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REPRESENTING DOMESTIC CONTAINMENT THROUGH INTER-CHARACTER NEGATIVE JUDGEMENTS: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CAREER TALK IN I LOVE LUCY (1951-52)

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KEYWORDS
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ABSTRACT
This paper approaches fictional telecinematic discourse with a qualitative analysis of inter-character negative evaluation in a specific context. The paper adapts and develops a categorisation for inter-character negative judgements from Appraisal Theory and Moral Foundations Theory, and uses it to analyse instances of negative evaluation where participation in career practices are negotiated between the marital couple of Lucy and Ricky Ricardo in the classic sitcom I Love Lucy. A recurring theme in the show, Lucy's desire to star in show business and Ricky's attempts to thwart her ambitions have been discussed as both a representation of domestic containment typical to Post-War gender roles as well as an example of early feminist representation in televised sitcoms. The analysis reveals three intertwined facets of containment: Moral judgements condemn Ricky's oppressive behaviour of restricting Lucy's access to career opportunities, Lucy's subversion of authority, and the distribution of the couple's social resources.

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

This article investigates inter-character negative evaluation occurring in dialogue sequences negotiating a marital couple's participation in paid labour activities in the 1950's classic sitcom I Love Lucy (CBS, 1951-1957). As such, this article aims to contribute to the study of fictional telecinematic discourse from a linguistic perspective in areas ranging from interpersonal evaluation in a specific context (e.g., Bednarek 2010), (relationship) characterisation (cf. Culpeper and Fernandez-Quintanilla 2017), and the representation of gender roles in early televised domestic sitcoms (e.g., Marc 1989, Mellencamp 1992, Gray 1994).

The article first introduces I Love Lucy from a perspective of a specific representation of gender roles, namely an "ideology of domesticity" (Landay 2005: 90). Then, it illustrates how a study of inter-character negative evaluation provides textual evidence for such a representation. The study is based on the rationale that analysis of inter-character negative evaluation can further support discussion of ideological representations in television series. By selecting a specific topic of dialogue, in this case the Ricardo's participation in career practices, and applying a model for categorising inter-character negative evaluation negotiating the topic, it is possible to reveal the negative values that the characters Lucy and Ricky produce for each other within the specific context and how they amount to a set of (repetitively) represented values.

1.1. I Love Lucy and Post-War Domestic Sitcoms in Media and Culture Studies

In the cultural climate of post-war America, early television shows (1946-) in their episodic series format, including the half-hour situational comedy show, offered a new fertile territory for covering domestic themes on marriage and family (Taylor 1989: 17).

The home-setting in televised sitcoms of the 1950's became a reproductive symbol of the ideology of domesticity: "an idealization of marriage, family, and the home prescribed, albeit differently, to both men and women" (Landay 2005: 90). Scholars in cultural and television studies have discussed *I Love Lucy* and its portrayal of marriage as a representation of ideological containment (Landay 2005: 90). This containment entailed married women abandoning ambitions related to the public sphere, such as higher education and careers (Mellencamp 1992, Gray 1994, Landay 2005).

In domestic sitcoms of the 1950s, the discontent housewife venturing into the sphere of public labour became a single episode plot theme in many prevalent shows of the period (e.g., *I Married Joan* (1.02), *Make Room for Daddy* (1.11)), with an inevitable and comfortable return to the status quo in the final act. No other character, however, was as adamantly and repetitively defiant of her husband's authority to contain her show business career ambitions as Lucy Ricardo (Lucille Ball) in *I Love Lucy* (Marc 1989, Mellencamp 1992). In *I Love Lucy*, the theme became an oft visited plot device throughout the series, and a source for comedic situations to play out in the form of physical slapstick and verbal ridicule. Lucy's husband Ricky Ricardo (Desi Arnaz), a band leader in a nightclub, notably occupied two overlapping roles: the authoritative husband at home, and Lucy's designated potential employer and gateway to stardom in the public sphere.

