to get a more in-depth picture and see how Meso-American differed from American culture. When asked what he wanted to obtain from this course, he replied, "Uhm, basically a better understanding of the culture and the media that present the culture. Also, see how the people are portrayed in the media. Stuff like that."

Alan:

Alan was a media arts senior interested in film production. He would like to pursue a career in film production that focused on character-driven, as opposed to action-driven, films. He also enjoyed documentaries, so a film on war was another genre he wanted to explore. Alan had some experience with the Mexican culture because of his ethnicity. Alan was part Mexican and he used to visit his grandmother who lived in a small Mexican town. However, that was the extent of his cultural experience. Alan did take an East Asian course that focused more toward the Japanese and Indian countries. But, other than those two factors, his contact with other cultures was minimal. His grandmother was the reason for enrolling in *Meso-American Media*. He wanted to become more familiar with the surrounding areas. So, personal interest motivated Alan to enroll. One thing that he hoped to learn from this course was the reasons behind the International Republican Party's endurance. He would like to know why the PRI remained in power for so long. At the moment of the interview, the professor did not talk about the Party. Thus, Alan hoped that the professor would discuss it more later on during the semester.

Tojiro:

This native Japanese media arts senior was interested in film production either in Japan or America. Tojiro would like to become involved in alternative, non-Hollywood type of filmmaking. His experience with different cultures consisted primarily of East Asian countries such as Korea and Vietnam. While in America, he had a few African-American and Hispanic friends.

Thus, his cultural experiences primarily extended from his travels. Non-Western civilization courses that he took was Classical Japanese Literature and some courses in English as a Second Language. His motive for enrolling in *Meso-American Media* was to explore different forms of media. He wanted to learn how socio-political and economic conditions affected media production in a particular country. Grades were not important to him as the learning aspect. So, cultural awareness as applied to media production was what he hoped to learn from this class.

Lisa:

This media arts senior would like to become a first assistant director of a non-Hollywood film project someday. She had friends in media arts who were African-American and Hispanic. She also had been to Mexico before because her grandparents were part of an American colony down there in the early 1910's. She took the *Meso-American Media* course because of its upper-division status. She also said that this course was one of the relatively few media arts history courses available to students. In addition, *Meso-American Media* dealt with a culture that she was not familiar with. She hoped to get a better understanding of the differences in film production. She hoped to see how Meso-American filmmakers view films and also make their films. Lisa really wanted to discern whether "theirs" were different from "ours."

Mary:

With a Spanish minor, this media arts senior would like to begin her media career in radio and then move on to television. Being a Spanish minor and a past participant in the Guadalajara

Program, this class was perfect for her. However, she did not come into this class with that thought. *Meso-American Media* just happened to be one of the department's available courses, and so she decided to come and try it out. She never knew what the course was about until the first day. Once Mary did find out, she was overjoyed with the chance to learn about a culture she loved so much. Love for the Spanish culture and for an Hispanic male made her glad that she came across this class even if it was by accident. Like Lisa, Mary also hoped to learn about the differences in media production and whether Meso-American media were similar to American.

Larry:

As a non-traditional psychology senior with a media arts minor, Larry wanted to become a producer of educational television programs and complete some writing on the side after graduation. In terms of cultural experience, he had taken some comparative literature and cultural studies courses that extended from Western societies to East Asian. Larry also enrolled in some music and theater arts courses that looked at non-Western civilizations. Apart from coursework though, Larry had some direct experience with people from other cultures. He had friends who came from all different regions such as Sri Lanka, Bolodesh, and Africa. Living in a small Eastern Arizona mining town also helped increase his experience with the Mexican culture. His travels also made Larry aware of cultural differences. For instance, he was stationed in Panama for three months and also lived in Mexico for awhile. These experiences motivated him to enroll in *Meso-American Media*. He loved the

area and he found them to be unique and simple. Course credits were another reason why he enrolled, but studying an area he enjoyed was the primary one. When asked what he hoped to obtain from this class he replied,

Uhm, to get more in touch with the "real" history. The professor has a good reputation among his students. So, I thought about taking a course that deals with real history as compared to what we tend to get. Just learning more about the origins. In my book, I have six chapters already completed that deals with the Southwestern culture, paying specific attention to the Indian population and Mexican influence. So, I thought this course may be helpful.

Margo:

Margo was a media arts senior who made it known to me of her coming graduation. She planned to get into sales and advertising that stemmed from her positive experience with the college's newspaper. She had two reasons for enrolling in *Meso-American Media*. First, she needed the upper-division credits and the course was a replacement for a waived history course. Second, the course struck an interest in her because she was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. Margo felt that she was the most "lost" person in the class in terms of Meso-American culture. So, this course would be useful for increasing Margo's own cultural understanding. Margo would someday like to go back and visit her birthplace even though she was not Hispanic herself. Her parents wanted to buy some land in Mexico, and in order to do that, one must be a Mexican citizen. However, her parents never did buy any land and never returned to Mexico after that. This was a

unique story to hear. *Meso-American Media* was her first course that dealt with a non-European culture. Her experience with cultural diversity was minimal, but she did have a very close friend who was Korean. Other than that, most of her cultural experiences were European due to her travels. Margo was a spiritual person. Thus, the course caught her interest in terms of the animistic part and how cultures could be so different. She explained her interest best as,

[I wanted to get] some knowledge about the differences, and even so far, at how they look at life. As for myself right now, I have taken a personal interest in not what you call religion but spirituality, and I am interested in how other cultures view it because I am interested in how our culture does. So, every time we talk about that [animism], I get really interested because I am interested in it myself.

Yuki:

This Japanese media arts senior plans to return to Japan after she graduates and work for a distribution company there. So, she felt that this course would be useful for her in terms of learning about different cultures and their films. As a distributor, she would be travelling to different countries and selecting worthwhile films that her company should purchase and distribute in Japan. Thus, she saw benefit in the course. However, that was not her original intention. She was not that interested in Latin America, but she needed something to fill her schedule and *Meso-American Media* was available. However, after taking the class, Yuki did find the course useful for her future. She had taken some Latin American Studies courses before, but

something was always lacking in those. Therefore, Yuki hoped that this class would give her a more in-depth perspective of the culture. That way, she could look at a film with a complete understanding and not just with superficial eyes.

Carl:

Carl was a general fine arts senior who majored in three areas: architecture, art, and media arts. Nevertheless, his passion was media and he planned to enter the field of cinematography after he graduated. Carl realized that he would most likely begin as a key grip and then work his way up into actual film production. But, if the film industry did not work, then he planned to get into television. Carl was an interesting case in that although he did not enroll in any ethnic studies courses during his college years, he did have a class in high school that dealt with Eastern Studies. When I asked where he went to high school (Seattle), I understood why he had that opportunity to take a class that focused on non-American cultures. Like his coursework, Carl had little experience interacting with people from different cultures. He had been to Europe and Canada, but that was the extent of his cultural experience. There were some Mexican exchange students that he knew about in the architecture program, but he never spoke to them. So, embarrassingly enough, Carl admitted how culturally unaware he was. His primary reasons for enrolling in *Meso-American Media* also reflected Carl's lack of interest to learn about Latin American cultures. Carl needed the upper-division credits that the course provided. The course also counted as dual credit for him as it would satisfy the media arts and minority studies requirements in his degree program.

Carl's response to the question of what he hoped to obtain from the course revealed his concern for credit hours as well.

Although he did indicate his desire to learn about Meso-American media, using this course to graduate was his primary concern.

Carmela:

Carmela was the only person in the class who was a Latin American Studies major. She was also the only one who was Panamanian. Carmela was graduating in spring and intended to apply to graduate school in New Mexico that coming fall. Carmela hoped to work for a corporation that dealt with Latin American countries one day. Carmela had a lot of experiences with the Hispanic population as she responded, "I lived in Central America and Panama for a year and had contact with the indigenous people there. The community I grew up with in New Jersey were Cuban, Puerto Rican, and African-American." During her teen years, Carmela lived in the projects of New Jersey. She used this fact as a way to explain her close relationship to other ethnic cultures. Being a Latin American studies major also explained the number of courses she took that looked at Meso-American history and culture. Because of these experiences, learning about Meso-American history was not the main reason why she enrolled in the course. Instead, the course was suggested to Carmela by her advisor and she just happened to need one more history course. So, instead of taking another course within her department, she decided to try something new. Media arts criticism was a new field for her. Carmela was amazed of all the things that were involved with filmmaking and film analysis. Carmela explained this feeling best when she answered what she

hoped to obtain from this course,

An awareness I guess and how films are shaped. Learn some of the critical aspects and analysis of a film. I guess that's what we're doing now in here. I guess I am somewhat worried about the analysis of films, but I'll get the hang of it soon.

Enrique:

This Chicano media arts senior plans to get involved with the Latino circuit in Northern California that was venturing into independent commercial film projects. People involved with this venture were James Olmos, Paul Rodriguez, Rubin Blades, and some others. By pulling resources together, these individuals hope to produce films that better represent their culture while making some profit on the side. Enrique hoped that he could become a part of this venture one day. In terms of coursework, he had taken some non-Western civilization courses that were cross-interdisciplinary. Most of these were cross-listed under sociology, anthropology, minority studies, etc. Enrique mentioned one course he took that looked at urban sociology in terms of gender and race. But, most of his experience with the Hispanic population was a result of his own heritage. Living in Arizona provided avenues for Enrique to interact with people from the Chicano culture. Also, he was involved with a group of students who discussed sociological issues concerning world matters. He defined this group as a "mini-United Nations" where students from all races and socio-economic statuses come together and talk about what was on their minds. These experiences helped augment Enrique's cultural awareness. His reason for taking

Meso-American Media was twofold. First, the course dealt with his culture and he could learn about media criticism. Second, the course provided upper-division units that he needed. So, like most of the other participants, the course provided Enrique a way to obtain course credits and to learn about a culture he enjoyed. Enrique was highly involved with the industry and was a political activist in some respect. When he responded to the question of what he hoped to obtain from the class, his activities and agenda were pronounced,

I guess to improve my understanding of what I can do to improve the social issues within my work and to acquire some understanding of how people can handle themselves within in the media, like a professional ethic, and what a media person can do to improve the condition. Just a new appreciation for my culture. It pains me to see this stuff we see in class as so depressive.

Sarah:

Sarah was a media arts senior who would like to become a campus minister. She did not indicate any intentions to work in media, but to follow her religious convictions. Being a native Arizonan, she had many encounters with the Hispanic and Syrian cultures. She took an near-Eastern studies course that looked at Syria and Egypt which she found engaging. When I asked Sarah why she took the course, her only response was "I needed upper-division units." I asked her if she was interested in the culture and she replied giggling "No. Not really." So, that was the extent of that conversation. However, she did have much to say when I asked Sarah what she hoped to obtain from *Meso-*

American Media. Because she had been to Mexico before, she wanted to learn more about the surrounding areas. Sarah explained,

Actually, I think it would be interesting to find out about the other countries beside Mexico or deeper Mexico than what I have experienced with the people there and their cultures. Because there is a huge stereotypical Mexican image, you know vision of Mexico, which of course most people living in the US have and the people living on the border have. So, it would be interesting to find out about the other people.

Emilia:

Emilia was a senior studying media arts. She hoped to get into the film industry to produce motion pictures and become a directory of photography. She already had some connections in the industry, so she was not too worried about getting into the field even if she were a woman filmmaker. She enrolled in *Meso-American Media* because there was nothing left for her to take and the course was required under her catalog. She had taken some other cultural studies courses before though. However, these courses were not taken at this Southwestern university but at a local community college. Some courses she took were Americans of the Southwest and a humanities course that looked at four different ethnic groups (Asians, African-Americans, Native-Americans, and Hispanics). She found this class to be worthwhile and exciting because of its content. Although Emilia was Hispanic, she did not have much contact with that population as she should have. She explained this as, "Uhm, being Hispanic, I really don't get involved with the community which I should do

more or less. Because I live on the Northside of town, there is a large white population. So, I really don't associate with other groups." However, Emilia's lack of personal contact did not make her to forget the Hispanic culture as she talked about her current film project,

I am working on a film right now that deals with juvenile delinquents on the Southwest side of town. It's about an Hispanic girl who was raped by her boyfriend and her sister is trying to get revenge on this kid. It is pretty interesting because these kids [actors] range from ages thirteen to seventeen and this is their first time dealing with filmmaking. The way they talk are pretty cool.

They've opened up my eyes to the Chicano culture.

When I asked her what she hoped to obtain from this class she replied,

Oh gosh, knowledge of my culture because I don't know it. My parents, I think I mentioned this in class before, my parents refused to speak to me in Spanish because of the troubles my dad had when he came to the US. You know. He had problems. So, he didn't want us to go through the same crap as he did. I grew up in LA and in Malibu and I didn't know I was Hispanic until I was in my early twenties. And I go, "Oh my gosh, I am really different." I am darker, I am different. It was until I moved to Arizona that I realized, "Oh, I'm different." It's really weird. It was a weird thing I was coping with.

This was a common experience for many individuals and we talked a little bit more about the issues of bilingualism and cultural

insensitivity of the time.

Cyril:

This media arts senior from Greece had a split minor between business and Classics because of the difficult time he had deciding what to major in. Because his father operated a radio station in Greece, Cyril opted to follow in his father's footsteps. *Meso-American Media* was his first ethnic studies course and he chose to enroll in it because the course fulfilled the race, gender, and ethnic studies requirement. Cyril alluded to his anxieties about the course because he currently felt lost in the class. I assured him that he would grow accustomed to the course content and that from my point of view, he seemed to understand the course completely. This helped ease his anxieties somewhat. However, he did ask me if I could help him with the assignments if needed, and I assured him I would. In terms of cultural experiences, most of his friends and family were from Greece. Although Cyril knew some people who were Hispanic and African-American, that was the extent of his cultural experience. Cyril did have some stereotypes about the Meso-American and Mexican cultures. These stereotypes could be the result of Cyril's lack of cultural understanding. This was best demonstrated by his answer to the question of what he hoped to obtain from the course. He stated,

I just want to get a better understanding and focus on the world and how people...uhm, I guess to understand why the Hispanics are kind of like into the gang thing or the macho type of thing. I guess if it's in their genes, I am not going to put that much weight on it. But, just to

understand what their culture is about, and helping me get over any fears or uh, things I have about them.

Cassie:

Cassie was a media arts senior who would like to get into the cable or film industry someday and produce media programs. Although she took *Meso-American Media* because of its upper-division status, the course sounded interesting to her. Cassie's brother, being Guatemalan, also helped in her decision to enroll. She had taken a few non-Western civilization courses during her years in college. These courses included a couple of Islamic courses and one on Asian religions. Cassie's social interactions with people from different cultures was limited though. While living in Oregon, she did talk to a few people from the Pacific rim such as Japan. She even had a Japanese roommate for a semester that she enjoyed knowing. Because of her brother, Cassie had travelled to Guatemala and Mexico a few times. Thus, her cultural experiences came primarily from travelling and knowing a few people. What Cassie hoped to obtain from *Meso-American Media* was "a better understanding of media around the world concerning Latin American culture."

Lance:

Lance was a media arts senior who just wanted to make movies. He was a non-traditional student in that he came to the university after serving some time in the Army. He wanted to return to the military after he gets commission and then make his way into the film industry to produce movies. He would also like to dabble in screenwriting and acting as well. Lance had three reasons for enrolling in *Meso-American Media*. First, the course provided

upper-division units he needed. Second, because he had taken so many media arts courses already, *Meso-American Media* was the only one that was left to him that semester. In other words, he could not get into the other classes he hoped for. Third, Lance's friend recommended the course to him and so he decided to try. Lance never took an ethnic studies course before, thus *Meso-American Media* was his first look into a non-European culture. Lance did have a lot of experience in terms of cultural interaction as he explained,

Uhm, well over the years I had quite a few friends that were minorities. One of my cousins is adopted and he is Mexican. So, I had Hispanic friends and black friends over the years. Uhm, oriental friends. I've lived all over the world so...I did a year in Korea. I went to Somalia for Operation Storm. I lived in Germany and I lived in Arizona. So, I had a lot of contact but never really got involved.

Lance also had several things he wanted to obtain from the course. First, he wanted to gain a different outlook of how people make movies, and second, he needed the credit and grade.

Henry:

This graduating media arts senior planned to get into media production someday. But, during the time of the interview, his aspiration was to prepare himself for a triathlon event that happened to be taking place in Switzerland during the summer. Thus, media was placed on the back burner for awhile until he accomplished his goal of winning a triathlon event. The closest that Henry ever got to taking an ethnic studies course was at a local community college where enrolled in a Cultural and Ethnic

Relations course that Henry enjoyed. Henry also had some cultural contact with Yugoslavian, Japanese, Mexican, and Indian people through some personal acquaintances. There were two reasons why Henry enrolled in the *Meso-American Media* course,

One reason is that it happened to be compatible with my schedule, and second, I was interested in the professor. He seemed to be an interesting teacher and I do have an interest in such classes that I have no understanding of. I try to keep an open mind in such a class. When I do, it becomes exciting and stimulating. That's what this class seems to be taking shape.

In response to what he wanted to obtain from the course, he had two things in mind,

I want an "A." I have to get my GPA going. I have to get an "A." And you know, getting more into the course. As each course goes by, I get more interested in what we're talking about whether its their clothes or customs. It's just neat to see how these people live when they live totally different from what I do. It really gives me an appreciation of life in general. A lot of these people are basic, but yet, they strive for material wealth while at the same time keeping their spiritual nature.

Attitudinal Interviews

Second and third interviews were much more formal in that specific agendas were used. These two interviews were designed to unearth information relevant to the course and to my research questions. Because students were well into the semester by this time, I wanted to collect data that reflected the students'

thoughts and opinions about the course and how it was going. Also, I wanted to see how the participants viewed specific areas concerning my research questions. In other words, I wanted to determine whether the students found the course to be a positive experience in terms of its content and methodology, whether they thought semiotics was a useful approach, and whether they discovered anything new about themselves. Therefore, the second and third interviews were designed to support my four original research questions.

These two interviews were separated into clusters for easier reporting and analysis of data. Interview questions were categorized into clusters that represent the four research questions designed for this study. For example, cluster number one represented the research question "What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?," cluster number two signified "How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?," and so on. With these four research questions in mind, the interview questions were designed accordingly.

In interview two, questions were divided into three clusters. Questions one, two, and six fit best with cluster one or "What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?" These questions were (Table 3.1):

Table 3.1. Cluster One Questions--Interview Two

Number	Questions
1	From your experiences in class, do you feel that films produced by Meso-American filmmakers accurately represent their gender and/or race?
2	Is Meso-American media any different from those made by American filmmakers (whether Hispanic, white, or another ethnicity)?
6	What things have you learned as a result of this course that you were not aware of before?

Questions four and five fit best with cluster two or "How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?" These two questions were (Table 3.2):

Table 3.2. Cluster Two Questions--Interview Two

Number	Questions
4	Would you say that your interest level in the course has increased, decreased, or remained about the same.
5	Can you please tell me what things have sparked your interest? OR What things have diverted your attention away from the course?

Cluster three or "Is The Meso-American Cultural Code an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of media artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?" was best answered by question three. This question was (Table 3.3):

Table 3.3. Cluster Three Question--Interview Two

Number	Questions
3	In general, how useful do you find cultural codes as a technique for analyzing media? Would you ever use this technique in your analysis of media or in your productions?

Interview question number ten qualified for all four research questions because of its general scope and array of possible

responses. Interview question number seven was "How useful is this course to you?" As one may see, interview two did not have a cluster four. That area was best answered by the surveys completed in class.

