



The Importance of Culture: *Selena*

HUM 260

ANGELA TORRES



Values

- ▶ “Cultural values are preferences people have for how they navigate life...interact, communicate, plan, and complete tasks.” (Cultural Intelligence Center)
- ▶ Father, Abraham Quintanilla = old values; modesty, career orientated.
- ▶ Daughter, Selena Quintanilla = new values; dressing trendy, acting freely.
- ▶ Overall = family is most important.
- ▶ At 1:30, we see Selena reveal her bustier top that her father heavily approves of.



Assumptions

- ▶ “That’s the way it is ... she’s just a woman, tu sabes.” This was said about not paying Selena and her group the full amount owed because she’s “just a woman.”
- ▶ Selena broke many barriers for the Mexican American community and woman, showing that if she can do it, anyone can too.



The Hispanic Perspective

- ▶ Director- Gregory Nava, Latino descent (Mexico)
- ▶ Having someone who understands the background, struggles, and cultural context of Selena's story matters in telling it.
- ▶ His perspective allowed for her story to be told in an authentic and honorable way, for which the movie is still revered for.



The Importance of Casting

- ▶ Jennifer Lopez- Selena Quintanilla (IMDB)
- ▶ Jackie Guerra- Suzette Quintanilla (IMDB)
- ▶ Edward James Olmos- Abraham Quintanilla (IMDB)
- ▶ Jacob Vargas- Abie Quintanilla (IMDB)

- ▶ Having people of Hispanic background gives POC a chance to tell a story that is about one of the most popular Mexican American singers ever in an authentic and sentimental way.



Symbolism

- ▶ White rose = Selena's favorite flower and a sign that many believe she knew she was going to die because of her reoccurring dream. (People)
- ▶ Selena herself was a symbol for many of her fans, showing how anyone can make it in the music industry.



Social and Cultural Commentary

- ▶ Commentary on cultural pressure from Americans and Mexicans to fit in.
- ▶ Selena herself was a cultural phenomenon, with her songs, style, and artistry being used as inspiration to this day.



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