Ideological readings of *I Love Lucy* as a sitcom text have been made from multiple positions. Marc notes Lucy's failed schemes to challenge her husband became a "ritual celebration of female deference to patriarchal structure" (1989: 56), whereas Mellencamp (1992: 322–333), Gray (1994: 46–53) and Rowe (1995) discuss Lucy's rebellion against the domestic setting as a cultural text enacting "the frustration of women confined to the home" (Rowe, 1995: 170). Seemingly contradictory views are hardly surprising, as fictional telecinematic discourse is multi-levelled, and with a complex participation framework involving both the production crew and TV viewer, as well as the inter-character level between the characters (and embedded recipient) (Chovanec and Dynel 2015, Brock 2015). Lucy can be defiant and rebellious on the level of inter-character dialogue (as this paper will show), but her defiance is mitigated by her "harebrained schemes" (Marc 1989: 55, original quotations). However, it is Lucille Ball's talent in physical slapstick comedy that is put on display in Lucy's schemes (Gray 1994: 47), and for the recipient of the time, the fiction of the show itself was deeply interwoven with the celebrity couple status of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, whose real-world life, such as the birth of their child, were mirrored in the show (Landay 2005).

1.2. Aim and Relevance of the Study

This article contributes to the study of fictional telecinematic discourse from a linguistic perspective by focusing on negative evaluation occurring on the inter-character level of dialogue. The article aims to investigate (1) the language the Ricardos use to negatively evaluate each other on the topic

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of career related practices, and (2) the kind of methodological framework that is required to analyse the direct and indirect evaluative meanings the couple produce for each other, and ultimately, the study shows how these meanings contribute to the representation of domestic containment, discussed above.

As television series are culturally significant texts (Bednarek 2010), the relevance of this study derives from the premise that the study of language and values represented in domestic sitcoms of the early 1950's is a worthy endeavour in and of itself. This is not least because, by their very function, inter-character negative evaluation enforces and/or renegotiates marital (and) gender roles, as shown in Example 1.

Example 1.

LUCY:	(to her husband) You're mean! You didn't even let me finish auditioning, for heaven's sake. You give anybody else a chance but your wife! *I Love Lucy* (1.12) (1951)
JOAN:	(to her husband) Then why are you stifling me? *I Married Joan* (1.02) (1952)
MARGARET:	(to her husband) Lydia's made something of herself from that little business we started in college, but when I wanted to go on with it you wouldn't have it, you didn't have any confidence in me. *Make Room for Daddy* (1.11) (1953)

Example 1 displays three conversational turns from three sitcom housewives of the early 1950's that challenge and condemn their husbands' oppressive behaviour in limiting the women's access to career opportunities in one way or another. As such, the women are effectively renegotiating established obligations, roles, and values within their marital relationship.

Originally aired in a time of Post-War gender role negotiation (Gray 1994, Landay 2005), and before the success of the hegemonic white middle-class family representations of sitcoms such as *Father Knows Best* and *Leave it to Beaver* of the later 1950's "suburban ecstasy period" (Marc 1989: 51), an investigation of the evaluative language of career talk in *I Love Lucy* makes for an interesting study on what sort of values were represented in one of the most popular shows of its time.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Inter-character Negative Judgements and Dimensions of Evaluation

In this article I use the term negative judgement to signify an occurrence of inter-character negative evaluation within a dialogue turn. Judgements are valenced evaluative expressions, i.e., propositions of attitude towards people or their behaviour (Martin and White 2005: 42–57). Thompson and Hunston regard evaluation as value-laden, with markers for "indications of the existence of goals and their (non)-achievement" (Thompson and Hunston 2000: 21). Thus, an inter-character *negative* judgement is Character A's indication of negative attitude towards Character B's *non*-achievement of any given goal. Consequently, the underlying premise of the communicative act is that, within social interaction, there exists a latent field of desires and expectations towards qualities and behaviour, which upon not being met (or claimed to not being met), may warrant an expression denoting the non-achievement. In Example 1, depending on the choice of wording, the indicated non-achievement of the husbands' behaviours is to not allow (or to actively prevent), let alone encourage, their wives' participation in paid labour practices, for example.