Clustering of the interview questions also occurred for interview three. However, unlike interview two, the questions were directed more toward cluster one than anything else. Because interview three was the final interview and had been conducted toward the end of the semester, having six out of the seven questions categorized into cluster one was inevitable. This was an excellent time to see what the participants have really thought about the course and learned throughout the semester. The six interview questions were (Table 3.4):

Table 3.4. Cluster One Questions--Interview Three

Number	Questions
1	Did you achieve your goal for this course (I told them what they said to me in the first interview)?
2	If so, did you obtain more than what you had expected?
3	Would you now look at media differently as a result of this course? In what way?
4	Would you look at foreign media differently as a result of this course?
5	If so, what things will you be looking for?
6	To what extent have you learned about the Meso-American <u>culture</u> from this course?

Question number seven was placed under cluster two or "How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?" Question number seven was designed to see how the students really felt about using media as an instructional tool. Although some

students had already expressed their opinions regarding this question in their film surveys (question number fourteen), I did not get everyone's viewpoint. Thus, I had to ask this final question (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5. Cluster Two Question--Interview Three

Number	Question Itself
7	Finally, if you were required to take a cultural studies or history course, say Native American Folklore 101, would you prefer to enroll in a session that uses the traditional format (think back to your social sciences elective days) or one taught like Meso-American Media?

Document Analysis

Document analysis was a simple process, because the final essays did not reveal as much information I hoped they would concerning attitudinal change. Reason why was that I did not have anything to base the students' work upon as a measurement of attitudinal change. Students were required only to complete one written assignment. Without some kind of examination such as tests, I could not ascertain the amount of knowledge the students had at the beginning of the semester compared with the end. If periodic exams were distributed, I could have surveyed students' progress and compared exam grades with the final papers.

The final paper assignments did provide a general sense of whether the students understood the requirements of the assignment in that they had to apply the historical formation of the cultural codes to their respective media artifacts. If papers were put together randomly without any reference to Meso-American history or cultural codes, then it was assumed that the students did not completely understand the course assignment.

Analyses basically entailed reading the papers and looking for relevant patterns or commonalities. Information that I looked for in these papers included (a) what artifacts the participants chose and why, (b) what cultural codes they used, and (c) some conclusions that the participants reached (Appendix J). Data revealed by this process would indicate whether students really understood the context of the course, learned something about Meso-American media and the Cultural Code, and considered identifying cultural codes useful for analyzing media.

Pre- and post-tests

These surveys were used to determine whether the students' attitudes and knowledge bases changed during the course of the semester (Appendix G). The same survey was used for the pre-testing and post-testing to see whether student attitude and knowledge about Meso-American culture changed as the participants began to learn about Meso-American media, its history, and the power of its cultural codes.

Processes by which these surveys were developed took many forms. Twenty-five questions that dealt specifically with Meso-America, its media, and the course content were originated during the pre-planning stage for the study. Before the class had begun in spring, I was able to review the course's syllabi, required readings, bibliographic pages, and hand-outs that the professor planned to distribute to his students. This was an excellent opportunity for me to become acquainted with the course and to plan my survey instruments. Interviewing the professor beforehand regarding course content, his expectations, and his evaluative procedures also helped in the development of the

surveys. In addition, I had to look at my research questions to determine what I wanted to gather in terms of data. My surveys needed to include questions that would answer the four inquiries I had. As a result, these opportunities helped me develop the twenty-five questions.

Seven questions were reserved for personal reflections as they asked students to reflect over their critical viewing of mass media. These questions were not as important as the original twenty-five. However, I wanted to see where the students were in terms of media criticism and self awareness. These seven questions were taken from another pilot survey that I distributed a semester before. Because of the positive results of that survey, I used several questions from the survey that would help me ascertain the critical background of these students. Thus, the seven personal reflection questions were established (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6. Personal Reflection Survey Questions.

Number	Questions
1	In my own work (writing, production, directing, managing, etc.), I try to become aware of my potential biases toward people, cultures, and events.
2	In my own work (writing, production, directing, managing, etc.), I try to alter stereotypical portrayals of people, cultures, and events that I see in popular media.
3	I find that my gender and culture (e.g., African-Americans, working-class, lesbians, whites) are accurately represented in the mass media.
4	I am conscious of the biases and meticulous selection of media producers.
5	I am aware of the stereotypes inherent in the mass media.
6	I can verbally say to someone, "Oh, that's conventional" when I see a stereotype occur.
7	Cultural codes will be something that I will use in the future to analyze media products.

Among the seven was one question that asked students whether they found cultural codes a good instrument for analyzing media products. This was asked to see whether the students thought a semiotic approach was useful for media criticism of any sort.

A special section on the survey was reserved for comments. Although participants from the pilot study did not utilize this comment feature, I decided to try it with this group. I was actually surprised by some of the candid remarks that the participants made in regards to the survey, course content, and their roles in this study. Some of the responses made on the pre-test were as follows (Tables 3.7):

Table 3.7. Comments from the Pre-test

Names	Comments/Responses
Lisa	I think it is great for you to go to the source (students) of learning. But, what will you do with it? I'm as guilty of stereotyping as Hollywood. But, I put it in satire. It's not a solution to the problem.
Mary	After these particular questions, I have become more interested in learning about Meso-American media. Thank you! Hope I get into this course!
Enrique	American westerns are prime examples of stereotypes (made in response to questions on first page).
Emilia	I never actually thought of these questions. I'm glad you brought them to my attention. At this point, my expectations are vague. I have no idea of what I'm getting myself into. Hope to know a little bit more about Meso-American culture.
Lance	Quite a few of the questions are difficult to answer because, as of yet, I have no experience with Meso-American media.
Henry	Sounds interesting already!

After reading these comments, I realized that this group of students was receptive toward me. Pre-test sensitization was definitely an issue here in terms of preparing students for the course. Comments such as "Sounds interesting already!" and "After these particular questions, I have become more interested in learning about Meso-American media," are indicators of pre-test sensitization. Completing the survey may have also helped the students become aware of the things I was looking for. This realization may have caused students to behave differently in class or respond to interview questions in ways they thought I wanted to hear. Hence, pre-test sensitization was an inevitable issue that I had to confront.

A comment section was also included in the post-tests as

well, but as I expected, fewer commentaries were made in regard to specifics such as the survey, what they have learned, etc.. This could have been caused by anxiousness of nearing the end of the semester or being "commented out" because of previous interviews I had with them. Most of the comments were directed toward me and things we discussed during the course of the semester (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8. Comments from the Post-Test

Names	Comments/Responses
Becca	Regarding the comment I made earlier (during the interview), what I meant was that it was important to have an open mind and understand other cultures. Not just Anglos--because all races will be minorities alike--this is a "melting pot."
Alan	This is an excellent survey; well presented. The course and my role in this study more than met my expectations.
Lisa	Made me think of the values and learning I have taken for granted such as not giving into stereotypes and being aware and viewing foreign films as the norm and thinking of Hollywood as the odd man out!
Margo	It was a pleasure talking with you! Good luck to you. You will be an excellent teacher!!
Emilia	I was expecting to learn about the culture and history of Meso-America. Yes this is a media class, but I would have liked to know more about the culture first before trying to conquer any aspect of this class.
Cassie	I still don't know the answers to all these questions. I hope I have been helpful.
Lance	It was long [the survey], but interesting.
Henry	Have fun and make people think.

Although more students did respond in the post-test, four of the commentaries were in reference to past discussions, how the participants liked being in the study, and wishing me luck in future. Therefore, the number of the responses between the pre-

and post-tests were about the same, but the reflective quality was not. I was pleased nonetheless by the initial responses for they offered me a better understanding of the students and what they expected from the class.

The twenty-five attitude questions were developed with several intentions. First, because I wanted to detect stereotypes that the students might have had toward Meso-American media and culture, certain questions used stereotypical ideas such as "Machismo is strong in Meso-America culture," and "Women filmmakers are almost nonexistent in Meso-America." These statements were asked assuming that the students believed that male-dominance was strong in Meso-American culture. Although patriarchy did occupy the dominant position, we did not learn until the end of the semester that revolution had caused a reversal in the gender roles as women became commanders of all-male rebel troops. Second, I wanted to ascertain whether students found media a reliable instructional tool to teach culture. Statements as "Studying media produced by a particular culture can heighten a person's understanding toward that culture," and "Ethnic studies courses are more successful when instructors use media to teach history and socio-cultural values," were intended to determine whether media could be used as an instructional tool in cultural studies courses. Third, I wanted to see if cultural codes or semiotics could be a valuable instrument in teaching media criticism. Answers to statements that talked about cultural codes such as "Analyzing media products with cultural codes can help individuals translate the value and belief systems found in a particular culture," and

"Cultural codes are the best method for interpreting mass media products," helped give me an understanding of whether the participants viewed cultural codes as useful instruments in cultural courses such as *Meso-American Media*. Finally, certain statements were developed to look at inherent stereotypes that the students may have about Meso-American media and culture, and to discover how much these students knew about Meso-American history, its culture, media, and political-economic condition. These goals could be best described in the following examples of statements:

1. "Meso-American filmmakers and video producers are neutral and objective when it comes to documenting social and political conditions."
2. "In Meso-America, the "rich" get richer and the "poor" get poorer."
3. "Urbanization has increased social power for the upper-class in Meso-America."
4. "Meso-American proletariat workers never had power to alter their socio-economic conditions."
5. "Media that deal with socio-political concerns are embraced more openly in Meso-America than in America."

Such statements would help determine whether student attitude toward these facts or events altered during the course of the semester as they learn Meso-American history and analyze its media products. Pre-conceived notions that the students might have had about Meso-American media and culture were determined through these statements. Hence, the above examples demonstrate how the surveys were used to ascertain stereotypes that the

participants have before entering the course and whether taking the course altered their viewpoints at all.

The surveys were designed to meet several objectives. First, they were used to determine what the students knew about the course they were enrolled in and what they were expecting from it. Second, statements were developed to answer the research questions had raised. Finding out whether cultural codes and native media could be appropriate instruments in educating students about culture and media criticism was better accomplished through the surveys because I had the participants' earlier responses to compare with the post-tests. This was an aspect that could not have been achieved so easily in the interviews and document analyses. In addition, responses from surveys helped identify any attitudinal changes that the students might have undergone as the semester progressed. Finally, the surveys gave me quantifiable data that observations, interviews, and document analyses could not. Findings gathered from the surveys supplemented the qualitative methods. In other words, the surveys helped substantiate the more subjective methods used in this study.

Similar to the interviews, statements in the surveys were also divided into four categories based on the research questions. An inter-rater reliability test was conducted to see whether my division of statements was consistent with that suggested by the other raters. Four raters were chosen. These individuals included the professor himself, an undergraduate student who had taken the *Meso-American Media* course, and two graduate students who were not familiar with my study. These

individuals rated each of the twenty-five core statements and the seven personal reflection statements to its respective research question. This was done to relate each survey item to the four research questions. If a rater thought that a statement on the survey fit best with research question number one "What do individuals learn from the analysis of Meso-American media," then he/she would assign a rating of one to that particular survey question. If a number five was written next to the statement, then the rater did not think the statement belonged to any of the four research questions. A table of ratings for the attitude questions is given in Appendix K.

The personal reflection questions were also rated. These included seven statements that did not really reflect upon the content of the course. Instead, these statements asked students about their personal opinions concerning media in general and their own viewing habits. Ratings for these seven questions are offered in Appendix L.

Inter-Rater Agreement

To ensure consistency among my ratings and the four raters, a simple percentage calculation was performed. Because the ratings did not have a value (e.g., one is greater than five), the correlational method could not be used. Thus, straight percentages of agreement for the subscales were done. This process was called an *inter-rater agreement rate* in which the attitude subscales or the first twenty-five statements were calculated, and the personal subscales or the seven personal reflection questions were calculated. The agreement rate was calculated by taking my rating, whether a one, two, three, four,

or five for each statement, and comparing it with the other four responses. Therefore, the overall percentage was determined by my rating. For instance, four out of five raters said that three was a possible "fit" subscale for statement number two "Analyzing media products with cultural codes can help individuals translate the value and belief systems found in a particular culture." Thus, the agreement rate for that question was 80%. For statements that have more than one response, the raters believed that both (or all three responses) was a possible "fit." As a result, the attitude subscale had an agreement rate of 78%, and the personal subscale had an agreement rate of 80%. As one can see, the raters were very consistent with my ratings or categorization of the statements.

Survey Question Clusters

After the inter-rater agreement rate was tabulated, the statements were divided into four categories for data recording. The following clusters were used when performing statistical calculations on survey responses. The abbreviation ATT signified a statement from the attitude subscale. PER stood for a personal reflection question.

Each of the research questions has been categorized into clusters. Therefore, cluster number one belonged to the "What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?" question. Cluster number one consisted of statements presented in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9. Survey Cluster One

Number	Question Itself
ATT8	Analyzing the media takes a lot of mental work.
ATT20	Social structures that organize cultural communities are historically produced.
ATT21	Media that deal with socio-political concerns are embraced more openly in Meso-America than in America.
ATT23	Land is the site of power in Meso-America.
ATT25	When comparing Meso-American media to American media, there is not a real significant difference between them in terms of character portrayal, theme, production technique, and intention.
PER4	I am conscious of the biases and meticulous selection of media producers.

Cluster number two or "How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?" included statements shown in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10. Survey Cluster Two

Number	Question Itself
ATT3	Ethnic studies courses are more successful when instructors use media to teach history and socio-cultural values.
ATT13	When a particular community or culture is being discussed in a classroom, native media products are useful to extend the dialogue and personal understanding.
ATT24	Media can never represent a culture completely.

Cluster number three or "Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of media artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?" consisted of statements presented in Table 3.11.

Table 3.11. Survey Cluster Three

Number	Question Itself
ATT2	Analyzing media products with cultural codes can help individuals translate the value and belief systems found in a particular culture.
ATT16	Cultural codes are the best method for interpreting mass media products.
ATT17	Urbanization has increased social power for the upper-class in Meso-America.
ATT18	Meso-American proletariat workers never had power to alter their socio-economic conditions.
PER7	Cultural codes will be something that I will use in the future to analyze media products.

Finally, cluster number four or "Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?" included statements shown in Table 3.12.

Table 3.12. Survey Cluster Four

Number	Question Itself
ATT1	Studying media produced by a particular culture can heighten a person's understanding toward that culture.
ATT4	The primary purpose of Meso-American filmmakers is to provoke change in the current structure of society.
ATT5	Meso-American filmmakers can represent their culture more accurately than films produced by American filmmakers.
ATT6	Films produced by ethnic minorities better represent their population than media produced by the dominant culture (e.g., the Hollywood film studios, network television).
ATT10	Meso-American filmmakers and video producers are neutral and objective when it comes to documenting social and political conditions.
ATT11	Women are represented more favorably in American cinema than in Meso-America.
ATT14	Machismo is strong in Meso-American culture.
ATT22	American media producers rely more on stereotypes than do Meso-American producers.
PER1	In my own work (writing, production, directing, managing, etc.), I try to become aware of my potential biases toward people, cultures, and events.
PER2	In my own work (writing, production, directing, managing, etc.), I try to alter stereotypical portrayals of people, cultures, and events that I see in popular media.
PER3	I find that my gender and culture (e.g., African-Americans, working-class, lesbians, whites) are accurately represented in the mass media.
PER5	I am aware of the stereotypes inherent in the mass media.
PER6	I can verbally say to someone, "Oh, that's conventional" when I see a stereotype occur.

There were also some statements that were not classified into any of the clusters. These non-suitable statements were (see Table 3.13):

Table 3.13. Unused Survey Cluster

Number	Question Itself
ATT7	Women filmmakers are almost nonexistent in Meso-America.
ATT9	A "critical reader" of media is also a critic toward other larger political, social, and economic issues that she/he may face.
ATT12	The primary purpose of the American media industry is to entertain.
ATT15	In Meso-America, the "rich" get richer and the "poor" get poorer.
ATT19	American filmmakers have more freedom to approach critical issues that may generate backlash from powerful institutions.

Overall, these cluster groups became the final clusters in the survey analysis, with the exception of cluster five that was not included in the final statistical calculations. Basically, each statement was "fitted" into its appropriate research question depending upon the raters' responses. After that, each statement was then compared between the pre- and post-tests results to see whether an attitude change had occurred among the participants.

Pre- and Post-Film Surveys

Another method for detecting attitude change was to require participants to respond to questions based upon a film clip screened in class. After the participants responded to the written tests, film surveys were distributed as students responded to questions that applied to the film clip. Students viewed a six minute film clip that I chose because of its content and focus. The film clip came from a Jon Duigan film titled Romero that documented events of Archbishop Romero's effort to change conditions in El Salvador during the late 1970's. The six

minute clip consisted of Archbishop Romero proclaiming the injustices that the people have suffered in El Salvador that ended with the execution of one of Romero's followers.

There were several reasons for choosing this clip. First, I wanted to have the participants analyze a film that they would not have seen in class. This way I could assure that a classroom analysis of Romero would not have influenced the participants' responses in the post-film surveys. Second, Romero was suggested to me by the professor. Because the film was situated in El Salvador, his home country, and he knew that Romero would not be a required screening for the class, I decided to take a look. The film was very good in terms of meeting my agenda and I thought that Romero might strike an interest among the students as well. Third, the film was a very good example of using cultural codes to explain events in El Salvador. Once the students became more familiar with cultural codes and Meso-American history, I knew that the post-film survey responses would change because of the students' experiences. Finally, although I began with the intention of showing a film clip in a native language with English subtitles, I decided that a non-Meso-American film that used English would help inexperienced students focus on the content rather than trying to read, see, and hear at the same time. Reading subtitles takes practice, and I wanted to document what the students thought and found in the clip than trying to understand what was going on and answering questions at the same time. Thus, Romero became the final media artifact used for the film survey.

Questions for the Film Surveys

Questions were designed next. The first three questions "Have you seen this film before?," "Are you familiar with the story of Archbishop Romero?," "Do you plan to see this film?," were asked to determine whether the students knew about Archbishop Romero or had seen the film before. These factors could definitely influence responses. From this set of questions, only two knew about Archbishop Romero and no one had seen the film. However, many indicated an interest in seeing the film, thus accomplishing my objective to motivate student interest. By the time of the post-film surveys, seven of the students had viewed the entire film. This factor may have influenced their post-film survey responses, especially when two of the seven used Romero as their media artifact for the final papers. Hence, previous experience had been taken into consideration when analyzing the results of the film surveys.

The remaining set of questions dealt with the clip and course content in general (Appendix H). Because I wanted to determine the students analytical abilities and the amount of knowledge they obtained from the course, questions were asked regarding the clip's content, their viewpoints of the events that took place, and the clip's accuracy of events. Questioning students about cultural codes, their perspective of religion in the film, and their assessment of the clip's authenticity helped ascertain what knowledge they might have gained over the course of the semester. These questions were:

1. What or who are the contenders in this film clip? In other words, what are the dilemmas these people are

facing?

2. From your own experiences and perspectives toward El Salvadoran culture, what codes do you see in this clip (cultural and cinematic)?
3. Identify some oppositional themes you see here.
4. Do you think this documented account of the events in 1977 is authentic and true?
5. Does religion play a significant role in El Salvadoran culture?
6. Why do you believe this (personal experience, information given in this clip, word of mouth).
7. Who does religion serve in El Salvador?