Linguistic evaluation has been a prominent field of research in media discourses, most notably the news discourse, and social media. In fictional telecinematic discourse, some of the most prominent research has been done by Bednarek (e.g., 2010). Though methodologically different to this paper, Bednarek's (2010: 180–223) case study of the ideological representation of food practices in *Gilmore Girls* bears resemblance to the study at hand in that it selects the topic of evaluation (e.g., food, vegan/vegetarian vs. meat-eating) while quantitatively and qualitatively analysing occurrences of linguistic evaluation of the practice(s) in order to arrive at conclusions of ideological representation.

Lemke (1998), Martin and White (2005), and Bednarek (2009) offer perhaps the most comprehensive categorisations for evaluation. Bednarek (2009: 161, 162 in table 7) incorporates extensive linguistic and cognitive research (including

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Lemke 1998, Martin and White 2005) in appraisal and evaluation and proposes seven dimensions of opinion lexis:

- Expectedness – How expected?
- Emotivity – How good/bad? How necessary? How appropriate?
- Importance – How important?
- Authenticity – How real/true?
- Power – How able? How easy to deal with?
- Reliability – How likely?
- Causality – What are the reasons/consequences?

While judgements belong to the emotivity dimension (Bednarek 2009: 160,162), negative judgements as expressed opinions/propositions may criticise a person by indicating the lack or excess of a trait or behaviour with any of the other evaluative axes (cf. Malrieu 1999: 131–134, who emphasises axes of evaluation mixing and combining). Thus, inter-character negative judgements are driven by, but not limited to, an evaluation of emotivity and non-desire.

In their Appraisal Theory, Martin and White (2005: 52–53) divide judgements into judgements of social esteem and social sanction. Judgements of social esteem criticise personal characteristics or social relevance whereas judgements of social sanction condemn behaviour as immoral.

Similarly, I distinguish inter-character negative judgements into two main types: negative personal judgements and negative moral judgements, displayed in the next section in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. For moral judgements, I implement six moral foundations from the Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt 2012, Graham et al. 2013). The Moral Foundations Theory sums itself as "a nativist, cultural developmentalist, intuitionist, and pluralist approach to the study of morality" (Graham et al. 2013: 71). The theory establishes five moral foundations, which form the basis of human morality: The care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation and authority/subversion foundations (Graham et al. 2013: 68–71), with an additional liberty/oppression foundation put forth by Haidt (e.g., 2012). For the purposes of this article, I adapt these foundations for the categorisation of meanings expressed in inter-character negative judgements because they offer a more context-specific categorisation than Martin and White's (2005) distinction between social sanction of propriety ("how appropriate?") and veracity ("how truthful?"), and Lemke's (1998) normativity/appropriateness. While the definitions of the moral judgement categories (displayed in Table 2) are influenced by (and names carried over) from the Moral Foundations Theory, this paper will not directly contribute to the discussion of MFT.

2.2 Negative Judgements in Fictional Telecinematic Discourse and Sitcom

Among the first issues to resolve when researching inter-character negative judgements is determining the researcher's reading position and what counts as negative evaluation.

Fictional telecinematic discourse involves a complex participation framework between the collective sender (i.e., the production crew) and TV viewer, and the fictitious inter-character level (Brock 2015, and references within). Bubel (2008) and Brock (2015) make space for the TV viewer as an overhearer on the fictitious level, which, in TV sitcom, is largely achieved with the three-camera system enabling the positioning of the viewer within the interaction with close-shots. As Brock notes, the TV viewer's role on the fictitious level is one of empathy (2015: 33), allowing the viewer/researcher to tap into the characters' attitudes.

Methodologically, this access to attitudes is crucial to discerning an act of negative judgement on the characters' level, as their attitudes, intentions, and reactions are available to the viewer/researcher to interpret. The same reading position is used in studies of impoliteness in fictional telecinematic discourse to warrant interpretations of impoliteness (e.g., Culpeper 2011, McIntyre and Bousfield 2017, Bednarek 2010, Dynel 2017).

In fact, it is worth pointing out that inter-character negative judgements, in part, function as coercive and affective impoliteness (Culpeper 2011). They may coerce "a realignment of values between the producer and the target such that the producer benefits or has their current benefits reinforced or protected" (Culpeper 2011: 226), and/or may be instrumental affective displays of negative emotion signalling that "the target is to blame for producing that negative emotional state" (Culpeper 2011: 225), respectively. As discussed in the previous section, both emotivity (or valence) and causality are dimensions of evaluation. This is to say, that if there is a communicative act that signals negative emotivity and causality (blame), even as short as an emotive interjection, it has evaluative meaning. This is useful to keep in mind when assessing indirect negative judgements.

Inter-character negative judgements contribute to many functions of TV dialogue including characterisation and creating the narrative problem, i.e., situation, that must be resolved. Mills defines sitcom as "a form of programming which

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foregrounds its comic intent" (Mills 2009: 49), and negative judgements (and impoliteness) are certainly a dialogue device to create comedy (cf. Culpeper 2011, Dynel 2013, on entertaining impoliteness, and disaffiliative humour, respectively).

Bearing in mind the discussion of ideological domestic containment from the introductory section, the function of telecinematic discourse to express ideology (Kozloff, 2000: 33–34, Bednarek, 2018) is of a greater interest. Though ideology is a contested term (cf. Malrieu 1999, Bednarek 2010: 180–185), I approach ideology in this article as a context-specific micro representation of values. Thus, for current purposes, an ideology of negative (marital) career talk in *I Love Lucy* simply consists of the values expressed in character-character negative judgements negotiating paid labour practices in the text. In the next section, I introduce methodological choices on how to categorise various evaluative meanings occurring in the negative judgements.

3. **METHOD AND DATA**

3.1 Working Definition of Negative Judgements and Analytical Decisions

From discussion in the previous section, I draw a working definition of negative judgement for this paper:

An inter-character negative judgement is an expression (or perceived expression) of a character's negative attitude towards another character's specific quality or behaviour in a specific context.

Tables 1 and 2 display a categorisation of five sub-types of personal negative judgements and six sub-types of moral negative judgements. It is influenced by the classifications of Lemke (1998), Martin and White (2005), Bednarek (2009) and the Moral Foundations Theory (e.g., Graham et al. 2013), which are displayed in brackets below the sub-type of negative judgement and referenced with capitalised letters (see reference key at the bottom of the tables). This categorisation provides the framework for analysing types of inflicted meanings in inter-character negative judgements. In the final column of the tables, I give examples of adjectival realisations for each category. Lexical examples are neither exhaustive nor should they be considered as restricted to a category. For example, *a bitter person* will most often refer to emotional coping rather than the sensory quality of taste. Moreover, as will be discussed below, conversational turns such as *do you have to be like that?* may well indirectly criticize similar qualities of resentfulness in relation to a trigger such as a character's bitter remark.

Following Malrieu (1999), I take the position that axes/dimensions of evaluation should be treated as potentially simultaneously co-occurring. Furthermore, a conversational turn with negative judgements may express disapproval of many (interrelated) social behaviours or characteristics. Analysis of negative judgements should thus allow for the co-occurrence of the various sub-types (displayed in Tables 1 and 2), depending on the situational context of the utterance.

This study employs the conversational turn as a practical unit of observation for two main reasons. Firstly, the analytical apparatus must account for indirect negative judgements, but these are at times difficult to pinpoint to specific units within a turn. Secondly, because evaluation has intensifying and prosodic qualities (Martin and White 2005), observing units within a turn becomes problematic. For example, in Lucy's turn in Example 1, the researcher might easily identify a negative moral judgement of care/harm in *You're mean!* as the judgement is directly inscribed. But when considered in the context of the dialogue sequence, displayed in Example 2, the researcher would face problems identifying how many, if any, indirect denotations of care/harm are present in the follow-up criticism *You didn't even let me finish auditioning for heaven's sake you give anybody else a chance but your wife!*

Example 2.