Other questions were designed to have students explore their own beliefs about what films should be like, whether they felt Romero would be a good film to show in a cultural studies course, and if they would have changed certain scenes in the clip. These questions were:

1. How would a film produced by an El Salvadoran individual differ from Jon Duigan's docudrama of Archbishop Romero? Things you may want to consider are cinematographic technique, costume/setting, characterization, plots, theme, narrative structure, etc.
2. Do you think this film would be useful in a classroom where ethnic cultures in Meso-America are being explored? Why?
3. Finally, if you were the producer/writer/director of this clip, how would you approach these scenes? What

would you have added? What things would you have changed?

Thus, the survey was designed to document attitude change using these questions.

Analogous to the pre- and post-tests, the questions on the film surveys were also divided into clusters. Cluster number one or "What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?" consisted of questions five, eight, and fifteen (see Table 3.14).

Table 3.14. Film Survey Cluster One

Number	Questions
5	What or who are the contenders in this film clip? In other words, what are the dilemmas these people are facing?
8	Do you think this documented account of the events in 1977 is authentic and true?
15	Finally, if you were the producer/writer/director of this clip, how would you approach these scenes. What would you have added? What things would you have changed?

Cluster two or "How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?" was made up of only question fourteen. This question was "Do you think this film would be useful in a classroom where ethnic cultures in Meso-America are being explored and why?"

Questions five and six belonged to cluster three or "Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of media artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?" These two questions stated (see Table 3.15):

Table 3.15. Film Survey Cluster Three

Number	Questions
5	What or who are the contenders in this film clip? In other words, what are the dilemmas these people are facing?
6	From your own experiences and perspectives toward El Salvadoran culture, what <u>codes</u> do you see in this clip (cultural and cinematic)?

Finally, cluster number four or "Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?" consisted of ten, twelve, and thirteen (see Table 3.16).

Table 3.16. Film Survey Cluster Four

Number	Questions
10	Does religion play a significant role in El Salvadoran culture?
12	Who does religion serve in El Salvador? Elites or the peasant/rural Class?
13	How would a film produced by an El Salvadoran individual differ from Jon Duigan's docudrama of Archbishop Romero? Things you may want to consider are cinematographic technique, costume/setting, characterization, plots, theme, narrative structure, etc.

Two questions on the surveys were miscellaneous queries aimed toward revealing personal experiences that may not be related to class or information that was later determined not necessary in the study. A table of these two questions are given below (see Table 3.17).

Table 3.17. Film Survey Unused Cluster

Number	Questions
7	Identify some oppositional themes you see here in this clip.
11	Why do you believe this (in reference to question ten).

Distribution of Film Surveys

Film surveys were completed by the participants during the second day of class. Instead of having students complete the film surveys on the first day of class like the pre-tests, I believed that the second day would guarantee a better assignment of students who were enrolled in the course. In other words, I wanted to catch the late-comers and make sure that some of the students who were present on the first day would remain in the course. Sure enough, a few late-comers did attend the second day of class as opposed to the first. The late-comers also completed the pre-tests on the second day as well. During the last day of school, the post-film surveys were completed immediately after the post-tests since I knew all of the students would be there at that time.

Data Analysis

Analyzing this data set was complex because of its multiple sources. For each method used during the data collection process, a distinct approach had to be used to examine the results. Methods for analyzing interviews would not be the same as the methods used for examining surveys. The same was also true for organizing fieldnotes and comparing them to coded documents. In this study, four distinct approaches were used to analyze the data sources. The following synopsis provides a

description of the approaches that were used to analyze the data after they were collected.

Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes were more difficult to analyze because of the complexity of data gathering and inherent subjectivity. Because the fieldnotes were in a diary-like form, they provided "rich" descriptors of classroom environment and student behavior throughout the semester (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982d; Pitman and Maxwell, 1992) that added substance to the surveys. Fieldnotes were basically used to fill in gaps that the interviews, document analysis, and surveys could not provide. Data from the fieldnotes were analyzed depending upon what information was retrieved from each session. The report of observations looked much like a diary with specific themes or codes.

For organizational purposes, codes were developed by examining repeated occurrences of student behavior and responses identified in the fieldnotes. Specific categories under which the observations were organized are: 1) setting/context codes, 2) definition of the situation code, 3) process and activity codes, 4) relationships and social structure codes, 5) event codes, and 6) pre-assigned codes developed ahead of time (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982e; Miles and Huberman, 1984b).

Interviews

The method of analysis for interviews was similar to document analysis. Once the interviews were completed and transcribed (for those conducted with a tape recorder), they were organized into categories for analysis using a system suggested by Rawlings (1988). Codes were developed to organize the

information from the interviews so that it could be plotted under appropriate headings (Miles and Huberman, 1984b). This made the write-up much easier because the information was already categorized under specific topics of discussion. In addition, codes aided in the comparison process by categorizing students' responses under similar headings for all ten students. Hence, if I wanted to compare one student's answer to another's on a specific topic, the codes served as indexes for easier retrieval. Coding categories used were: 1) perspectives held by subjects, 2) subjects' ways of thinking about people and objects, 3) process codes, 4) relationships and social structure codes, and 5) strategy.

Document Analysis

As with the interviews, student essays were coded into categories for comparison purposes. Because there was only one written assignment, I had just one set of documents with which to examine attitudinal changes among the students. Once the documents were coded into the strategy and process categories, comparing them with the results from the interviews, surveys, and fieldnotes helped determine whether the students were consistent in their thoughts and opinions about Meso-American culture. In other words, the documentation helped to determine whether the students actually acted upon what they believed or perceived to be true.

Surveys

The questionnaires were tabulated based upon the students' responses on an ordinal scale from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Number one signifies *strongly agree*, while number five

indicates *strongly disagree*. Comparison between the pre- and post-tests was performed by using a one-way analysis of variance, or in other words a simple t-test (Shavelson, 1988c). Because the surveys were straightforward and contained few questions, a simple t-test was appropriate. This test indicated whether the students changed their attitudes regarding Meso-American culture since the beginning of the semester beyond chance effects.

Another form of quantifiable measure was the t-test for dependent samples. Because the comparison group also completed the pre- and post-tests, another t-test was required to compare the results between the two samples. By performing this type of analysis, I was able to determine whether the treatment had an effect on how participants would respond to the survey questions.

Film Surveys

These five minute viewing surveys incorporated characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative analyses. They were quantitative in that some of the questions were on a bipolar continuum (i.e. *always* and *never*) that could be analyzed using t-tests. However, some questions required short answers, thus coding mechanisms were used to document the data obtained from these types of questions.

Analyzing data can be a difficult task especially when one is working with more than one data source. In this study, five data sources were analyzed individually to see whether student sensitivity toward the Meso-American culture had increased over the course of the semester. Pre- and post-tests were used to document changes in students' attitudes and knowledge over the course of the semester. In addition, observations, interviews,

and document analysis provided descriptive data on top of the information retrieved from the surveys. With these five data sources, changes in attitudes could be recorded and interpreted.

Summary

A total of eighteen students were the participants in this descriptive study of attitude change toward Meso-American media and culture. Participants were selected from available media arts courses that dealt with a non-North-American culture. A comparison group was also selected to contrast responses on the attitude surveys with the observed group.

Five instruments were used in the study to delineate attitude change toward Meso-American media and culture. Qualitative measures included observation, interviews, and document analysis to obtain an in-depth, personal depiction of the media course by the eighteen participants. Quantitative measures included the attitude and film surveys that were used to assess any attitude changes among the participants between the first day of class and the end of the semester. The comparison group also completed attitude surveys that were used to compare their with responses with those given by the observed group. Chapter Four will present the results obtained from the various measures that would help interpret whether a course on *Meso-American Media* caused students to become more responsive to the Meso-American culture.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND REPORT OF DATA

This chapter describes the research procedures used to collect and interpret the data gathered in this study. The purpose of this chapter is to:

1. Present the data gathered with the five measurement instruments.
2. Report the data about the specific research questions.

The fifteen week study revealed information concerning students' perceptions and goals about their education and what they actually obtained from the *Meso-American Media* course. The study also exposed some factors that may have inhibited the students' learning processes and their full acceptance of the Meso-American culture. This report of findings will attempt to provide a discussion of what was actually discovered by the students using the methods described in the previous chapter. An understanding of the participants' behaviors and attitudes is important when drawing conclusions. Therefore, this chapter summarizes the data regarding behaviors and attitudes that were collected over the fifteen week semester.

General Observations

The following synopses are general observations made about the students' behaviors and interactions in the classroom; personal dialogues between the professor, the students, and me; and any other pertinent findings that could help explain student attitudes regarding Meso-American culture and media. These findings do not directly relate to the four research questions. That is, these findings were general observations made about

student behavior in class and not on how the students perceived Meso-American media and culture. Nonetheless, classroom behaviors and interactions provided the context necessary for investigating student attitudes and attitude change. These factors were important because student success and personal agenda often decided whether students thoroughly understood the course's content.

The participants consisted of the eighteen students enrolled in the *Meso-American Media* course. The course's objective was for the participants to understand how the Meso-American Cultural Code could be used as an instrument to analyze and interpret cultural texts. Media analyzed in the course consisted of media artifacts that represented the Meso-American culture. Films and videos were brought to the classroom for the eighteen students to examine using concepts from The Meso-American Cultural Code. Films viewed in class were produced by native Meso-Americans, American-Hispanics, and non-Meso-Americans. These films were either fictional or not depending upon the filmmaker and his/her agenda. Thus, films that represented any aspect of Meso-American culture and its history were included in the course's syllabi.

Patterns of Student Behavior

There were three common behaviors that I noticed throughout the semester. These were inattentiveness, negotiations with assignments, and socialization.

Inattentiveness in this classroom could be defined as students' periodically reading materials from outside of class, completing outside homework, or falling asleep in class. Like

other college classrooms I have been in as both a student and a teacher, this class was not really different in terms of such behaviors. More than half of the students exhibited such behaviors at one time or another. An interesting observation was that the same subgroup of students usually exhibited these behaviors during class time while the remaining class did not. This off-task subgroup consisted of seven students, Margo, Emilia, Sarah, Tim, Lisa, Yuki, and Becca. Margo, who sat next to me, was constantly doing something unrelated to class. She either read her books, flipped through her daily planner and notes, or wrote letters to her friends and family about ninety-four percent of the time. There were only a few instances in which Margo actually paid attention. These times were during "hot" discussions, when the professor told cultural jokes or stories, and when the professor was explaining assignments. Emilia also exhibited these off-task behaviors half of the time as she periodically completed outside homework, flipped through her notes, and doodled. Sarah was a constant sleeper. She rarely took notes and when she did, doodles and scribbles could be seen on her pages. Tim was also a sleeper, but not as extensive as Sarah. However, I noticed him reading the college newspaper here and there. Lisa also did not sit still half of the time. She was constantly doing something whether looking through her notes, completing outside homework, or doodling. Yuki was also like Lisa in terms of repeated behaviors. Becca, who sat in front of the classroom, played crossword puzzles or read the college newspaper in front of the professor toward the end of the semester. Finally, there was a subgroup of nine

students who constantly left the classroom either during lectures or screenings. This subgroup somewhat overlapped with the off task subgroup. These individuals were Tim, Emilia, Lisa, Henry, Lance, Tojiro, Yuki, Margo, and Sarah. These students consisted more than half of the class.

Students who were attentive throughout the semester included Carmela, Cyril, Larry, Mary, and Cassie. These five students did not exhibit the same inattentive behaviors as the others. Although I might have occasionally observed them doing something off task during class time, I would say that these five students paid close attention to what was going on about ninety-five percent of the time. I observed them listening closely to what was being said in the classroom and taking notes during film screenings. These on task behaviors were not generally presented by the other students on a continuous basis.

An important issue to note concerning inattentiveness was when the students were off task and on task. Although the previous description may give an impression that half of the class was always preoccupied with other things, the off task students usually became attentive when the professor was not lecturing. I noticed that lectures caused these off task students to become preoccupied with something else. When classroom discussions developed and critical issues were being discussed, the off-task students paid attention. Although a few did remain off task during these times such as Margo and Sarah, I would observe them listening once in awhile. Sarah even participated in a few discussions, especially when religion was the keynote focus. Therefore, although a student may appear to

be bored and uninterested, one cannot assume that these off-task behaviors really represent their actual attention. A student may seem inattentive, but he/she may be heeding what is actually being said. In a sense, these students may be selective in what they observe or not.

Negotiating about assignments was another common pattern. The professor was very lax in his policy regarding assignments. He accepted late papers and hardly penalized students for poor quality work. I have seen and heard the professor give leeway to five students during the semester concerning homework and writing the final papers. The lowest grade that a student received was a "C." This was reflective of his student-centered approach and the thought that if a student did complete all of his/her work, then a "C" should be granted. Lance was one person who constantly turned in assignments late. Lance was also a person who missed classes. However, the professor generally excused absences that could be explained. The professor did keep close tabs on those who came late to class. If the students did not inform him of their tardiness, then the students were marked absent. Henry was another person who turned in late assignments. However, I rarely saw him penalized for it. Alan, who did his historical background paper all wrong, was allowed a second chance to correct his mistakes and did a very good job on the rewrite. Thus, as long as students had a viable excuse or explained their situations to the professor, deadlines for assignments were negotiable.

Socialization patterns were also noted. In the beginning of the semester, students tended to sit alone or with someone they

knew previously from another class. The class was also very quiet during these first few weeks. However, in the third week of class, certain socialization patterns began to emerge. Emilia and Lisa already knew one another, but Lance joined them later. These three students all knew one another from a production class. Margo began to sit next to me after the initial interviews, and although Larry and Alan used to sit next to one another during the first half of the semester, Larry ended up moving next to Carmela. This move was surprising because Alan and Larry were sitting next to one another before the week of my conference. Mary and Yuki were also a pair, only when Yuki came to class on time. These patterns were interesting to see. However, these socialization patterns did not appear to be related to student success. A few of the students who sat alone such as Cyril, Henry, Becca, and Tim also did quite well in the class without help from others. But, for the most part, those students who were interactive with someone did well in the classroom because of peer support.

Teacher-Student Interaction

The professor appeared to have a very good relationship with his students. Students' comments about him during interviews helped determine the positive nature of that relationship. Students appeared to be able to trust and view him as a friend, something opposite to the stereotypical college teacher-student relationship. This bond was evident in the number of students who visited the professor before and after class. At first, no one approached him. But, after awhile, when everyone was comfortable with the classroom environment, more classroom visits

were made before and after class. The professor usually arrived to class fifteen minutes early and remained after class as long as the students needed to talk with him. Most of the visits came during the last month of class because of assignments and presentations. Although a few students like Margo, Cyril, and Tojiro approached me for suggestions on completing assignments, others like Cyril, Carmela, Emilia, Henry, Yuki, Mary, Becca, Sarah, Enrique, Lance, and Alan would periodically visit the professor before and after class. Thus, the professor was a very busy person with questions and concerns after the sixth week of the semester.

Office hours were also used by some students. As I discovered from the interview with the professor, a few students visited him during his office hours for clarifications on assignments. The professor vividly remembered four students who came to visit him, although he did say that he probably seen others. These students were Carmela when she came to ask him about coding categories, Mary with a question about the cultural history behind the categories, Carl who asked him about the due date of the proposal, and Yuki who was confused about the bibliography required for the final paper. Therefore, similar to most college students, office hours were rarely used by the students in this class.

A lot of humor was exhibited in this classroom. Before class, students would joke with one another and with the professor. I noticed a lot of laughter going on before class, especially when the professor was there. Because of the professor's nature, humor was welcomed. This was also evident

during classroom discussions. Students would constantly make side remarks in response to the topic of discussion. Henry and Becca were repeated culprits in this matter as well as Carmela, Lance, and Larry. For instance, Henry's repeated remarks of "Marianismo" and "Machismo" became a classroom joke. Students also responded well toward the professor's actions and words. When the professor told stories, the students listened attentively and responded with either laughter or with more intense discussions.

Finally, the professor also responded well toward his students' actions. He knew when the students were bored, and he would include a funny or interesting story to lighten up the class a bit. Also, when students made funny comments about something that he had said, he reacted in a positive way usually saying something to get back at the student. Henry was the center of attention when these things occurred, and he usually became the target of the professor's humorous rebuttals.

Performance

Classroom performance was a key issue as to whether the students succeeded or not in the course. Although other factors such as classroom behavior and interest also influenced student success on task, participation was crucial. If a student did not participate, understanding of the material was problematic. Participation in classroom discussions was required of the students. However, the professor did not penalize quiet students as long as they paid attention in class. The professor believed that he should not chastise students for their pensiveness. Thus, not only did the professor look for quantity and quality of

verbal participation, but he also looked for active listening as well. Henry did half of the talking during class discussions. However, these tended to be funny remarks concerning what was being said or puns made about the professors' stories. The relevant conversations came from Lisa, Carmela, Lance, Enrique, and Larry. When critical issues arose, these five students were sure to join the deliberations. Sarah also contributed her part during these discussions. Usually the classroom discussions involved these six people while the others simply listened and nodded their heads. Political, economic, and social factors were typically the topics of discussion. Mary and Becca also participated during classroom discussions, but they tended to ask questions rather than contribute ideas and discuss issues. The quiet non-contributing ones were Margo, Cyril, Tim, Larry, Tojiro, Emilia, Yuki, Alan, Carl, and Cassie. Thus, Henry served as the class clown while six other students introduced relevant issues into the conversation. The remaining ten students sat and appeared to attend but did not verbally interact.

Performance on assignments was also considered. Because of the professor's tolerant nature, most of the students did well on their classroom assignments and presentations. Students who did a great job on their papers and presentations received an "A" in the course. He also took into consideration a student's background knowledge on the assignments. For instance, he did not expect Carmela to understand all of the elements of film analysis because her major was in Latin American Studies, and also did not expect the Japanese students to fully understand what was going on in class because of language barriers. The

table below shows the final grades each student received including some of the professor's comments as to why they received the grade they did (Table 4.1). Lance's grade was the only one missing because he turned in his final paper late.

Table 4.1. Semester Grades

Names	Grade	Professor's Reasoning/Comments
Alan	A	"Did a good job at revising historical context paper. He is quiet, but that is his personality."
Lisa	A	"Nice presentation and participation is OK."
Mary	A	"She really felt the part (in her presentation). OK paper too."
Larry	A	"Look at his book (referring to his final paper) and that should explain his grade."
Margo	A	"Nice paper and presentation."
Yuki	A	"Had a few absences but nice paper."
Carmela	A	"Well, we know about her [Carmela is what you can call an "ideal" student]."
Cyril	A	"Perfect attendance and paper is all right."
Cassie	A	"Quiet, but nice work and perfect attendance."
Henry	A	"Nice paper. Good participation. Maybe a little too much."
Becca	B	"Well, I don't know about her. She seems into the class, but her work is just not there."
Tim	B	"Paper not too good and was quiet."
Tojiro	B	He did have a problem with language. He had an understanding of the concept, but paper was unorganized.
Carl	B	"Paper not too clear and was pretty much silent throughout the semester, even though at the end he began to speak out."
Sarah	B	"Said nothing of importance, but probably her poor attendance and the quality of her final paper caused her grade to be a "B"."
Enrique	C	Cannot write properly or academically. Paper was basically a quote from the Internet that I found for him one day. He was also absent quite a bit.
Emilia	C	No application of the concepts. She was absent about three times. She just didn't try to apply the cultural code to larger social meanings--she just pretty much gave a narrative account of her artifact."

Attendance

Coming to class appears to have been a vital factor to student success. There seems to have been a relationship between absences and grades. If the students did not attend class, their grades most likely reflected that behavior. However, a few students who did not have a perfect record in terms of absences and tardies were able to get good grades because of their effort on classroom assignments and participation. A table in the Appendix displays the days students were in class (Appendix G). The table also shows the number of tardies and whether the students left class early. However, a condensed version of the table is given below (see Table 4.2). Information in this table provides the number of days missed, the number of tardies, and the number of times the student left class early. There were a total of thirty sessions in which the class met during the semester.