	(Lucy has frequently interrupted Ricky's business call in an effort to audition for him)
RICKY:	No honey all you have to do is just come out and ask me, Ricky, can I be in the show?
LUCY:	Really?
RICKY:	Of course!
LUCY:	Ricky can I be in the show?
RICKY:	No. (Ricky picks up the phone and resumes talking to his agent) Jerry-
LUCY:	You're mean! You didn't even let me finish auditioning for heaven's sake you give anybody else a chance but your wife!
	I Love Lucy (1.12)

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Sub-Type	Definition	Descriptive Examples
Aesthetic appeal (reaction) M/W (composition) M/W	Evaluate undesired quality of person/behaviour in sensory appeal.	Visual: *ugly, disfigured* Olfactory: *smelly, pungent* Taste: *sour, salty* Auditory: *hoarse, squeaky* Haptic: *coarse, sweaty*
Competence (power) B (capacity) M/W (reaction) M/W (composition) M/W (action-oriented behaviour)	Evaluate undesired quality of person/behaviour in coping with perceptive, intellectual, physical, or social ability or skill (incl. skill in domain).	Perceptive/intellect: *blind, deaf* *stupid, naïve, crazy* Physical: *weak, slow, old, clumsy* Social/skill: *boring, dull, awkward* *incompetent*
Coping (power) B (humorousness/ seriousness) L (capacity) M/W (tenacity) M/W (emotion-oriented behaviour)	Evaluate undesired quality of person/behaviour in regulating/coping with emotion or affective/ emotional circumstance.	Regulating emotions: *angry, cowardly, joyous, surprised, disgusted* Coping with circumstances: *pessimistic, optimistic, reckless, evasive, humorous, serious, callous, jealous, gloating, self-indulgent, proud, hedonistic* Resolve: *stubborn, persistent, distracted, lazy, idle*
Normality (M/W) (expectedness) B (reliability) B (usuality/expectability) L	Evaluate undesired quality of person/behaviour in relation to expectedness, predictability or uniqueness.	Uniqueness: *deviant, unfamiliar, unspecial* Expectedness: *odd, unpredictable* *predictable, unsurprising*
Valuation (M/W) (importance) B (necessity) B (importance/significance) L (belonging)	Evaluate undesired quality of person/behaviour in relation to significance, importance or belonging.	Worthiness/importance: *unworthy, insignificant* *unnecessary* Belonging: *'othering' lexis e.g. ideological slurs*
Reference key: B = (Bednarek 2009), L = (Lemke 1998), M/W = (Martin and White 2005)		

TABLE 1. NEGATIVE PERSONAL JUDGEMENT SUB-TYPES

From the sequence it is clear Ricky intentionally misleads Lucy to thinking she might have a chance to perform in his show. When Lucy is finally snubbed by Ricky, she responds with heightened emotional distress and the negative judgement *you're mean* denoting cruelty. Her distress is visible in the follow-up utterance that condemns Ricky's oppressive behaviour (*you didn't even let me*) and fairness (*you give anybody else a chance*) but whether a negative judgement of care/harm is implicit in these utterances is unclear.

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	Definition	Descriptive Examples
Care/ **harm** (MFT) (propriety) M/W (appropriateness) L (causality) B	Evaluate behaviour/person causing undesired suffering (or lack of care).	Lack of care: *negligent* Excess of harm: *cruel, mean* *dangerous*, *violent*
Fairness/ **cheating** (MFT) (propriety) M/W (veracity) M/W (tenacity) M/W (appropriateness) L (causality) B (authenticity) B (reliability) B	Evaluate behaviour/person causing undesired disproportionality in social resources (equity, justice, honesty, dependability).	Lack of Fairness: *unjust*, *unfair* *selfish, greedy* *undependable, untrustworthy* Excess of Cheating: *cheating*, *dishonest* *deceitful*, *manipulative*
Loyalty/ **betrayal** (MFT) (tenacity) M/W (propriety) M/W (appropriateness) L (causality) B	Evaluate behaviour/person causing undesired disruption to in-group loyalty/inclusion/exclusion.	*disloyal*, *betraying* *traitorous* *unpatriotic*
Sanctity/ **degradation** (MFT) (propriety) M/W (appropriateness) L (causality) B	Evaluate behaviour/person causing undesired contamination, disgust or sacrilege (taboo).	Contamination: *unclean*, *messy, diseased* Degradation: *impure*, *spoiled*, *decadent* Sacrilege/taboo: *unholy* *perverted, disgusting*
Authority/ **subversion** (MFT) (propriety) M/W (appropriateness) L (causality) B	Evaluate behaviour/person causing undesired disruption to in-group hierarchy and tradition (lack of authority or excess of subversion).	Lack of authority*:* *weak*, *indeterminate*, *diffident* Excess of subversion: *subversive*, *rebellious*, *unruly*
Liberty/ **oppression** (MFT) (propriety) M/W (appropriateness) L (causality) B	Evaluate behaviour/person causing undesired disruption to autonomy or freedom (lack of autonomy or excess of oppression).	Lack of autonomy: *dependent*, *subject* Excess of oppression: *oppressive*, *tyrannical*