Table 4.2. Number of Students Attending in Terms of Frequency of Absences, Tardiness, and Leaving Early

Number of Times	Record of Attendance		
	Absences	Tardies	Leaving Early
0	2	3	10
1	4	0	4
2	2	3	2
3	2	2	1
4	2	1	0
5	1	2	1
6	0	2	0
7	3	0	0
8	0	1	0
9	0	1	0
10	1	0	0
11	1	1	0
12	0	1	0
13	0	0	0
14	0	0	0
15	0	0	0
16	0	16	0

There were no real patterns between absences, tardies, and leaving class early. For instance, one student came to class late sixteen times out of the thirty sessions, and yet, managed never to be absent. Another example was a student who missed ten sessions and never came to class late. Therefore, a pattern did not emerge when examining attendance.

Confounding Variables

Another criterion for determining student success was examining other factors that could inhibit learning or participating. These were called confounding variables and they either helped or inhibited the amount of information the students would learn. A number of factors fell into this category. They were:

1. Extent of their experiences in interacting with people from different cultures.
2. Whether they learned the material from other courses.
3. The kinds of personal and academic interests they had.
4. Things that the students hoped to achieve and learn from Meso-American Media.
5. The students' reasons for taking the class.

These five factors greatly affected the type of information the students found valuable and whether they reflected on their own beliefs about Meso-American culture. All of these factors were explained in the initial interviews. What was now interesting to see was whether these factors did effect student attitude and success.

In general, background experience did not appear to affect the students' classroom performance that much. Students who reported having no knowledge of Meso-America when entering the class did just as well as those who had had extensive interaction with the Hispanic population. Ironically, students who were from the Hispanic population received lower grades than the white students who had little reported knowledge of the culture. Therefore, background experience seemed not to be a deciding

factor in this type of class.

Student interest and goals did seem to be a factor in classroom performance. Students who indicated a high interest in learning about Meso-American media and culture did better than those who reported that they just needed to take a course. Students who mentioned that their goals were to expand their knowledge about the Meso-American culture subsequently earned higher grades. Those who said that they just needed to take a course and no other course was available earned the lower grades. Motivation appeared to be a key factor here. If students did not enter the classroom with a sincere interest to learn, their overall performance appeared to be adversely affected by that lack of curiosity and motivation.

Personal Reflection, Evaluation, and Understanding

In general, the students did a lot of comparison-contrast during the semester. During classroom discussions, the students periodically reflected on conditions in Meso-America and compared those conditions to themselves in the United States. They also evaluated the usefulness of the cultural codes and how they could be used to understand the reasons for showing particular film scenes. They also became more aware of their own advantages over the Meso-Americans in terms of socio-economic prosperity. Finally, students realized how difficult the situation was in Meso-America as they analyzed the film screenings. Students often voiced how they would like to see things change in Meso-America.

There were many times during classroom discussions that student concerns emerged. It is not possible because of space

constraints to give examples of all their concerns would be impossible. Nevertheless, one good example follows. The instance happened on day six when students evaluated and discussed some of the aspects they found in the film Todos Los Santos "The Return". They had previously screened Todos Los Santos "Cuchumatan," the first film in the series. The second film, Todos Los Santos "The Return", returns approximately fifteen years later to the same village to see what had changed. Although the complete dialogue could not be recorded, the class session went something similar to this:

Lisa: It was a depressing film. The colors were less bright this time.

Sarah: The film was interesting in that it took us into different places to see where the people have relocated.

Prof.: What codes could be found?

Larry makes his attempt of explaining how the film used the exploitation of temporality theme.

Larry: This time we got to see how the guerrillas and the government wanted to control the land and people in the town.

Becca: We get only an impression of the very rich and very poor. But, I know there is a large middle-class population in Mexico.

Carmela: Mexico is the only country that has a middle-class, but not the others.

Lance: America is more based on economics than lineage.

Henry and Mary try to clarify the meaning of mestizo and ladino.

Carmela: Involvement of the audience increased because the film recounts the lives of the people we saw before [returning characters from the first film].

Sarah: Some of the participants were not the same as the ones before though.

Carmela: Big symbolism in the film with the masks indicating fear among the villagers.

Enrique questions why the film showed the public works building. The discussion then led to the civil patrols watching over the villagers.

Sarah: Showing the patrol demonstrates the bad conditions they were in. Public works were not helping--the patrols were working for free.

Enrique: Problem with the film is that it didn't show the rich fat cats that ran everything.

Carmela: Interesting to see how that one male whistled to the interviewee to stop talking as he passed by. A neat way of seeing how they communicated dissatisfaction to one another.

Mary: So, is the whole thing [public works] meant to keep the villagers oppressed.

Henry: Money and capitalism are dangers for indigenous people. Many people throw away their culture.

Lance: Land has been divided up so much, how can they be happy?

Carmela: Now they have pressure from the outside too as well as malnutrition [a result from the small lots to farm on].

The class discussed how awful these peasants' situations were in terms of economic and social survival. Rosa, a character in the film, had a very hectic lifestyle between working three jobs, going to school, and taking care of her siblings.

Henry: Life is stressful for them.

Carmela: I need to stop complaining. The American assumption that these people are lazy is wrong.

This example demonstrates the nature of the class discussions. Although some sessions were not as in-depth as this one, students did begin to carefully think about and voice their opinions about what was happening in the film that represented conditions in Guatemala. The above example illustrated some of the personal reflections, critical evaluations, and cultural awareness that occurred as the class sessions went by. As Carmela said, "I need to stop complaining [about my life]. The American assumption that these people are lazy is wrong."

Discussion of Researcher Influence

Researcher influence was a factor in this study for obtaining data that depicted student performance and classroom behavior. The "Hawthorne effect" might have had some influence in the data gathering process. However, my presence did not seem to alter the students' behavior and discussion that much. Some students were reading the college newspaper, completing outside homework, and falling asleep in the classroom even when they knew I was there to observe. I guess their trust in me not to report such behavior to the professor existed, or they simply did not care what I recorded. Dialogues between students and the teacher did not seem to be affected that much as jokes, ideas, and

questions were frequently exchanged. Being in the back of the classroom made my presence less obvious. Trust was also a factor. This was demonstrated to me when students voiced their dissatisfaction with the course to me during interviews rather than to the professor. Students also asked me for clarification on assignments and what the professor was trying to say during class. These circumstances illustrated the students' trust in me to help them with class assignments and course content, as well as to serve as someone to whom they could safely divulge concerns without repercussions.

Social interactions with the participants also influenced the findings in terms of acquiring personal data. Small talk really helped when trying to build rapport with the students. The short conversations seemed to make students feel more comfortable with me. This was good in a sense that students may disclose more personal information.

However, as we began to talk more often, I noticed that I revealed more information regarding my study. As students became more familiar with my study, their responses became more centered. After I told them what I was looking for, they responded with agreement and the fact that this area of study had been neglected, something that I voiced a few times to the students. I tried not to reveal too much concerning my agenda, but I noticed that my responses to their questions did have some direct effect. Whether that impact was great or not, I will never know.

Findings Pertinent to Research Questions

The extent to which the participants benefitted from the

course depended a lot upon their attitude toward college, professors, and media coursework in general. Although the participants expressed an interest in learning about a foreign culture and its media, personal agenda did affect their overall performance in the class. However, when the participants communicated their feelings toward Meso-American media and culture, and how Meso-American media differed from the American media they were accustomed to, a shift in attitude was evident. This shift was most apparent in the interviews. Findings have been classified into categories in order to summarize the results of this study according to their respective research questions. What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?

Interviews. Through interviews, final papers and responses to film surveys, the participants revealed that they learned three things in general. One thing that the students learned was how media and culture were closely tied together, so much so that the media often represented the culture. Because media are cultural products, they cannot be separated from the culture in which they are produced. Learning about Meso-American history appeared to be a factor in the students' development of this cultural sensitivity. Some students entered the classroom with no experience with Meso-American culture, whereas others had minimal contact because of their ethnicity and/or living situations.

To illustrate, one student who had no reported experience with the Meso-American culture was Margo. She stated that she knew nothing about the culture,

I learned everything about Meso-America as a result of this course. I came into this class knowing zero. I couldn't even tell you what machismo was. And now, I find that to be the most interesting thing, especially in how women are viewed as spiritually superior because they give life. I think that's very interesting. I came in knowing nothing, so I gained everything.

Despite their previous experiences, students realized that media cannot be separated from their cultures. Because media and culture are associated, students begin to learn about things that are culturally specific. For instance, Lance stated that Meso-American media taught him about the culture and its people. He began to understand why the Meso-American people acted and believed in certain ways. Margo also responded similarly,

I have a greater knowledge of the people down there, and I was introduced to them through this course. As an analogy, I had an acquaintance with them, but never really knew what they were about. It [the course] has opened a door to filmmaking that I was not aware of. I can now get a feeling for the "real" people and not something that was based upon Hollywood glamour. It [the course] was a nice peek into the world.

Yuki also saw something culturally specific in Meso-American films that was different from American documentaries. Yuki stated,

Films we watched in this class impressed me more than American films. They [Meso-American media] seem to have a "we have to fight them" type of attitude. American

documentaries also comment on governmental issues, but I don't see the same anger as in the Meso-American films. American media seems to hide the conflict, where in Meso-American media, the bad side is obvious.

Cassie stated that she also found the course helpful in that she learned how to interpret cultural messages in the Meso-American media. She reported,

The course has helped me understand culturally what is going on in the films. I saw Water for Chocolate before this course, and now I can understand some of the issues that were brought up in the film.

Finally, Jill and Carl reported that they also saw cultural value in the media they watched. Jill said that she was more aware of "the importance of culture in media as it appears in symbolism," in that certain themes, cinematographic styles, and other filmic qualities may have a specific cultural meaning that outsiders may not grasp. Carl also said that he was more aware of the cultural influences that might effect the structure of a film, particularly in a Meso-American film. Hence, these students appeared to be aware of the association between media and culture.

Another finding was that the students learned about the culture and history of Meso-America through their analyses of Meso-America media. As students discussed how the films screened in class were structured and what cultural codes were used, students also appeared to learn about the Meso-American culture and history. All of the students learned that the peasant-class in Meso-America was in a poor state of economic and

social development, and, thus, causing the rebellions to occur. Lisa best expressed this realization as, "All the conflicts that happened in the '80s I felt stupid about, because I didn't know such things. I always knew there were conflicts there, but didn't understand why, and that was interesting to find out." Alan also had a similar viewpoint when he said, "I like watching the documentaries in this class because I learned about how the guerrillas worked. Because of American media, I always thought that they were the enemies when they really were not." Larry also had a analogous impression. He stated,

I learned a lot, especially about the conditions down there. To really see it has made a difference in me, especially in my distrust for authority figures. So, I learned how to "read" a form of media to better understand the history and culture. Another thing is knowing about the U.S. relations down there in Meso-America. I now know what kind of influence the U.S. had down there. I took the course in hopes of gaining knowledge, and I did.

Some students even commented on how the peasant-class was never able to improve its situation because of the autocratic rulership that oppressed the lower-class voices. In a response made during the post-film surveys, Larry had this to say regarding the situation in El Salvador,

The rich elite are oppressing the less fortunate through intimidation, slavery, and killing. The lands have been taken from the subsistence farmers and turned into commercial agriculture. Much of the money made from the crops goes out of the country or recirculates through the

hands of the "hares."

A statement like this indicated the amount of learning that was going on among some of the participants concerning the socio-political conflicts in Meso-America. Overall, most of the participants did seem to learn about the social, economic, and political history of Meso-America as they analyzed Meso-American media.

A third finding was that the participants learned about the cultural codes and how they could be applied in analyzing media. Most of the students never heard of the cultural code concept before taking the course. This was indicated by the questions they asked me when the students completed the pre-tests on the first day of class. By the time the second interviews were held, most of the students seemed to have a good understanding of what the Meso-American Cultural Code meant. For instance, when I asked Cassie whether she found the codes useful for media analysis, this was what she had to say,

I would say pretty useful. They give you something to work with. Coming up with initial ideas was hard, and the codes helped me do that. They are something to work with.

All of the other students responded to this issue in a similar way. Tim stated his viewpoint on cultural codes as, "I think they're [codes] useful. I mean you have to have something to go by. I think it is a good way to delve or jump into the analysis of a film." Emilia also found value in using codes to analyze a film as well as the other students. Thus, cultural codes were something that the students learned how to apply in their media analysis.

In addition, the students also saw the benefit of using cultural codes to analyze media from any culture. For instance, Tim reported,

I don't know if I would use the same codes as he [professor] does, but some ones similar. I mean I've taken other courses, like German cinema, and this is the first class that has given me the codes. I mean German and Japanese cinema have given me the history, but not the codes to analyze films. And, I think codes are useful to use, especially when I am not from the culture that the film was made in.

A few of the students even discussed cultural codes with their friends and family to demonstrate what they have learned from the course such as Margo,

Oh, I thought about things at times and tell my roommates and neighbors about what I saw and heard in class. I talked about machismo and...well, that was the main ingredient I took away. Also, maybe one of the movies we watched. I don't remember.

Hence, participants learned about the cultural codes and their use in media analyses through this course.

Individual comparisons on surveys. Student responses to pre- and post-surveys were also examined to see whether students' viewpoints changed over the course of the semester pertaining to this research question. Statements on the surveys were divided into four categories based upon the research questions designed. An inter-rater reliability test was conducted to see whether my division of statements was consistent to the other raters. These

individuals rated each of the twenty-five attitude statements and the seven personal reflection statements on the survey to its respective research question. Thus, statements on the pre- and post-tests were divided into clusters (one, two, three, and four) to represent the four research questions designed for this study.

Cluster one had two separate scores to answer the first research question, "What do individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?" Both the attitude and personal reflection scores were examined in cluster one. When reviewing the following scores, keep in mind that none of these scores could ever be completely accurate because the students may have interpreted survey questions differently from what I had intended. However, according to the pre-determined clusters agreed upon by the raters, a score of .00 indicates no change for that person between the pre- and post-tests, and positive scores indicate that learning took place, with 3.00 being the highest.

The first cluster consisted of five attitude questions taken from the surveys (see Table 3.9). These five statements were:

1. Analyzing the media takes a lot of mental work.
2. Social structures that organize cultural communities are historically produced.
3. Media that deal with socio-political concerns are embraced more openly in Meso-America than in America.
4. Land is the site of power in Meso-America.
5. When comparing Meso-American media to American media, there is not a real significant difference between them in terms of character portrayal, theme,

production technique, and intention.

The distribution table below shows the difference in response scores for each student on cluster one attitude questions (Table 4.3). A positive score meant that the student improved his/her response to the post-test question based upon an ordinal scale. The scores were based upon mean differences in that a pre-test mean score is subtracted from a post-test mean score. However, a positive value was given to a score if the post-test mean exceeded the pre-test mean. Negative scores were given if the pre-test mean exceeded the post-test mean. Therefore, positive scores were the criterion for determining whether the course had some effect upon student attitude.

Table 4.3. Individual Mean Differences in Attitude Cluster One

Scores	Number of Students
1.40	1
1.20	0
1.00	1
.80	2
.60	1
.40	1
.20	2
.00	4
-.20	2
-.40	3
-.60	1

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent.

As one can see from the eighteen students' scores, ten students remained constant (0) or regressed in their scores. Eight improved in the attitude cluster. Even though six scores fell

into the negative, eight students did alter their viewpoints toward a positive direction in some respect. This change should be kept in mind when comparing the scores to zeros, because a score of .00 suggests no change. Change in students' attitude for this cluster was inconsistent because of the range in scores. The questions used for this cluster were developed from course content that I knew the professor planned to discuss. Thus, answering the questions really depended upon the student knowing about a specific piece of information of Meso-American history. By looking at the scores, some students did not learn that information or just forgot when answering the post-surveys.

Personal reflection scores between the pre- and post-tests were also compared for each student. Cluster number one had one statement in the personal reflection section. Students were asked to give a rating to this statement "I am conscious of the biases and meticulous selection of media producers." The distribution table below gives an account of the scores (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4. Individual Mean Differences in Personal Reflection Cluster One

Score	Number of Students
2.00	3
1.00	3
.00	10
-1.00	1
-2.00	1

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent.

Twelve students remained constant (0) or regressed in their scores for the personal reflection cluster one question. Six

students did improve their scores for this question. Thus, a third of the class (six students) altered their responses positively on the post-tests.

There were some significant changes in the personal reflection question with some students increasing their responses by two whole points. Keep in mind though that this calculation was based upon one question. Hence, a jump of one, two, or three points might be expected because only one question was being compared in the pre- and post-tests. When a larger number of questions are included in the computation, more digressions in the scores are obtained. Nevertheless, having students jump one or two point values for this particular question is interesting.

Group comparisons on survey. Correlation t-tests were performed between the observed group (students in *Meso-American Media*) and the comparison group (another selected media arts classroom). As explained in Chapter Three, a comparison group was chosen to compare responses on the pre- and post-surveys to the responses given by the observed group. Overall, the correlation t-tests for this cluster indicated no change in attitude even though separate tests were performed. The table below shows the results of the first set of t-tests for cluster one attitude (Table 4.5). The t-tests investigated the pre-tests' and post-tests' mean scores separately between the two groups.

Table 4.5. Cluster One Pre- and Post-test Scores Across Independent Samples of Observed and Comparison Groups

t-Tests	Observed			Comparison			Final Scores	
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	MD	t
Pre (ATT)	18	2.88	.42	15	2.89	.48	-.01	-.10
Post (ATT)	18	3.05	.37	15	2.93	.71	.12	.57
Pre (PER)	18	4.05	.73	15	4.20	.68	-.14	-.59
Post (PER)	18	4.39	.78	15	4.20	.68	.19	.74

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

My hypothesis that the observed group would have the most significant attitude change over the comparison had to be rejected with these set scores. The final t_{observed} scores did not exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/32) = 1.697$. Therefore, no differences were found between the observed's and comparison's scores on the pre- and post-tests for cluster one.

The same result also occurred when matched pair t-tests were performed on dependent samples. In this test, pre-test scores were basically subtracted from the post-test scores to see if a difference occurred for the individual groups. The table below shows the results of these matched pair t-tests (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6. Matched Pairs t-Tests for Observed and Comparison Groups on Cluster One

t-Tests	Observed				Comparison			
	N	X	SD	t	N	X	SD	t
Pre and Post (ATT)	18	.17	.55	1.34	15	.04	.87	.19
Pre and Post (PER)	18	.33	1.03	1.37	15	.00	.76	.00

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

My hypothesis that the observed group would have the most significant attitude change over the comparison had to be rejected with these set scores. The final t_{observed} scores did not exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/17) = 1.740$ and $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/14) = 2.145$, and thus the hypothesis had to be rejected.

As one may see from these set of scores, the observed group indicated no change concerning what they had learned as a result of the *Meso-American Media* course. When comparing the cluster one scores for just the comparison group, no variations were obtained. Thus, the t-tests did not indicate a change in attitude for either the observed or comparison groups.

How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?

Interviews. The first finding was that most of the students agreed that a media-based course was much more effective in teaching college students about a foreign culture than a traditional lecture. The participants gave many reasons as to why they felt this way. First, they felt that media could keep aural learners or non-history enthusiasts attentive. A few of

the students expressed this viewpoint during the film surveys that it was better to see and hear, than just to hear about a particular event. All but one student agreed that the film Romero would be a useful media artifact to teach students about El Salvadoran culture because of its visualizations. The best responses concerning this issue came from Becca and Sarah. They discussed how they felt about using Romero in a cultural studies course.

Another good reason to show the film is because I believe that people are more visual today and are very media oriented. Showing this film would be a good way to keep nonreaders or people who aren't history buffs interested.[Becca]

Yes if it's [Romero] historically factual or if it is produced by a person from El Salvador. Why? Because video is more entertaining and often more informative than a lecture. You can see and hear instead of just hearing.[Sarah]

For these two students, and the others, use of media was reported to be much more interesting than a lecture or history book. This factor was also evident in some of the interview responses. Cassie, Carmela, Cyril, Emilia, Henry, and Lance all agreed that they did not particularly enjoy the course readings or lectures that much. However, they did enjoy the classes when students watched a film and then spent an entire session discussing the codes, themes, symbols, characterizations, and cinematography in the film they had just viewed. In the end, students reported that they believed that showing people suffer made much more of

an impact on them than listening to a person talk about suffering.

A second finding was that media served as a substitute for not being there. Not only did the students learn about history, but they learned about culture, too. Because the mass media are cultural products that represent the dominant notions and cultural practices of the producers, most of the participants reported that they found media useful in teaching students about Meso-American culture and history. A consensus was apparent in the interviews and film surveys regarding how effective media could be to teach non-Meso-Americans the culture. Because films screened in class had many cultural connotations, media allowed the students to see what Meso-America was like without actually being there.

In this class, media appeared to serve as a bridge between the students and Meso-Americans. This bridge helped students to experience the culture through visual images. Becca felt that the film Romero would be a good teaching tool for understanding how things were without actually being there. Tim made a similar remark in that the film could show the culture to someone who was not a native from El Salvador. Tojiro found the film useful not only for teaching culture, but learning about El Salvadoran history. Mary felt that the film would provide historical and present day issues that needed to be recognized by students who might be unaware of the situation in El Salvador. All but Emilia stated that they found the film Romero useful for teaching students about El Salvadoran culture. The students appeared to believe that if they could not experience Meso-American culture

first-hand, then viewing its media was an alternative way of being introduced to the Meso-American people.

Another finding was that media provided a way for students to learn about how things really were like in Meso-America when they believed otherwise. Although the students were aware of biases and selective manipulation of producers to convey certain messages, media could be used to demonstrate how things were to a non-native. In addition, media provided students with oppositional viewpoints that might have been censored. For instance, Yuki reported that,

I didn't know a lot of the history because before I thought that the Spaniards came in peace to mix with the indigenous people because that was what we learned in Japan. But actually, the indigenous women were raped and the people were robbed of their things. So, I didn't know about that. Also, I didn't know that many Indian people were still there and suffering, and that the European descendants were still governing those countries. So, everything was different from what I was taught.

Larry, Tim, Henry, and Alan also responded similarly to this issue. Larry heard about the guerilla movements that took place in Meso-America. However, he was quite unaware of the conditions that existed in Meso-America that prompted the peasants to rebel. Before the course, Tim had no idea of the reasons why the conflicts in El Salvador occurred, although had heard about them from other sources. Finally, Henry and Alan never realized how awful the socio-economic conditions were in Meso-America, although they heard about the high inflation ensuing in those

countries. Therefore, these students discovered that what they believed to be true was not necessarily so.

Finally, media provided an outlet for historical and present issues to be addressed. This was important for those students who were unaware of current and past conditions in Meso-America. With the help of visual media, better mental pictures could be formed among the students about why those conditions existed in Meso-America. All of the students agreed that media allowed them to see better the conditions that existed in Meso-America. This viewpoint was best expressed by Lance who said,

I got a more detailed background to some of the situations down there like El Salvador. I knew generally about the government being oppressive and the people uprising to that. But, I got a more detailed description of earlier times and how it relates to now from what we saw and heard in class.

Hence, the students valued media as an instructional tool to teach cultural studies courses.

Individual comparisons on surveys. Survey responses were also compared for this research question. Student responses to pre- and post-surveys were examined to see whether students' viewpoints changed over the course of the semester pertaining to this research question. Statements on the surveys were divided into four categories based upon the research questions designed. Four raters determined what statements on the surveys fit accordingly to clusters that corresponded to the four research questions. Thus, statements on the pre- and post-tests were divided into clusters (one, two, three, and four) to represent the four research questions designed for this study.

Cluster number two had three attitude statements on the survey and answered the research question "How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture (see Table 3.10)? Personal reflection questions were not rated into this category. Therefore, only three attitude questions were compared for cluster two. These three statements from the surveys in cluster two were:

1. Ethnic studies courses are more successful when instructors use media to teach history and socio-cultural values.
2. When a particular community or culture is being discussed in a classroom, native media products are useful to extend the dialogue and personal understanding.
3. Media can never represent a culture completely.

The distribution table below shows the mean scores for each student on cluster two questions. Unlike cluster one, cluster two had only attitude questions. Therefore, only one column is shown (Table 4.7). Nevertheless, the numbers mean the same as cluster one in terms of interpreting changes in scores. A positive score meant that the student improved his/her response to the post-test question based upon an ordinal scale in that his/her post-test mean score was higher than the re-test mean score. Therefore, higher the score is in the positive category, higher the chance of attitudinal shift for that student.

Table 4.7. Individual Mean Differences in Attitude Cluster Two

Scores	Number of Students
2.00	1
1.80	0
1.60	2
1.40	2
1.20	0
1.00	0
.80	0
.60	3
.40	3
.20	1
.00	1
-.20	0
-.40	1
-.60	1
-.80	0
-1.00	0
-1.20	0
-1.40	3

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent.

For cluster two, six students remained constant (0) or regressed in their scores. Twelve students (two-thirds of the class) improved their scores. This is an escalation of scores if compared to the values given in cluster one for individual students. If one compared the attitude shift of each student in these scores, more than half the class responded to cluster two's attitude questions positively in that they agreed of using native media to teach students about culture. Thus, two-thirds of the sample altered their perspective toward using native media as an

instructional tool.

Group comparisons on surveys. This result differed from the correlation t-tests when groups as a whole were compared. For cluster two, t-tests were performed on the observed (*Meso-American Media*) and comparison (another media course) groups to see whether the combined scores between the two groups changed or not. The first t-test investigated the pre-tests and post-tests separately for the groups. The results are shown in the table (Tables 4.8).

Table 4.8. Cluster Two Pre- and Post-test Scores Across Independent Samples of Observed and Comparison Groups

t-Tests	Observed			Comparison			Final Scores	
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	MD	t
Pre (ATT)	18	3.83	.54	15	4.07	.51	-.24	-1.27
Post (ATT)	18	4.15	.69	15	4.04	.64	.11	.44

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

The criterion for accepting my hypothesis that the observed group would a significant attitude change over the comparison group was not accepted with these set scores. The final t_{observed} scores did not exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/32) = \pm 1.697$. Therefore, no differences were found between the observed's and comparison's scores on the pre- and post-tests for cluster one.

The same result also occurred when matched pair t-tests were performed on dependent samples. This test examined the observed's and comparison's combined pre- and post-test scores. The table below shows the results of these matched pair t-tests

(Table 4.9).

Table 4.9. Matched Pairs t-Tests for Observed and Comparison Groups on Cluster Two

t-Tests	Observed				Comparison			
	N	X	SD	t	N	X	SD	t
Pre and Post (ATT)	18	.31	1.06	1.26	15	-.02	.74	-.12

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

The criterion for accepting my hypothesis that the observed group would have a significant attitude change over the comparison group was not reached with these set scores. The final t_{observed} scores did not exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/17) = 1.740$ and $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/14) = 2.145$, and thus the hypothesis was rejected.

Results from this table showed no significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores for each group. The observed group indicated no change in how they viewed using native media as instructional instruments. The comparison group also indicated no change. Thus, the t-tests did not indicate a change in attitude within both the observed and comparison groups.

Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of cultural artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?

Interviews. Responses made in the interviews indicated a positive reaction for using cultural codes to analyze Meso-American media products. The first finding was that students found use in cultural codes as a method to organize their own media analysis and production work. During the interviews,

participants expressed their likelihood of using this semiotic process when they view media as they compare media across the cultures. Alan explained the importance of his awareness of cultural codes as,

When viewing a foreign film before, I never thought of it as representing a different culture. I took it only for face value like John Woo and his films [Hard Boiled]. I took them as they were instead of them being part of that culture. This class opened my eyes to foreign films. Maybe I can't apply the same codes [used in this class], but I will look for something similar and compare it to American media.

Becca voiced her response toward using codes to compare media across the cultures, "I now know more about other cultures, and can apply what I have learned from this course to help me and other people understand about the differences." Tim also a similar viewpoint in which he said, "I have learned another dimension of media presentation. I could apply the cultural codes learned in this class to what I am viewing." Others have proclaimed that cultural codes allowed them to see and understand the underlying context and purpose of a film, thus making them more critical to the film's structural format based upon cultural factors.

Some students also indicated an interest in using cultural codes as a method for organizing their own future media productions. Alan, Lisa, Emilia, Larry, Tojiro, Becca, Enrique, Henry, and Carl all had reasons as to why they found the course useful for their own media productions. Emilia and Enrique, who

are both Hispanic, said that the course had motivated them to produce a film or video on their own that represented their culture by applying some of the codes to help increase authenticity. Henry said that he would use the concept of the cultural code for his screen writing because "It [codes] has given me more knowledge when I'm thinking about media, writing, and how to analyze media. Codes gave me a denotative and connotative structure to go off on. So, I can make sure everything means something." Thus, half of the production majors realized the importance of using and researching the codes when producing a film.

A second finding was that the participants found cultural codes a useful method for discovering cultural meanings and customs, especially when one has to research the historical background. They felt that because cultural codes were the products of history, an assumption was made that if one could grasp the codes, then that person would come to understand the culture. Tim explained this notion as, "If I were to go down there or remain here and produce a film on Meso-America, I would now have a better idea about their culture and history--a background that I did not have before." Others also agreed with Tim. Statements like "I am sure that I would be more aware of cultural influences, particularly in Meso-American films [Carl]," and "I have become more critical of the media and how they relate to the culture [Lisa]," demonstrate how these students learned about the relationship between culture and media.

A third finding was that some codes were viewed as being more comprehensible to the students than others. From document

analysis of final papers, the most popular codes were defense, sexuality, and interaction. Students seemed to understand these codes the most, thus accounting for their high use in the papers. Reasons why students tended to grasp these three codes more than the other codes were (a) the number of times these three codes were mentioned during classroom discussions (almost seventy percent of the time as compared to the other codes), and (b) the abundance of historical data that could be found in the library pertaining to the three codes, especially sexuality and interaction. Least used codes were exploitation or use of materials and learning. I could tell by the students' papers that these two codes were not the most comfortable ones for them to deal with. Tojiro even voiced his concern that he may not have completely understood the learning code in his paper. Temporality, on the other hand was never used by any of the students. The professor himself even commented on the students not attempting to analyze their media artifacts with the temporality code. Other codes such as association, play, subsistence, and territoriality were also used, but just not as much as defense, sexuality, and interaction. Basically, students in this class appeared to feel more comfortable with certain codes than others.

Responses to cluster three survey questions were also evaluated to determine whether the students felt differently about using cultural codes (see Table 3.11). Individual test questions and scores can be seen below for this research cluster "Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of cultural artifacts produced within

Meso-American culture? Like cluster one, both attitude and personal reflection statements were compared for each student.

The attitude questions for cluster three were:

1. Analyzing media products with cultural codes can help individuals translate the value and belief systems found in a particular culture.
2. Cultural codes are the best method for interpreting mass media products.
3. Urbanization has increased social power for the upper-class in Meso-America.
4. Meso-American proletariat workers never had power to alter their socio-economic conditions.

Distribution of scores for this set of attitude questions can be seen below (Table 4.10). Remember that positive scores indicate a significant change in the post-test mean score as compared to the pre-test mean score.

Table 4.10. Individual Mean Differences in Attitude Cluster Three

Scores	Number of Students
1.20	1
1.00	1
.80	4
.60	4
.40	0
.20	5
.00	2
-.20	1

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent.

Students responded positively to cluster three survey questions. A few significant jumps can be seen. Others have remained fairly close to their original responses in the pre-survey. In this set of cluster questions, only three students remained constant (0) or regressed in their responses. Fifteen students or eighty-three percent of the class improved their scores during the post-tests. Therefore, a majority of the class did respond positively to cluster three. The scores indicated that students moved toward the positive end of this cluster in that they found some use of cultural codes as an instrument to analyze media.

Cluster three also had one personal reflection question. This question was "Cultural codes will be something that I will use in the future to analyze media products." Mean scores for this individual question can be seen below (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11. Individual Mean Differences in Personal Reflection
Cluster Three

Scores	Number of Students
3.00	2
2.00	1
1.00	7
.00	6
-1.00	0
-2.00	1
-3.00	0

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent. Only seventeen students responded to this question. In terms of scores, seven out of seventeen students remained constant (0) or regressed. Ten students improved their scores in cluster three's personal reflection question. More than half of the class changed their responses toward the positive end as compared the seven who did not. This result demonstrates that the students did consider using cultural codes as a future method of analysis.

Group comparisons on surveys. This increase in scores was also found using the correlation t-tests. When performing t-tests on the pre-test and post-test scores between the two groups, a difference was found on cluster three "Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of cultural artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?" These results can be seen in the table below (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12. Cluster Three Pre- and Post-test Scores Across Independent Samples of Observed and Comparison Groups

t-Tests	Observed			Comparison			Final Scores	
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	MD	t
Pre (ATT)	18	3.38	.31	15	3.43	.48	-.05	-.42
Post (ATT)	18	3.84	.28	15	3.43	.62	.41	2.36*
Pre (PER)	18	3.35	1.22	15	4.07	.92	-.72	-1.82
Post (PER)	18	4.33	.84	15	3.80	1.01	.53	1.65

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

The criterion for accepting my hypothesis that the observed group would have the most significant attitude change over the comparison could be accepted with the second t_{observed} score in that the observed group increased their score over the comparison's on the attitude post-test. The second t_{observed} score did exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/32) = 1.697$. Therefore, a difference was found on the attitude post-test in which the observed improved over the comparison.

An increase was also discovered when matched pair t-tests were performed on dependent samples. This test examined the observed's and comparison's combined pre- and post-test scores. The table below shows the results of these matched pair t-tests (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13. Matched Pairs t-Tests for Observed and Comparison Groups on Cluster Three

t-Tests	Observed				Comparison			
	N	X	SD	t	N	X	SD	t
Pre and Post (ATT)	18	.46	.38	5.21**	15	-.01	.77	-.03
Pre and Post (PER)	18	1.00	1.17	3.52**	15	-.07	1.00	-.27

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

The criterion for accepting or rejecting my hypothesis that the observed group would have the most significant attitude change over the comparison was accepted for the observed group. The final t_{observed} scores for the observed group exceeded the $t_{\text{critical}}(.01/17) = 2.567$. The comparison's final scores did not exceed $t_{\text{critical}}(.01/14) = 2.624$. Therefore, the hypothesis could be accepted for the observed group.

Review. As demonstrated by the t-tests, a difference in the observed group was found. First, the observed group exceeded the comparison when combined means were performed on the attitude post-test. Second, when matched pairs were performed, the observed surpassed the comparison on both the attitude and personal reflection clusters. Therefore, unlike clusters one and two, a change in attitude could be seen in cluster three's attitude and personal reflection questions.

These results fit well with the findings from the individual mean difference scores and from the interviews. More than half of the class increased their scores on both the attitude and personal reflection clusters when mean scores were compared.

This result was consistent to the findings in the interviews in which students agreed that The Meso-American Cultural Code was a useful instrument for analyzing media. Thus, the findings from this research question have demonstrated an attitude shift among the participants in the *Meso-American Media* course.

Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?

Interviews. Most of the students agreed that the course helped them know more about Meso-American culture and its experiences. One finding was that the assumptions the students held about Meso-American culture before the course were changed. This change of attitude occurred as students learned how history affected the livelihoods of Meso-Americans today. Film viewings, readings, and classroom discussions improved their general understanding of how history can affect what might happen in the future. Participants learned that cultural codes did not emerge by themselves in Meso-America but through events that followed the Spanish conquest. "Everything in history touches or connects. It's is like a domino effect," was what Carmela thought about codes and Meso-American history. Carl also made an interesting discovery about how current events in Meso-America were relative to history, "I heard about the situation in Meso-America, but I didn't know the history behind the turmoil and rebellions. So, that was interesting. The fact that the Spanish conquest never really stopped and its descendants continue to rule today was something." Several other students agreed with Carmela and Carl about how tracing the Meso-American Cultural Code's roots was an effective tool for educating them about the relationship between

history and present conditions. These students began to understand that the socio-economic shortcomings was not the peasant classes' fault, but the historical circumstances that led many of the Meso-Americans to be in that state of socio-economic poverty.

Even more illuminating was the fact that most of the participants began to sympathize with the peasants who were fighting for their self-worth and dignity. After learning about the history, four of the students had this to say regarding Meso-Americans and their plight.

One thing I thought about the Meso-Americans was that they were fighting because they were fighting. I didn't know about the oppression and that the people were trying to overthrow their governments because they were so oppressed. I can really understand that now. I can now really sympathize with their fight.[Lisa]

I learned more about the political turmoil there. I know that there were political problems in Central America, but I thought that the guerrillas were all in one country. I learned that the problem was more widespread and guerilla movements were emerging everywhere. It makes me question how the governments could let this happen [poor status and oppression] to their own people and why the people took it, especially when everyone was suffering? What did he [professor] say, about five percent owned the land and the rest were suffering. I don't see why they [the poor] just don't get up. So, I now have a better picture of what is happening and why.[Cyril]

Films we saw attracted or impressed us more, like a "we have to fight them" type of attitude. We felt anger toward the governmental authorities and felt frustrated with what they [Meso-American peasants] were going through.[Yuki]

Learning about the controversial issues down there, how the culture is like, and the polarization between the Indians and mestizos are all beneficial. It opened my eyes more to what's going on in the world. I've learned that I should pay close attention and question things more, especially to what may seem wrong.[Jill]

Thus, many of the stereotypes that students had before the course appeared to be affected by its end. Emilia, Becca, and Carl mentioned that it was important not to stereotype Meso-Americans. Stereotypes such as the "bitchy spitfire," "lazy Mexican," and "Mexican alcoholic," were notions that should not be taken lightly. Becca said that because she now knew the origins of these stereotypes, she would not necessarily blame the person who said it, but inform him/her of the history behind such stereotypical notions. During one classroom discussion, Carmela and Lisa began exploring the assumption that Meso-American women were subservient to men. Although some truth existed in this notion, both discussed how the roles were changing with women becoming the commanders of guerrilla troops. Hence, increased appreciation of Meso-American culture was not the only result from this class.

A second finding was that the students began to compare their own living conditions and values to those of the people in Meso-America. Henry spoke to me after class one day concerning

the conditions of the villagers in the film Todos Los Santos. He was surprised by their living conditions and how they made only 10¢ per day as compared to the minimum wage per hour here in America. He said that he would not be able to live under those conditions because of his dependence upon money and material goods. Thus, Henry was one student who thought about the differences between Meso-Americans and people in the United States.

Margo, Carmela, and Larry were three other students who made comparisons between America and Meso-America. Margo best summarized this comparison when she said, "We [Americans] complain about things on a grand scale and take things for granted. It is good to see how people cope with things on the other side. We are very lucky." Carmela also had the same idea in which she said how unbelievable it was for the peasants to be living under the conditions they had when we had so much. Another student who compared the different living conditions was Larry. He found that the media really helped him think about what he thought about people. Therefore, like Henry, some of the other students in the course also thought about the differences between Meso-Americans and Americans.