Reference key: B = (Bednarek 2009), L = (Lemke 1998), M/W = (Martin and White 2005), MFT = Moral Foundations Theory (e.g., Haidt 2012, Graham et al. 2013)

TABLE 2. NEGATIVE MORAL JUDGEMENT SUB-TYPES

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Martin and White (2005) and Bednarek (2009) maintain the (problematic) existence of indirect evaluation. Consider the sequence in Example 3, below.

Example 3.

		(Lucy is dancing in a one-sided effort to audition for Ricky, who needs to find a replacement for a dancer in his show)
(1)	RICKY:	What are you so fidgety about, your girdle too tight?
(2)	LUCY:	(happy) No I'm just about to suggest that in this very room there's a very pretty intelligent young lady who is a wonderful singer and dancer.
(3)	RICKY:	Who, Ethel?
(4)	LUCY:	(angry) Who Ethel? No not her me!
(5)	RICKY	(annoyed) Oh!
(6)	LUCY:	Oh Ricky this is a wonderful chance for me I know the number I can take Joanne's place please?
(7)	RICKY:	No that's out of the question.
(8)	LUCY:	Give me one good reason.
(9)	RICKY:	Well you're you're too fat.
(10)	LUCY:	Fat?!
(11)	RICKY:	You said so yourself.
		I Love Lucy (1.03)

A robust sequence of negative judgements, Example 3 has been identified with 8 out of 11 turns containing negative judgements with the exceptions of turns (2), (6) and (11). As far as direct negative judgements go, only Ricky's insult in turn (9) is a straightforward interpretation. In terms of variation for indirect judgements, consider turns (3), (4), (5), and (7). Ricky's request for further information on turn (3) effectively negates the positive judgements of aesthetic appeal and competence Lucy makes for herself in the preceding turn. Lucy's heightened emotional anger on turn (4) both ratifies turn (3) as a negative judgement, as well as indirectly evaluates Ricky's competence (in realising her talent). Ricky's negative emotive interjection *Oh!* on turn (5) is triggered by Lucy reasserting her proposal to star in his show (which, prior to this excerpt, had already been resolved), and finally, Ricky's utterance *that's out of the question* on turn (7) implies that Lucy's proposal is inappropriate.

Inferences of negative judgements may then be drawn from a variety of communicative features including the (intentional) mislabelling of the criticised behaviour (e.g. turn 1, where Ricky references Lucy's non-desirable dancing as *fidgety* and attributes her behaviour to the tightness of her *girdle*), un-cooperative (or dispreferred) responses that negate previously asserted positive values (turn 3), and negative emotive interjections and exclamations (turns 5 and 10) that signal that the target is to blame for causing them.

Following conventions in linguistic appraisal (e.g., Martin and White 2005, Bednarek 2009), an analytical decision was made to include a turn or act as a "Trigger" (Bednarek 2009: 165) for each observation of negative judgement. These triggering turns or acts pinpoint a character's behaviour in the text that causes them to be appraised. I further analysed the triggering turns with variables tailored to capture the context of the dialogue and negotiated career practice. These include keeping track of which career related practice is negotiated (e.g., auditioning) and whose participation in the social action is negotiated. To illustrate, consider turns (1) and (7) from Example 3 in Table 3, below. Table 3 displays some of the variables used to capture the situational context of the negative judgements in the dataset. Variable and variant names from the actual dataset have been changed for purposes of readability.