Overall, increased sensitivity occurred among all of the participants. Although most of the films viewed in class were described by some students as being bleak and one-sided, the messages conveyed to the students made them look at their own living situations, values, and ideas. Students no longer blamed the peasants for their poor socio-economic status and their involvement in guerilla movements. Instead, students found the

ruling-class who tried to secure their foothold in the economy to be at fault for the disruptions. They also realized the importance of understanding history first before making assumptions about a specific group of people. Poor living conditions may not be the people's fault, but due to historical events leading up to the present situation.

Individual comparisons on surveys. Individual test scores from each student were also used for ascertaining changes in attitude regarding this research question "Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes? Cluster four consisted of both attitude and personal reflection questions (see Table 3.12).

Attitude questions that followed under cluster four were:

1. Studying media produced by a particular culture can heighten a person's understanding toward that culture.
2. The primary purpose of Meso-American filmmakers is to provoke change in the current structure of society.
3. Meso-American filmmakers can represent their culture more accurately than films produced by American filmmakers.
4. Films produced by ethnic minorities better represent their population than media produced by the dominant culture (e.g., the Hollywood film studios, network television).
5. Meso-American filmmakers and video producers are neutral and objective when it comes to documenting social and political conditions.
6. Women are represented more favorably in American

cinema than in Meso-America.

7. Machismo is strong in Meso-American culture.
8. American media producers rely more on stereotypes than do Meso-American producers.

Scores for this set of questions can be seen below (Table 4.14). Because of the large number of attitude questions in this cluster, scores diverged considerably as compared to the other three. Remember, a positive difference in mean score is the determinant of attitude shift.

Table 4.14. Individual Mean Differences in Attitude Cluster Four

Scores	Number of Students
.80	2
.60	1
.40	2
.20	4
.00	5
-.20	2
-.40	0
-.60	1
-.80	0
-1.00	1

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent. Students were pretty balanced in terms of answering this attitude cluster. Nine students remained constant (0) or regressed, while nine others improved their scores. Thus, in this cluster set, half of the class altered their thinking toward the positive side by the end of the semester. By looking at the distribution of scores, half the students did alter some of their predispositions toward Meso-American culture and media.

Cluster four had a lot of personal reflection questions as well. In comparison to the three previous clusters that had only one or no personal reflection statements, cluster four was an anomaly. Personal reflection statements that were assigned to this cluster were:

1. In my own work, I try to become aware of my potential biases toward people, cultures, and events.
2. In my own work, I try to alter stereotypical portrayals of people, cultures, and events that I see in popular media.
3. I find that my gender and culture are accurately represented in the mass media.
4. I am aware of the stereotypes inherent in the mass media.
5. I can verbally say to someone, "Oh, that's conventional" when I see a stereotype occur.

Because this cluster had five personal reflection questions, I was interested to see how the scores came out. As I had expected, some negative scores were seen. The scores in Table 4.15 were also lower compared to cluster one and three that had only one personal reflection question.

Table 4.15. Individual Mean Differences in Personal Reflection
Cluster Four

Scores	Number of Students
1.40	1
1.20	1
1.00	0
.80	0
.60	5
.40	1
.20	4
.00	3
-.20	1
-.40	2

Note. Scores were rounded off to the nearest tenth of a percent.

In cluster four's personal reflection questions, six students remained the same (0) or regressed in their scores. Twelve students, or two-thirds of the class, improved their scoring for this cluster set. This positive change of scores indicated that an attitude shift did occur among the participants concerning this research question.

Group comparisons on surveys. Differences in individual test scores also contributed to the significant differences found with the correlational t-tests. The first t-test compared individual pre-test and post-test scores between the two groups. Cluster four or "Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?" was the subject matter under investigation. The table below shows the results of the independent t-tests (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16. Cluster Four Pre- and Post-test Scores Across Independent Samples of Observed and Comparison Groups

t-Tests	Observed			Comparison			Final Scores	
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	MD	t
Pre (ATT)	18	3.52	.37	15	3.57	.41	-.05	-.36
Post (ATT)	18	3.61	.32	15	3.34	.36	.27	2.33*
Pre (PER)	18	3.58	.68	15	4.00	.39	-.42	-2.24
Post (PER)	18	3.61	.32	15	3.34	.36	.27	2.33*

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

The criterion for accepting the hypothesis that the observed group would have a significant attitude change over the comparison group was accepted with the second and fourth t_{observed} scores in that the observed group increased their scores over the comparison group on the attitude and personal post-tests. The second and fourth t_{observed} score did exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/32) = 1.697$. Therefore, a difference was found on the post-tests in which the observed improved over the comparison.

An increase in attitude was also discovered when matched pair t-tests were performed on dependent samples. These t-tests examined the observed's and comparison's combined pre- and post-test scores. The table below shows the results of these matched pair t-tests (Table 4.17).

Table 4.17. Matched Pairs t-Tests for Observed and Comparison Groups on Cluster Four

t-Tests	Observed				Comparison			
	N	X	SD	t	N	X	SD	t
Pre and Post (ATT)	18	1.00	.47	.87	15	-.01	.77	-.03
Pre and Post (PER)	18	.32	.49	2.81*	15	-.23	.61	-1.44

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$.

The criterion for accepting the hypothesis that the observed group would have the most significant attitude change over the comparison was accepted for the observed group for the personal reflection cluster. The final t_{observed} score exceeded the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/17) = 1.740$ in comparison to the observed's critical value of $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/14) = 2.145$. Therefore, the hypothesis could be accepted for the observed group in the personal reflection cluster.

Review. As demonstrated by the t-tests, a difference in the observed group was found. First, the observed group exceeded the comparison group when combined means were performed on the attitude and personal reflection post-tests. Second, when matched pairs were performed, the observed group surpassed the comparison group on the personal reflection cluster. Therefore, as with cluster three, a change in attitude could be seen in cluster four's attitude and personal reflection questions.

These results fit well with the findings from the individual mean difference scores and from the interviews. More than half of the class increased their individual mean scores on both the

attitude and personal reflection clusters. This result was consistent to the findings in the interviews in which students agreed that the *Meso-American Media* course had helped them become aware of some of the assumptions they held regarding Meso-American culture. Thus, the findings regarding this research question have suggested an attitude shift among the participants in the *Meso-American Media* course.

Discussion of the Interview Process

Several things happened during the interview process that could have affected the accuracy of data. First, delaying the interviews might have had an effect in the report of findings. Because of circumstances, the initial interviews did not begin until the third week of school. To gain student trust, the interviews should have begun a lot sooner. Once students had spoken to me either by phone or in person, they became much more affable toward me. Rapport increased once they realized I was not there to be the "professor's eyes." Students were willing to participate after they became informed as to why I wanted to perform research on this particular course.

Other problems did occur concerning interviews. Interviewing students by phone should have been avoided in the initial interviews. Students appeared to be much more congenial when they talked to me in person instead of by telephone. Seeing me in person helped the approachability aspect because I was no longer the distant observer they thought me to be. If I had interviewed all of the students in person, approachability would have been easier, and they might have talked to me more openly about themselves and what they thought of the course.

Another constraint was finding time for the interviews. Getting everyone interviewed at one time was extremely difficult. Busy schedules of the students led me to resort to ineffective telephone interviews. Most of the interviews were held either before or after class. Students found these times to be best because they would have to be in class anyway. Thus, the interview process was slow in that I could only meet two to four students per week. If students' schedules were different, the interview periods could have been completed in two weeks as compared to the six weeks it took for the second interviews.

Discussion of Pre-Test Sensitization

Pre-test sensitization was also a factor. The pre-test appeared to make some students excited about the course and helped them prepare for what was coming. Those who did not know what cultural codes or Meso-America meant were looking forward to hearing about them after the survey. I know this because a few questions emerged regarding those two topics during the pre-test and I told students to answer the statements as best as possible and wait for the professor to explain the two concepts afterward. Thus, the test helped prepare students for the course before getting an introduction to the course or to the syllabi.

The film survey also had a similar impact. I never intended students to watch the entire film or use Romero as their texts such as Cyril and Carmela did. However, the film survey did do just that. I spoke positively of the film, especially of the dramatic ending. This could have caused students to take Romero seriously and use the film to their advantage. The survey itself may have also given students ideas of what to look for in the

film. As a precaution, I had to ask Cyril and Carmela not to show the same clip in their presentations because I was afraid this may effect responses in the post-film surveys. Nonetheless, the presentations made by Cyril and Carmela would have some influence on the participants' responses because they now had a better idea of the storyline and its cultural codes.

Overall t-Test Comparisons

Another set of t-tests was performed by combining all four clusters into one for both the attitude and personal reflection categories. A reason for performing this test was to see whether the observed group scored higher overall on the attitude surveys. Because the observed group did not change their scores in the first two clusters, I wanted to see whether overall cluster scores would indicate something different. Analogous to the separated cluster scores in the previous section, the observed group did indicate an overall change on the surveys as compared to the comparison. In table 4.18, one can see that the observed group exceeded the comparison in terms of attitude adjustment, especially in the attitude category.

Table 4.18. Combined Clustered Pre- and Post-test Scores Across Independent Samples of Observed and Comparison Groups

t-Tests	Observed			Comparison			Final Scores	
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	MD	t
Pre (ATT)	18	3.41	.22	15	3.54	.25	-.13	-1.52
Post (ATT)	18	3.65	.24	15	3.44	.34	.21	2.06*
Pre (PER)	18	3.62	.60	15	4.04	.35	-.42	-2.47
Post (PER)	18	4.03	.45	15	3.90	.55	.13	.73

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

The criterion for accepting my hypotheses that the observed group would have a significant change over the comparison group was accepted with second t_{observed} scores in that the observed group increased their scores over the comparison's on the post-attitude tests. The second t_{observed} score did exceed the $t_{\text{critical}}(.05/32) = 1.697$. Therefore, a difference was found on the attitude post-test in which the observed group surpassed the comparison.

An increase was also discovered when matched pair t-tests were performed on dependent samples. This test examined the observed's and comparison's combined pre- and post-test scores separately. The table below shows the results of these matched pair t-tests (Table 4.19).

Table 4.19. Matched Pairs t-Tests for Observed and Comparison Groups on Combined Clusters

t-Tests	Observed				Comparison			
	N	X	SD	t	N	X	SD	t
Pre and Post (ATT)	18	.23	.32	3.10**	15	-.10	.39	-.96
Pre and Post (PER)	18	.41	.48	3.65**	15	-.13	.64	-.80

Note. Values in the t column were the determinants for attitude adjustments. ATT = attitude questions; PER = personal reflection; MD = mean difference.

** $p < .01$.

The criterion for accepting the hypothesis that the observed group would have a significant attitude change over the comparison group was accepted with these sets of scores. The final t_{observed} scores exceeded the $t_{\text{critical}}(.01/17) = 2.567$ in comparison to the observed's critical value of $t_{\text{critical}}(.01/14) = 2.264$. Therefore, the hypothesis could be accepted for the observed group in both the attitude and personal reflection cluster.

As demonstrated by the overall t-tests, a difference in the observed group was found. First, the observed group exceeded the comparison when combined means were performed on the attitude post-test and personal pre-test. Second, when matched pairs were performed, the observed surpassed the comparison on both the pre- and post-tests. Therefore, a positive change in attitude for the observed groups could be identified when combining all of the clusters together for the attitude and personal reflection categories.

Professor's Reflections

According to the professor, classroom climate and student interaction were very different during the semester of this study compared to the previous semester. The professor had a more positive experience during the second semester than in the first. A number of circumstances affected the classroom atmosphere during the semester of observation. These reasons were defined during a personal interview with the professor outside of classroom time.

Competition was evident among the students during the previous semester while it was not that apparent during the semester of the study. In the previous semester, the professor had to continuously deal with competition that was occurring among the enrolled students. This could have been caused by a more diverse group of students in the first semester as compared to the second. The student population in the first semester consisted of media arts majors, Latin American studies majors, and eight Latin American studies graduate students. The problem occurred when the diverse groups were separating and comparing themselves to one another. First, the graduate students would sit together in one corner, thus avoiding the other undergraduates. The media arts and Latin American studies majors would constantly contest to one group knowing more about Meso-American history or media criticism. Because one group assumed that the other had more knowledge about a particular subject matter, comments about the unfairness in evaluation emerged. Last, the media arts undergraduates were much more verbal, but were short-sighted in terms of theory. This made classroom

interaction much more complicated and problematic. As a result, classroom discussions became an area of tension as the students intimidated one another.

The professor reported that the semester of the study (Spring 1995) was different. Instead of comparing themselves with one another in terms of background knowledge, the students were much more sympathetic and cooperative. For instance, the only Latin American studies major in the class often spoke out and shared her knowledge with the other students, and in turn, a few media arts students helped her with the media theory and criticism aspect. This type of cooperative relationship was much more frequent this semester than in previous semester. Also, the students somewhat blamed their lack of knowledge on themselves rather than on one another. During interviews, students often voiced their lack of personal experiences either with theory or history, minimal contact they had with people from other cultures, and their own resentment toward history as factors in their inability to understand. Thus, classroom interaction was much more effective in terms of communicating information, thoughts, and ideas because of the type of students enrolled.

The professor credited this positive atmosphere to the students' similarity in background. He postulated that most of the students had a similar background in terms of interests, experience, and character. He felt that the students were much more mature with only one student being a junior. However, a diversity did exist in the classroom even if there were no graduate students present. Two Hispanic, two Japanese, one Panamanian, and one half Hispanic student were enrolled in the

course lending to its diversity. There were also students from what the professor explained as the "feminist" group or female students who were involved with feminist theory. Finally, the regular "run-of-the-mill" students also helped make up the classroom's diverse population. Thus, the classroom was no way a homogeneous group, although similarities of interest, character, and background existed.

The professor also changed a few of his instructional approaches based upon this group of students. First, he decreased the amount of theory in his lectures. He felt that the students were not ready for heavy-duty theory and leveled theory off a bit. The professor had planned to get more into theory as tied to Meso-American history, but he decided not to. This decision made him limit the amount of material given because he wanted to increase classroom discussions and focus less on lectures. The professor's own student-centered philosophy helped him concentrate more on student interaction as opposed to lecturing or reading from course materials. In addition, he focused more on film criticism and how students could use cultural codes in their analyses. This could be attributed to the problems that existed in the previous semester with variability of background experience and the ability to "read" a film. Thus, his approach throughout the course was to introduce a theme or topic, usually a category from the Meso-American Cultural Code, screen a film that applied to those codes, and then perform a classroom analysis of the film introducing some background on history. I found this method quite effective. Even though students were lost at the beginning as to how history

could be tied to cultural codes and what the professor really wanted from them, the method proved successful at the end as students expressed their enjoyment of learning from one another and from the actual film analyses performed in class.

Concentrating on one final assignment did not change. The professor preferred having students focus on one assignment, and so did they. Students did turn in progress reports such as paper proposals and history reports of the cultural codes behind their selected films. These reports ensured that the students were working on and understanding their final assignments. However, the final paper was "the" semester project. The professor wanted students to concentrate on these final papers for several reasons. He believed that if students focused on one thing, they would become more involved. They would become the "information seekers" by completing a project that they were committed to emotionally. He also wanted students to perform an in-depth study, and this assignment pushed them to do that. The final assignments also helped keep students on their toes in that they could never stop researching, exploring, summarizing, and deducing their findings. Thus, students' creative processes emerged from this assignment as they performed research on their own and selectively chose what to include or omit. These were reasons why focusing on one major assignment was not kept in the course syllabi.

Summary

This study revealed some important findings related to media literacy education and cultural studies courses. A few major observations are presented in this summary.

Students claimed that they learned several things from this course regarding Meso-American media and its culture. First, students said that they learned that media cannot be separated from the culture in which they are produced. Media and culture are closely associated, and therefore, inseparable. Students also reported that they learned about the culture and history of Meso-America through classroom analyses of media and through their own research endeavors for the final papers. Finally, students learned about The Meso-American Cultural Code and how to apply it as a method of analysis. Hence, students learned something new as a result of *Meso-American Media*.

Media also served as a tool for teaching students about Meso-American culture. Because all media have a visual element, students found media a much better instrument to teach history and culture than just listening to lectures and reading textbooks. Media, with their visual and aural elements, kept these students interested. For the students, media served as substitutes for being in Meso-America during the times of political turmoil. If they could not experience the events first-hand, then viewing the media was an alternative. Finally, media allowed students to hear and see alternative viewpoints that may have been suppressed. Before the course, some students believed that the guerrillas were the troublemakers. However, that perspective changed as a result of the course.

In terms of using The Meso-American Cultural Code as a method of analysis, three things were discovered. First, all but one student stated that they found value in using cultural codes to organize their own media analysis, completing classroom

projects, and possibly incorporating the notion of codes into their future media productions in their interviews. Second, because the students were required to research the historical backgrounds of the codes they used in their final papers, they not only learned about Meso-American media, but its history and culture too. Finally, certain codes were used more often than others by the students. Codes that were brought up during classroom discussions and in the course's readings seemed to have used more often by the students. Codes that were not discussed that often were neglected. Thus, codes were an integral part of analyzing Meso-American media and culture.

According to students' statements, heightened sensitivity and awareness toward Meso-American people occurred. Stereotypes and assumptions that some students had before the course changed by the end because of what they had learned. Some students also realized the advantages they enjoy in America as opposed to the peasants in Meso-America. As a result, some students felt guilty about their living situation in the United States when they compared themselves to the people in Meso-America.

Individual differences in test score means were also examined for the four research questions. Pre-test means were subtracted from the post-tests to see whether an increase or decrease in survey response occurred. All four clusters showed at least half of the class increasing in their scores for the individual cluster of questions. The only one that did not show a major change was the personal reflection scores in cluster one. Thus, change did occur when comparing the means for each student individually.

Correlation t-tests revealed something different in terms of what the students learned. When the observed (*Meso-American Media*) and comparison (media writing course) groups were compared, the only significant changes in attitude could be seen in the last two research questions where the shift was significant. The first two clusters did not indicate a statistically significant change in which the observed's scores did not meet the criterion of accepting the hypothesis.

Chapter Five discusses the conclusions made from this study. Things that need to be considered if replicating this study are also discussed in the next chapter. Finally, Chapter Five addresses the implications of this study in cultural studies courses and in future media literacy research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter deals with the conclusions made from the findings, implications for the development and design of future cultural studies courses, and the implications of this study in future media literacy research. This chapter will:

1. Offer a brief synopsis of the study.
2. Connect the findings to inferences suggested by the data.
3. Discuss the implications of this study for future social/cultural studies courses.
4. Examine the significance of this study in future media literacy research.

Results of this study indicate support for using media as an instructional tool to teach students about different cultures. Participants in the study displayed an interest in enrolling in courses that use media as a form instruction as opposed to traditional lecture format. From what was gathered in this study, media appealed to a greater range of students than did textbooks. In the Meso-America Media class, use of native media appeared to be vital for understanding cultural differences and historical implications upon the Meso-American society. If cultural studies courses are to succeed in accommodating future students, then supplementing instruction with mass media must be considered.

Synopsis

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether college students enrolled in a *Meso-American Media* course would become

more sensitive to the Meso-American culture as a result of exposure to media in this course. The hypothesis was that stereotypical attitudes toward Meso-American culture would subside as the participants increased their familiarity with the cultural codes that represented the Meso-American experience. If Meso-American media could teach students to become critical "users" of mass media, then studying the mass media could also help increase student sensitivity toward other cultures and experiences.

The course's main objective was for participants to understand how the Meso-American Cultural Code could be used as an instrument to analyze and interpret cultural texts. Media analyzed in the course consisted of media artifacts that represented the Meso-American culture. Films and videos were brought to the classroom for the eighteen students to examine using concepts from The Meso-American Cultural Code. Films viewed in class were either produced by a native Meso-American, an Hispanic-American, or a non-Meso-American filmmaker.

Participants were eighteen college students who enrolled in a *Meso-American Media* course that was taught by an El Salvadoran professor at a Southwest University during the Spring of 1995. The sample consisted of fifteen media arts students, one psychology student, one general fine arts student, and one Latin American studies student. All of the students were seniors, with the exception of one media arts junior. Of the fifteen media arts majors, eleven were working toward their Bachelor's of Fine Arts degrees and four were working toward their Bachelor's of Arts degrees. Cultural background also varied among the

participants. Two students were Hispanic/Latino-American, two were from Japan, one student was from Panama, one was from Greece, and the rest were of European-American background. By gender, the sample was balanced, with nine women and eight men participating.

Research questions were designed to answer whether studying *Meso-American Media* would help students become more culturally aware. The research questions investigated were:

1. What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?
2. How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?
3. Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of media artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?
4. Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?

Using these research questions for direction, the study investigated whether media literacy altered individuals' perceptions toward Meso-American culture.

Methods of data collection were adapted from both the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. Qualitative methods such as participant observations, interviews, and document analyses were used in the study to substantiate changes in the attitudes of individuals who were enrolled in the *Meso-American Media*. Quantitative methods were also used to document

attitude change. Pre- and post-surveys were distributed to record any changes in students' perspectives as they learned about cultural codes and Meso-American history. After the surveys were given, a critical test was conducted. The test consisted of a five-minute viewing of a film clip during which students wrote down their observations concerning their identification of cultural codes and socio-cultural meanings. In short, these two methods helped sustain the observations, interviews, and document analyses made in the study.

Conclusions and Implications

Meso-American Media was a course that explored cultural history and media through a semiotic process called cultural codes. All of the participants in the course learned a great deal from this process. Not only did they see value in using cultural codes to interpret media products, but also discovered how easily societal issues could be overlooked or misinterpreted by an outsider. In a sense, the participants became quasi-anthropologists as they observed, read, analyzed, and interpreted cultural artifacts. Participants repeatedly verbalized how they appreciated the freedom to do their own research and derive their own conclusions.

What do the individuals learn from critical analysis of Meso-American media (film and video)?

Students reported learning several things from this course and its method of media analyses. First, students learned that media products were heavily embodied with cultural elements. The media viewed in this course represented many aspects of Meso-American culture that the students were exposed to. Thus, a

conclusion was made from this finding that history and culture could not be separated from the media. Because media are cultural products from which they are produced, separating culture from the media is impossible. This implies that if analysis of media is done, one must learn the media's historical and cultural context as well.

Second, students reported that they learned about the history and culture of Meso-America as a result of this course. Students, regardless of their background knowledge, learned at least one thing new about Meso-America and its media that they were not aware of before. Therefore, because media are cultural products, it can be concluded that analyzing media can help one learn about that culture. This implies that native media should be used in such courses if the objective for students is to learn about a particular culture.

Finally, students learned about The Meso-American Cultural Code and how historically embedded these codes were. This acquisition of knowledge was not the result of viewing Meso-American media per se, but the outcome of using cultural codes to examine Meso-American media and its cultural messages. Similar to the conclusion made for Meso-American media, history and culture could not be separated from the cultural codes, especially when they were being applied toward media analysis. This implies that because cultural codes are historically and culturally embedded, one should learn the background of the codes before analyzing any form of native media.

How do Meso-American media (film and video) act as instruments in educating college students about a foreign culture?

There were three ways in which native media served as instruments in teaching students about different cultures. First, students said that media were much more effective because they provided both the visual and aural messages needed to understand an issue. For students who were not really interested in the course content, presenting visuals was considered to be a practical tool to increase student interest. Therefore, it can be concluded that using media, combined with textbooks and lectures, was found to be more effective than just solely relying upon textbooks for learning information. Students reported that the visual aspects of media touched them emotionally and would probably remain with them much longer than a passage in a textbook. This implies that cultural studies courses should consider supplementing instruction with native media.

Second, students found the use of media as a way to understand a culture that they could not experience first-hand. Students realized that they could never go down to Meso-America and really experience the events that took place in the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, it can be concluded that media in this classroom served as a substitute for being there. This implies that although media could never provide the entire cultural context, media could be used as an instructional tool to explore different cultures if traveling is not an option.

Third, students regarded media as an effective way to discover alternative viewpoints that may have been suppressed through media's biases. Although students realized that the

media they viewed in class also had their individual biases, most of the students reported that they enjoyed learning about the various viewpoints on the subject matter. This way, students believed that they had a better understanding of what may be considered as the truth, even with all of the biases. Hence, some media can be used to teach information that students may not have been aware of because of personal biases and/or limited prior knowledge of that particular culture. This implies that media might be used as a way to present different sides of an issue related to a culture.

Finally, students reported that Meso-American media provided them a way to study Meso-American history and some of the issues that it faces today. Students discovered that past events influence current socio-economic and political conditions that exists today in Meso-America. One can conclude that media was an effective tool for teaching these students about history and current events. This implies that cultural studies courses should consider using media as a way to promote discussion of how history and current events are closely associated.

Is "The Meso-American Cultural Code" an appropriate instrument for interpreting the meanings of media artifacts produced within Meso-American culture?

Three conclusions and implications were made concerning this question. First, students found use of cultural codes as a method to organize their own media analysis and productions. Students said that they would utilize the codes for organizing their final writing assignments, for viewing media outside of class, and for beginning their own media productions. In short,

one can conclude that codes provided the students with the context or framework needed to analyze media products in general. This conclusion has significant implications for courses that study history and culture. Because history cannot be separated from cultural codes, cultural studies courses should utilize a similar concept of The Meso-American Cultural Code to explore a culture.

Second, most of the students learned about Meso-American history and culture by researching the codes. Half of the students voiced how they enjoyed performing their own research on the codes because they learned about why certain customs existed in Meso-America as a result of history. Because codes are historically embedded, one can conclude that codes offer students the background knowledge they need to understand concerning Meso-American values and customs. An implication of this is that because history and codes are related, a similar concept of The Cultural Code could be used in cultural studies courses to explore history, customs, and values.

Finally, certain codes such as defense, sexuality, and interaction were used more frequently than others by the students. Reasons why students tended to grasp these three codes more than the others were because of the number of times these they came up during classroom discussions, and the abundance of historical data that could be found in the library pertaining to the three codes. One may conclude that the more familiar the message system, the higher the frequency of use in the course. (Note: Least used codes were exploitation and learning, and temporality was never used by the students during dialogue or in

their papers. The four remaining codes were used on the average). This implies that all codes should be explored more thoroughly in the first quarter of the semester and even encouraged by the professor for students to use.

Does studying Meso-American media heighten one's sensitivity toward Meso-American culture and reduce stereotypes?

Two general conclusions and implications were generated from this particular research question. First, stereotypical assumptions that most of the students held before the course had changed by the end of the semester. Because the students learned that current conditions in Meso-America were a direct result of the Spanish conquest, students no longer blamed the peasant class for their poor existence. Thus, a conclusion was made from this finding that learning about a culture's history and media can increase student's understanding of that culture and why certain conditions exist. This implies that if a course's objective is to increase students' cultural awareness, then a course like *Meso-American Media* should be considered.

Second, most of the students realized the advantages of living in the United States. Analyzing Meso-American media that represented its present socio-economic conditions enlightened the students about the suffering that the Meso-American people went through. A few students even felt guilty about their own relatively good living conditions here in the United States. One can conclude that sympathy toward the oppressed increased as students became more familiar with Meso-American culture. This implies that to increase people's knowledge and sensitivity about a particular culture, a course like *Meso-American Media* should be

attempted.

Implications for Social Studies Courses

Using media as an instructional tool in a social studies course should be seriously considered. There are two reasons as to why media should be implemented into social/cultural studies courses at the middle school, secondary, and post-secondary levels of education. First, mass media can provide a means for students who do not learn well in the traditional way through lectures and reading printed materials. Second, the mass media could be used as an instrument to attract students to take social/cultural studies courses that they may have overlooked before. These reasons are important for instructors of social studies courses because the effectiveness and popularity of such courses seem to have declined over the past decade among college students.

If media provided the emotional aspect to the participants' understanding of Meso-American culture, then the native media screened in this class succeeded. Most of the students admitted that media gave them an outlet to explore areas of Meso-American culture that they could not have had because of physical distance. Although these students realized that media did have their own biases in presenting images and messages, things that were shown to them in class touched them both emotionally and intellectually. Not only did most of the students in this course learn about history and culture of Meso-America, but also the conflicts and violence that were occurring in its society. Seeing people killed for no reason other than voicing their thoughts about the government appeared to affect the students

emotionally and made them think about the advantages they have here in the United States. In short, the emotional aspect might remain with these students much longer because they were exposed to the vivid imageries and detailed witness accounts given to them by the films.

The implication of this study suggests that the use of mass media is an informative tool for teaching college students about a foreign culture. Many of the participants had little or no experience with the Meso-American culture. In addition, the majority of the students had enrolled in only one other non-Western civilization course besides the *Meso-American Media* course. Fulfilling program requirements is usually the primary reason for college students to enroll in such non-Western civilization courses. Many of the students admitted that if non-Western civilization courses were not required of them to graduate from the University, they would have never elected to set foot into a cultural studies classroom. Although this type of response is disappointing, antipathy toward cultural studies courses does exist.

Requiring students to enroll in something they are not interested in can cause problems. Students feel pressured when a set of required courses is given to them, especially when they may not be interested in them. Therefore, creating a more satisfying learning environment is important to elevate curiosity. Using different supplemental materials to teach course content is one way to handle the delicate situation that could impede the learning process. Approaching cultural content that appeals to students' backgrounds and interests may

eventually decrease contention and improve the learning process (Cheng, 1990; Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990). Also, because this type of course relied heavily upon student participation and discussion, *Meso-America Media* was successful in captivating student interest. When classroom discussions were occurring, both the off task and on task students participated and attended more to what was going on in the classroom. Thus, student interest needs to be maintained to promote active learning, and a course similar to *Meso-American Media* may accomplish that.

Relevancy is the key issue here. If students feel that the class is useful to them in their academic or professional lives, then the ambivalence would subside and the interest should soon emerge. Furthermore, if a course was taught in a way that accommodated students' personal learning styles, the motivation to learn something new should eventually surface. Thus, suitability and relevancy need to be considered in cultural studies courses to maintain and increase students' curiosity to learn something that is unfamiliar to them. The use of mass media was one method used to approach the students in this *Meso-American Media* course to accomplish just that--increasing the motivation to learn something new and different.

Implications for Qualitative Research in Media Literacy

This study had important ramifications in the field of media literacy research. The data demonstrated the effectiveness of using native media to teach college students about Meso-American culture. Data also showed that some students could change their opinions about a certain culture and about themselves through the critical analysis of native media. However, the study did much

more than demonstrate the usefulness of media as an instructional tool in cultural studies courses. The study also disclosed the usefulness of performing qualitative research in the area of media literacy.

Rationale for this study stemmed from the lack of qualitative research that examined how media could influence student attitude toward a specific group of people. The few qualitative studies that have been conducted in media literacy did not examine personal attitudes toward a certain ethnic group. In addition, studies that did look at attitude toward race were quantitative and/or experimental in nature. Therefore, this study was important for the field of media literacy research in that it examined attitude change among a group of college students toward a particular ethnic group through the analyses of native media.

A few reasons could be accounted for as to why qualitative research methods should be employed in the area of media literacy research. Qualitative methods allowed me to record detailed sketches of student behavior and how that behavior led to different levels of attitudinal change. Examining students' interests and backgrounds is necessary to account for students' overall classroom behavior and success. In addition, interviews and general classroom observations permitted me to obtain personal information regarding students' interests in the course, their thoughts about course content, and finally, on the way the course was taught. If media literacy research concentrated on case studies as opposed to generalizing the audience, a better account might be made as to the effectiveness of using media to

teach students about culture, history, and political issues.

Time length is another promising aspect of qualitative research. Instead of relying upon the results of surveys, collecting pertinent data across days of observations provided me with a more in-depth picture of the participants. These factors did affect students' responses on the pre- and post-surveys distributed in class. Without recognition, the surveys may not be completely evaluated because of missing personal data. Gathering the complete representation of the classroom was important in this particular situation, and the extended time length provided me that thoroughness. These are issues that media literacists should take into consideration when determining the effectiveness of media criticism in cultural studies courses.

Recommendations for Future Research

More descriptive studies on attitudinal change in media literacy research has to be done to really understand how the media can affect the audience. This study has generated some interesting topics and questions that should be studied in a future qualitative or quantitative study that focuses on media effects. The research should definitely not end here with this study.

As with any other study, some inconsistencies were found in the design of this research project. If one were to conduct a similar study in the future, some considerations need to be re-examined. There are a few design matters that I believe will help the generalizability of such studies in the future. These suggestions are given below in the form of what I should have done differently in this study of Meso-American media.

Changing the Design of the Surveys

A more formal evaluation of students' knowledge could have helped increased the strength of my findings. Final essays were the only form of evaluation in the *Meso-American Media* course. Relying solely upon one assignment did not tell me how much the students increased their knowledge about Meso-American media and culture by the end of the semester. Thus, other forms of evaluation must be done to survey learning among the students.

If the course required students to complete exams, I could have been able to survey progress throughout the semester. However, exams usually ask for specific information taught in the course. Exams would have helped in terms of providing quantifiable information of (a) what the students learned, (b) what they actually remembered from the lessons, and (c) what information appealed to students' interests. Thus, exams could have been useful for validating what the students knew at the beginning of the semester and what they learned by the end.

Changing the design of my surveys could have replaced the exams in terms of what they offer. Instead of the pre- and post-tests asking students to give value judgements to assorted statements, I could have used the surveys as history exams to document what the students know. Interviews could then later be used to ask the students (a) how they feel about using cultural codes to analyze media, (b) how they perceive the use of mass media to teach culture, and (c) whether the media have helped them become aware of their own stereotypical attitudes.

Conducting a pilot study with the survey also could have increased relevancy. In this study, the surveys did not report

an attitude change for clusters one and two. There might have been a chance here that the survey questions were inappropriate to answer these research clusters. Also, there might have been a chance that the inter-raters' categorizations of clusters were also incorrect. Therefore, a pilot run of the survey could have insured the accuracy of the survey to ask suitable questions of what is being sought.

Probing Further into the Final Written Assignment

Asking students about their thought processes on the final assignments needs to be performed. An analysis of the final papers revealed that not much information could be extracted in terms of what they learned. Determining whether an attitude change occurred for each student could not be done by simply reviewing their final papers. Analyzing one assignment is not enough to discover an attitude change. The writing assignment did not show the actual learning process that the students went through during the course of the semester. Therefore, further probing of students ideas and thoughts needs to be completed to observe the learning process. If I were to interview these students at the time they were researching, collecting, and analyzing their media products, I would have been able to get a better sense of what was going through the students' minds in terms of using cultural codes, learning about Meso-American history, and how they approached their media artifacts.

Changing the Interview Process

Altering the design and implementation of the interviews could also prove useful. First, I discovered that my interview questions needed to be more direct and actually probe further for

specific information. I needed to guide students' responses more than just leaving them in the air with nothing to say. There were many times where I could have probed further into the students' responses but failed to do so. This could have hindered the quality my interview findings.

Second, follow-up discussions could be useful. After transcribing the interviews, I discovered how different each interview was even though I strictly followed the interview guides to avoid such outcomes. Students often talked about side issues that may or may not have been relative to the course. In addition, sometimes the student and I would get into a discussion about other critical issues such as media and their effects upon people and society. Therefore, insuring that the same set of topics is covered for each student is important, especially when one is trying to get the complete picture of the classroom and increase consistency. Follow-up discussions with the students could meet those gaps when one student gets her/his word in more than the others.

Third, increasing the number of interviews could have helped document attitude change. Only three interviews were conducted in this study, with the first being used to gather personal information. If more interviews were completed, attitude change would have been documented more accurately because of the changes I would see in the students every two to three weeks. In addition, students may be able to recall more of the information from the course or what they felt during the sessions if I were to probe them more often. Expecting students to recall their impressions during the first week of school on the final day of

class is difficult.

Fourth, repeating a set of questions across the number of interviews could help. Rather than just asking an important question only once throughout the semester, asking that question across the various interviews could help make the attitude change more noticeable. Locating when the attitude change occurred could be useful to see which student understood a particular concept before another student.

Finally, asking questions stemming from the pre-tests could affirm an attitude change or not. I have noticed that students respond to surveys differently than they do in personal interviews. Students who told me one thing, responded in the surveys differently from what I had expected. Thus, to ensure consistency between the surveys and interviews, asking questions that derive from the pre-tests could be useful.

Comparing Similar Courses

Investigating other courses similar to *Meso-American Media* could help improve the generalizability of the findings. Comparing this course to another cultural studies course at the University may prove useful in finding out whether other cultural studies courses are the same in terms of effect. It would be interesting to see whether courses that study culture and history could have the same impact upon student attitude and learning as *Meso-American Media*. Some questions to consider when investigating similar courses are:

1. Is the method of approach (semiotics) similar to the one used in *Meso-American Media*?
2. Is native media being used as supplemental materials?

3. Are there differences in student demographics and interests?
4. Is the instructor's teaching philosophy and approach the same as the instructor for *Meso-American Media*?
5. Is course content similar in terms of what is being taught?

Because each course is different no matter who teaches it or what types of students are enrolled, these questions have to be considered when designing studies that investigate courses across the curriculum. Nevertheless, comparing courses that are similar or distinct from *Meso-American Media* could help generalizability.

Ideal Situation

Studying the effects of such mediated-cultural studies courses requires much more than one semester of observation. To truly understand the effects of these courses upon student learning, one must perform a longitudinal study with the same population of students. Reexamining this group of students five years from now would be ideal. A lot could be discovered in terms of what they remembered from *Meso-American Media* and whether that course did have an effect upon their careers and personal lives. In addition, revising the methods of data collection used in this study to a different group of participants enrolled in the same course would also be beneficial. Different student populations could then be compared to see if similar effects occur. This way we might know whether the findings were based upon individual differences or upon course content and instruction instead.

Summary

Studying the effects of media upon personal attitude is an area that should not be ignored. This study investigated whether students in a *Meso-American Media* course altered their viewpoints toward Meso-American culture as they became more familiar with Meso-American media and its codes. Overall, the students reported that they enjoyed the course and its methodology toward analyzing the media. The students learned a number of things from the course. These things were: 1) how media and cultural codes cannot be separated from the culture and history in which they were produced from, 2) how native media can be used to explore a particular culture, and 3) how media can help students learn about the culture they are studying. A major implication from these conclusions was that media provided students the opportunity to become acquainted with a particular culture, especially when history and culture could not be segregated from the media themselves or from their codes.

Participants in the course also valued media as an instructional tool to teach cultural studies courses. Media was found much more effective than reading textbooks for these group of students because of media's visual and aural messages. Media were also viewed as substitutions for the real experience. If traveling to that culture was impossible, then media became the next best thing for becoming acquainted. For those students who were unaware of the causes of civil unrest in Meso-America, analyzing Meso-American media allowed students to see and hear the viewpoints that were silenced by the autocratic classes in Meso-American. In short, media became the visual and aural tool

in which students explored the political turmoil and cultural values of Meso-America. Because of media's usefulness in this sense, cultural studies courses should utilize native media to explore oppositional issues and cultural traits.