The benefit of keeping track of the situational context in this manner is twofold. Firstly, when the dataset is summarized, clear topical locations of negative judgements (e.g., Lucy proposing to perform in a show) become apparent. Secondly, identifying a trigger turn (by proximity) effectively embeds a (near-)adjacency-pair into the dataset, and thus the focus of analysis is not just on isolated occurrences of evaluation.

The evaluative meanings within the turns of containing negative judgements were disambiguated using question criteria in Table 4, with an empathetic character-character reading of the scene. I positioned myself as an observer of the fictional community on the fictitious inter-character level and interpreted inflicted negative judgements in career conflict talk by considering co-text, retrospective comments (also actions), non-verbal emotional reactions, and identifiable conventionalised and implicational impoliteness as textual evidence for further support of my interpretation (cf. Culpeper 2011: 11 on sources of evidence, and 133–194 on

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Turn containing negative judgement	What is the triggering turn for the judgement?	What is the negotiated career practice?	Whose participation in the practice is negotiated?	How is the participation negotiated in the trigger turn?	Has the participation happened or is it projected to happen in the future?
(1) What are you so fidgety about, your girdle too tight?	(Lucy dancing)	Auditioning	Lucy's	Physical on-screen performance	Has happened
(7) No that's out of the question.	Oh Ricky this is a wonderful chance for me I know the number I can take Joanne's place please?	Performing	Lucy's	Proposal/Interrogative for participation	Future

TABLE 3. EXAMPLES OF VARIABLES FOR CAPTURING SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

Negative Judgement	Question criteria: Does the conversational turn evaluate or afford evaluation of undesired...
Aesthetic appeal	...sensory quality (visual, auditory, olfactory, haptic etc.)?
Competence	...competence quality (perceptive, intellectual, physical, social, or skill in a specific domain)?
Coping	...emotion-oriented coping/reaction to negative or positive emotional circumstance?
Valuation	...(un)importance or necessity of person or their behaviour? ...belonging of person?
Normality	...expectedness, predictability or uniqueness of person or their behaviour?
Care/harm	...causing of emotional or physical suffering?
Fairness/cheating	...causing of disproportionality of distributed social or material resources? ...causing of threat to established obligations? ...dishonesty or deception?
Loyalty/betrayal	...causing of threat to in-group inclusion or membership? ...causing of threat to in-group exclusion?
Sanctity/degradation	...causing of contamination? ...causing of degradation of convention or concept? ...taboo behaviour?
Authority/subversion	...causing of threat to authority and/or tradition? ...lack of authority or weak leadership?
Liberty/oppression	...causing of threat to autonomy, self-direction, self-actualisation? ...lack of self-direction?

TABLE 4. QUESTION CRITERIA FOR NEGATIVE JUDGEMENTS

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impoliteness strategies, Thompson, 2014, on analytical decisions regarding interpretation of evaluation, and McIntyre and Bousfield, 2017, on impoliteness in fiction).

Each observation of a sub-type of negative judgement was complemented with supporting variables including the cline of directness and the section of the turn or sequence where it is found.

I included two additional cases of interpersonal negative judgement where the judgement is not directly aimed at the target. First, I included negative evaluation of a concept or (im)material substance, in which a character has participated or expressed identity. This is because the evaluated character's social action is represented in the thing that is evaluated. Second, I included interpersonal negative judgements not in the hearing of the target that occur either prior to the target entering, or after exiting, the set. This is to consider the overhearer design of fictional television discourse (e.g., Kozloff 2000, Bubel 2008, Brock 2015).

Considerations for the communicative context of an interpersonal negative judgement therefore involve the characters' (non-)desire towards the actions negotiated, the trigger(s) of a negative judgement, the values that are threatened and produced, and the implications that these values have for the characters' (fictitious) social organisation and change.

3.2 Data

The dataset of career talk discussed in this paper is derived from transcriptions of one scene from 9 selected episodes of the first season of *I Love Lucy* (originally aired CBS 1951-52) where Lucy and Ricky negotiate career practices. In the narrative structure of the episodes, the selected scenes occur in the first seven minutes of the episodes, where a problem is established for further escalation and eventual remedial. The next section will show how, even such a small sample case study can reveal repetitive features of negative evaluation both with regards to the specific context in which negative judgements occur and the quality of the judgements.