In terms of using The Meso-American Cultural Code for interpreting media artifacts, cultural codes provided a source for organization and learning the history. Codes provided students in the course with a context for organizing their own media analyses, final papers, and outside work. In addition, because codes were historically driven, learning the codes also helped the students acquire an understanding of Meso-American culture and its customs. Frequency of use was also an issue. The simpler the codes, more often they were used by the students. These conclusions imply that all codes need to be explored with equal emphasis in order for individuals to acquire a significant amount of knowledge of that particular culture and how the codes can be used in media analysis.

Two issues arose regarding the use of Meso-American media to heighten cultural sensitivity and reduce racial stereotypes. The course demonstrated that as students learned about a culture's history and its media, student's understanding toward sensitive issues in Meso-America increased. Also, sympathy toward the oppressed classes increased as students became more familiar with Meso-American culture and how history influenced the socio-economic conditions that exist today. Although the students realized that media could never be completely accurate in their representation, they felt that native media gave them another perspective toward Meso-American culture that the could not

experience otherwise. These two conclusions imply that a course like *Meso-American Media* should be implemented if increasing people's awareness and sensitivity about a particular culture is the objective.

Although this study is by no means complete, there is a strong pull toward using media as an instructional tool for cultural studies courses. Media provide avenues for students to explore different cultures by taking a closer look at their people's histories. Analyzing the media can also create critical viewers as they compare themselves to others with an awareness for how and why things are. For these reasons, native media should seriously be considered as an instructional tool for any course that has an objective to heighten people's awareness of themselves and others.

APPENDIX A:

Components of The Meso-American Cultural Code

<i>Primary Message Systems</i>	MESO-AMERICAN CULTURAL CODE	
	+ Social Power	- Social Power
Interaction	Rational	Animistic
Association	Extended Family	Nuclear Unstable Family
Sexuality	Machismo	Marianismo
Territoriality	Hacienda Plantation	Communal Lands Family Parcel
Temporality	Urban	Rural
Subsistence	Patron Entrepreneur Industrialist	Peon (Colono) Agric. Proletariat Urban Proletariat
Defence	Autocratic	Rebellious
Exploitation	Modernization	Development/ Liberation
Learning	Formal	Informal
Play	Fiesta	Ceremonial Mourning

Primary Message Systems - Represent the ten universal human activities generally found across cultures.

Meso-American Cultural Code - Uses the ten primary message systems to organize attributes that are culturally specific to Meso-American culture.

Social Power - Attributes from Meso-American culture are separated into positive and negative social powers that represent Meso-American people from the two distinct socio-economic statuses (with the exception of sexuality).

APPENDIX B:

Student Population

Name	Grade	Degree	Major	Minor/Emphasis
Becca	Senior	BA	MAR	Journalism/photography
Tim	Senior	BFA	MAR	Video Production
Alan	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film Production
Tojiro	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film Production
Lisa	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film Production
Mary	Senior	BA	MAR	Spanish
Larry	Senior	BA	PSYCH	Media Arts
Margo	Senior	BFA	MAR	Media Management
Yuki	Senior	BA	MAR	Psychology
Carl	Senior	BFA	GFAS	Arch/art/media arts
Carmela	Senior	BA	LAS	Political Science
Enrique	Senior	BFA	MAR	Media Management
Sarah	Senior	BFA	MAR	Performance
Emilia	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film Production
Cyril	Junior	BA	MAR	Classics/business
Cassie	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film Production
Lance	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film Production
Henry	Senior	BFA	MAR	Film/video Production

MAR = Media Arts
 LAS = Latin American Studies
 GFAS = General Fine Arts
 PSYC = Psychology

APPENDIX C:

Observation Guide

Patterns of Behavior

- inattentiveness (reading, writing, looking around)
- negotiations with assignments
- socialization patterns

Teacher-Student Interaction

- after-class visits
- office hour visits
- pre-class discussions, humoring
- making side-comments in response to discussion
- student responses to professor's actions and words
- professor's responses to certain students

Performance

- how well students perform on their assignments
- final grade
- participation in classroom discussions
- participation with thought or in response

Classroom Environment and Social Interaction

- social groups
- high or low participation
- attendance
- atmosphere (physical and emotional)

Confounding Variables

- reason for taking class
- end goal of the students
- experience with different cultures
- interests (personal and academic)
- learn from other courses

Researcher Influence

- Hawthorne Effect
- information given to students regarding my study
- social interactions with students - smiles, short conversations, listening to students' discussions (they are aware of me), off-topic discussions in interviews, etc.
- personal presence in the classroom
- asking me questions about assignments

APPENDIX C: Continued**Personal Reflections**

- over their environment, living arrangements, and beliefs as opposed to Meso-Americans.
- compare and contrast themselves to the Meso-Americans.
- over the cultural codes.

Critical Evaluation

- of Meso-American media and culture as compared to their own media and culture.
- wanting something to alter their approach toward media and society.
- comparison-contrast
- whether The Meso-American Cultural Code is an appropriate instrument for analyzing visual media.

Cultural Understanding

- students' awareness of their own advantages over Meso-Americans.
- realization of Meso-Americans' difficult situation and the reasons behind them.
- wanting to change conditions in Meso-America or make people know about them.
- sensitivity and guilt.

APPENDIX D:

Telephone Interview Schedule

1. Degree Sought (B.A., B.F.A.)
 2. Major/Minor
 3. Always been at the U of A?
 4. Future Plans
 5. Reasons for Taking Course
 6. Have you taken any other non-Western or ethnic studies courses before?
 7. What kind of experiences do you have with other ethnic minority cultures?
 8. Have you traveled outside the United States?
 9. What is the one thing you want to obtain from this course?
-

APPENDIX E:

Interview Two Questions

QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE COURSE:

1. From your experiences in class, do you feel that films produced by Meso-American filmmakers accurately represent their gender and/or race?
2. Is Meso-American media any different from those made by American filmmakers (whether Hispanic, white, or another ethnicity)?
3. In general, how useful do you find cultural codes as a technique for analyzing media?
Would you ever use this technique in your analysis of media or in your productions?
4. Would you say that your interest level in the course has increased, decreased, or remained about the same.
5. Can you please tell me what things have sparked your interest? **OR**
What things have diverted your attention away from the course?
6. What things have you learned as a result of this course that you were not aware of before?
7. How useful is this course to you?

APPENDIX F:

Final Interview Questions

Based upon our initial interview, your primary goal in this course was to:

1. In response to this, have you achieved your goal?
2. If so, did you obtain more than what you had expected?
3. Would you now look at media differently as a result of this course? In what way?
4. Would you look at foreign media differently as a result of this course?
5. If so, what things will you be looking for?
6. To what extent have you learned about the Meso-American culture from this course?
7. Finally, if you were required to take a cultural studies or history course, say Native American Folklore 101, would you prefer to enroll in a session that uses the traditional format (think back to your social sciences elective days) or one taught like *Meso-American Media*?

APPENDIX G: *Continued*

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat	Strongly Disagree
3. Ethnic studies courses are more successful when instructors use media to teach history and socio-cultural values.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
4. The primary purpose of Meso-American filmmakers is to provoke change in the current structure of society.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
5. Meso-American filmmakers can represent their culture more accurately than films produced by American filmmakers.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
6. Films produced by ethnic minorities better represent their population than media produced by the dominant culture (e.g., the Hollywood film studios, network television).	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
7. Women filmmakers are almost nonexistent in Meso-America.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
8. Analyzing the media takes a lot of mental work.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
9. A "critical reader" of media is also a critic toward other larger political, social, and economic issues that she/he may face.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1

APPENDIX G: Continued

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat	Strongly Disagree
10. Meso-American filmmakers and video producers are neutral and objective when it comes to documenting social and political conditions.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
11. Women are represented more favorably in American cinema than in Meso-America.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
12. The primary purpose of the American media industry is to entertain.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
13. When a particular community or culture is being discussed in a classroom, native media products are useful to extend the dialogue and personal understanding.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
14. Machismo is strong in Meso-American culture.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
15. In Meso-America, the "rich" get richer and the "poor" get poorer.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
16. Cultural codes are the best method for interpreting mass media products.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
17. Urbanization has increased social power for the upper-class in Meso-America.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1

APPENDIX G: *Continued*

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat	Strongly Disagree
18. Meso-American proletariat workers never had power to alter their socio-economic conditions.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
19. American filmmakers have more freedom to approach critical issues that may generate backlash from powerful institutions.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
20. Social structures that organize cultural communities are historically produced.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
21. Media that deal with socio-political concerns are embraced more openly in Meso-America than in America.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
22. American media producers rely more on stereotypes than do Meso-American producers.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
23. Land is the site of power in Meso-America.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1
24. Media can never represent a culture completely.	5-----	4-----	3-----2-----1

Appendix G: Continued

- | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 25. When comparing Meso-American media to American media, there is not a real significant difference between them in terms of character portrayal, theme, production technique, and intention. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |

Personal Refletcions

- | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|---------------|
| 1. In my own work (writing, production, directing, managing, etc.), I try to become aware of my potential biases toward people, cultures, and events. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |
| 2. In my own work (writing, production, directing, managing, etc.), I try to alter stereotypical portrayals of people, cultures, and events that I see in popular media. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |
| 3. I find that my gender and culture (e.g., African-Americans, working-class, lesbians, whites) are accurately represented in the mass media. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |
| 4. I am conscious of the biases and meticulous selection of media producers. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |
| 5. I am aware of the stereotypes inherent in the mass media. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |

Appendix G: *Continued*

- | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 6. I can verbally say to someone, "Oh, that's conventional" when I see a stereotype occur. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |
| 7. Cultural codes will be something that I will use in the future to analyze media products. | 5----- | 4----- | 3-----2-----1 |

COMMENTS about this survey, your expectations of the course, your role in this study, and any other remarks:

APPENDIX H: *Continued*

13. How would a film produced by an El Salvadoran individual differ from Jon Duigan's docudrama of Archbishop Romero? Things you may want to consider are cinematographic technique, costume/setting, characterization, plots, theme, narrative structure, etc.
14. Do you think this film would be useful in a classroom where ethnic cultures in Meso-America are being explored? Why?
15. Finally, if you were the producer/writer/director of this clip, how would you approach these scenes. What would you have added? What things would you have changed?

APPENDIX I:

Attendance

	1/ 12	1/ 17	1/ 19	1/ 24	1/ 26	1/ 31	2/ 2	2/ 14	2/ 16	2/ 21	2/ 23	2/ 28	3/ 2	3/ 7	3/ 9	3/ 21	3/ 23
Becca	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	L	*	A	*	*	*	*
Alan	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	A	*	3	*	3	*	2
Tojiro	*	1	*	*	*	2	*	*	5	1	2	7	6	5	*	*	6
Lisa	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	*	*	6	*	*	*	*	*	A
Mary	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	3	*	*	3
Larry	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5	*	2	*	A
Margo	A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	1	*	*	1	1
Yuki	*	3	*	*	*	*	2	*	1	3	A	6	*	6	*	3	7
Carl	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	*	2	1	A	*	A	A	*	*
Carmela	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Enrique	*	2	*	A	*	*	*	4	A	A	A	1	A	2	A	2 L	5
Sarah	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	A	A	*	L	A	A	4	*	A	*
Emilia	*	*	A	A	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	*	L	*	*	*	A
Cyril	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Cassie	*	*	*	A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*
Lance	*	*	*	A	A	3	1	A	*	*	A	*	A	7	A	A	*
Henry	*	*	*	*	2	*	3	2	2	*	3	5	*	*	A	L	8

* = In class

A = Absent

1,2,3,etc. = Tardiness in order L = Attended but left early

APPENDIX I: Continued

	3/28	3/30	4/4	4/6	4/11	4/13	4/18	4/20	4/25	4/27	5/2	Final
Becca	A	*	*	4	2	3	*	*	*	*	A	*
Tim	*	L	*	*L	*	1	*	*	*	2	*	2
Alan	*	A	*	1	*	*	*	*	4	*	A	*
Tojiro	1	*	*	5L	*	*	*	*	*	A	5	*
Lisa	A	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	*	*	*	*
Mary	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	2	3	*	*	*
Larry	*	*	*	A	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	4
Margo	*	L	*	A	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	1L
Yuki	*	3	1	*	4	5	1	1	*	1	4	*
Carl	2	1	A	*	*	*	*	*	A	*	3	*
Carmela	*	*	*	2	*	*	A	*	*	*	1	*
Enrique	*	A	A	A	7	4	3	3	*	A	*	3
Emilia	*	*	A	*L	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sarah	*	A	A	3	3	A	A	A	2	*	*	*
Cyril	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Cassie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
Lance	4	4	2	6	6	6	*	*	*	*	*	*
Henry	*	L	A	*L	*	A	*	*	A	*	2L	*L

* = In class

A = Absent

1,2,3,etc. = Tardiness in order L = Attended but left early

Example for Reading the Codes:

Codings for this table are "A" for absences, a number (1, 2, 3, etc.) for tardies to signify who came to class late in order that day, and an "L" for those who left class early. A "*" indicated that the student was there on time and did not leave class early. Some students had a combination of these codings. For example, Enrique had a "2L" on day 3/21/96 which meant he was the second person to come in late, but also left class early.

APPENDIX J:

Document Analysis Results

To read the table below, there are a few terms that need to be explained. The table is divided into four columns. The first table identifies the individual student. *Artifact* signifies the media text (film or video) that the student chose to analyze for his/her final paper. *Codes* represent the three primary message systems that the student used in his/her paper. All of the students were required to choose three codes that they had to research upon in order to apply the codes to their selected artifact. My critiques on the final papers are given in the *quality* column. Here, I reviewed all of the students' papers and critiqued them based upon proper organization, whether the students used the terminology correctly, whether the students completed the required assignment, and other concerns related to the papers.

Name	Artifact	Codes	Quality
Becca	<u>Salvador</u>	Sexuality/ Defense/Play	Talks about technical codes; no reference to semiotics and connotative meanings; little confusing to read; simple format; hard to see where the historical info is; talks more about scenes and characters; organization is lacking; little history given; no connotative levels of meanings are discussed.
Tim	<u>Media War in El Salvador</u>	Interaction/ Defense/ Exploitation	Talks about events in the documentary; mentions semiology and signs; looks at technical aspects; simple format with codes then scenes; not much historical reference; codes not clearly id; little unorganized.
Alan	<u>Cabeza de Vaca</u>	Interaction/ Play/ Sexuality	Talks about signifiers and connotative meanings; speaks about differences between film and book; talks about index, sign, and symbol; incorporates history; budgetary concerns.
Tojiro	<u>Cabeza de Vaca</u>	Play/ Learning/ Interaction	Little unorganized; language problems; codes never clearly id; confusion of categories; does talk about historical facts and connotative meanings.

APPENDIX J: Continued

Name	Artifact	Codes	Quality
Lisa	<u>Frida</u>	Defense/Play/ Sexuality	Talks about the surrealist aspects; some history given; simple format with codes, history, and scenes.
Mary	<u>Macario</u>	Interaction/ Association/ Subsistence	Talked about technical codes; good explanation of the connection between history and codes; discusses signifiers and connotative meanings; good analysis of themes.
Larry	<u>Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia</u>	Interaction/ Sexuality/ Subsistence	Good intro; discusses signifiers and connotative meanings; film reps. culture; great historical background; technical codes discussed; good integration of historical context and film scenes.
Margo	<u>Like Water for Chocolate</u>	Play/ Sexuality/ Association	Good use of terminology; talks about symbols and metaphors; need to expand on history; technical elements discussed.
Yuki	<u>Erendira</u>	Defense/ Interaction/ Association	Nice intro; talks about technical style and codes; mentions semiotics and codes as a method for analysis; history is given; story is about oppression.
Carl	<u>The Milagro Beanfield War</u>	Defense/ Interaction/ Territoriality	Talks about technical codes; does apply some historical context; no mention of class terminology expect for codes; plain paper with no connotative meanings.
Carmela	<u>Romero</u>	Defense/ Religion/ Territoriality	Incorporates history with the codes; talks about cinematographic codes and how they convey meanings; very long description of the technical aspects.

APPENDIX J: Continued

Name	Artifact	Codes	Quality
Enrique	<u>Chiapas: The Fight for Land and Liberty; Mexico: For Sale</u>	Defense/ Exploitation/ Subsistence	LONG description of the events (Internet source); talks about different cinematographic styles; talks about denotative and connotative meanings, but is somewhat confused; paper more of a political stand; info is randomly placed; little confusing.
Sarah	<u>Salvador</u>	Defense/ Sexuality/ Religion	Talks about the semiotic binary process; history of El Salvador given behind the codes; doesn't really go into connotative levels of meanings; simple format with codes, history, and scenes.
Emilia	<u>Que Viva Mexico!</u>	NA	History given; talks about storyline; no reference to codes; focus on scenes, characters, and plots; no exploration of what certain things mean.
Cyril	<u>Romero</u>	Play/ Defense/ Territoriality	Film reflects the culture with the codes; history of El Salvador given (1970's); finds film a good reps. of the events; interweaves the codes with certain scenes and historical facts (not separated).
Cassie	<u>The Cisco Kid</u>	Sexuality/ Defense/ Interaction	Argues that film reps. culture and people; talks about historical context of the film's story; refer to technical codes and semiotics; little history given behind the codes; aware that film has stereotypes; film reps. what Mexico must do to change.

APPENDIX J: Continued

Name	Artifact	Codes	Quality
Lance	<u>Like Water for Chocolate</u>	Sexuality/ Defense/ Learning	NA
Henry	<u>Like Water for Chocolate</u>	Play/ Sexuality/ Territoriality	Talks about denotative and connotative meanings; gives synopsis on semiotics; historical application; talks about binary oppositions.

APPENDIX K:

Inter-rater Responses to the Twenty-five Attitude Questions

Quest. No.	Raters				
	Professor	Undergrad	Grad	Grad	Myself
ATT1	4	4	4	4	4
ATT2	3	4,2	4,3	3	3
ATT3	3	2,1	2,1	2	2
ATT4	5	4,3	2	4	4
ATT5	5	4,3	4	4,3	4
ATT6	5	4,3	4	4	4
ATT7	5	2	5	5	5
ATT8	5	2,1	1	1	1
ATT9	5	4,2,1	1	5	5
ATT10	5	4,2	5	4	4
ATT11	5	4	2	4	4
ATT12	5	5	5	5	5
ATT13	2	4,2	4	4,2	2
ATT14	4	4,3	3	4	4
ATT15	5	4,3	5	5	5
ATT16	3	3	3	3	3
ATT17	3	3,1	5	3	3
ATT18	3	3,2	3	3	3
ATT19	5	2,1	5	5	5
ATT20	1	3	5	1	1
ATT21	5	2,1	1	1	1
ATT22	4	4,1	1	4,1	4
ATT23	1	4,3	5	1	1
ATT24	2	4,2	1	2	2
ATT25	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX K: *Continued*

ATT = Attitude Question
Undergrad = Undergraduate Student
Grad = Graduate Student

APPENDIX L:

Inter-rater Responses to the Seven Personal Reflection Questions

Quest. No.	Raters				
	Professor	Undergrad	Grad	Grad	Myself
PER1	4	4	5	4	4
PER2	4	4,2	5	4	4
PER3	4	4,2	1	4	4
PER4	1	4,2	5	1	1
PER5	4	4,2	1	4,2	4
PER6	4	4	5	4	4
PER7	3	3	3	3	3

PER = Personal Reflection Question
 Undergrad = Undergraduate Student
 Grad = Graduate Student

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