4. **RESULTS**

4.1 Overview of Situational Context

A total of 106 turns occurring in the selected scenes were identified as containing negative inter-character judgements negotiating career practices. The turns are equally divided between the characters Lucy and Ricky. In the first season of *I Love Lucy*, the situational context of negative judgements in career talk can be described as a representation of an ideological conflict of accessibility and containment. This is reflected in the distribution of moral negative judgements in Table 6, below, where a clear difference is visible in the frequency of judgements of authority/subversion and liberty/oppression. With few exceptions, career conflict talk revolves around Lucy's proposals, and Ricky's denials, for her future participation in show business, with the couple's attitude towards the participation creating a repetitive and oft frequented conflict of interests. The majority of inter-character negative judgements are identified as negotiating Lucy performing or auditioning. Negative judgements negotiating Ricky's participation in career practices mainly involve management practices such as holding auditions and hiring acts, often specifically (not) hiring Lucy.

4.2 Overview of Negative Judgements

Tables 5 and 6 present the frequencies of identified negative judgements. Table 5 displays the presence of the two main types of judgement (personal quality and moral agency) identified in the 106 interpersonal negative judgements of career conflict talk. In Table 5, the frequencies indicate if any of the five personal judgements or six moral judgements were identified in the conversational turn.

Negative Judgement	*Lucy evaluating Ricky*	*Ricky evaluating Lucy*
Personal	85% (45/53)	98% (52/53)
Moral	85% (45/53)	64% (34/53)

TABLE 5. FREQUENCY OF NEGATIVE PERSONAL AND MORAL JUDGEMENTS

Ricky's interpersonal negative judgements are more focused on solely criticising Lucy's personal qualities, with 19 instances where no moral judgements were identified as co-occurring with expressed personal judgements. Ricky's moral reasoning for keeping Lucy from show business is thus often latent or left unexpressed in textual evidence. In part, this result is also a consequence of the analytical decisions I made regarding indirect judgements. For example, I identified a trigger construct such as *proposal for participation-denial-negative emotive response (judgement)* to af-

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Personal Judgement	*Lucy evaluating Ricky*	*Ricky evaluating Lucy*
Aesthetic appeal	0% (0/45)	33% (17/52)
Competence	36% (16/45)	58% (30/52)
Coping	51% (23/45)	35% (18/52)
Normality	29% (13/45)	60% (31/52)
Valuation	60% (27/45)	65% (34/52)

Moral Judgement	Lucy evaluating Ricky	Ricky evaluating Lucy
Care/harm	47% (21/45)	29% (10/34)
Fairness/cheating	89% (40/45)	32% (11/34)
Loyalty/betrayal	13% (6/45)	29% (10/34)
Sanctity/degradation	0% (0/45)	0% (0/34)
Authority/subversion	2% (1/45)	79% (27/34)
Liberty/oppression	67% (30/45)	6% (2/34)

TABLE 6. FREQUENCY OF JUDGEMENT SUB-TYPES IN NEGATIVE PERSONAL AND MORAL JUDGEMENTS

ford an inference of Lucy condemning an unfair distribution of resources (a judgement of *fairness/cheating*), but did not identify a trigger construct of *proposal for participation-negative emotive response (judgement)* to afford a clear inference of Ricky condemning the distribution of resources, unless it was backed up by textual evidence such as retrospective comments in the scene.

Table 6 shows the frequency of the 11 sub-types of negative judgements in their respective personal and moral categories. Three facets of an ideological conflict of containment can be identified in the distribution of moral judgements. A differential distribution between judgements of liberty/oppression (Lucy 67%, Ricky 6%) and authority/subversion (Ricky 79%, Lucy 2%), and a high frequency of judgements of fairness/cheating (Lucy 89%). Notably, Table 6 also shows Ricky's judgements of aesthetic appeal and competence to be more numerous. These intertwined facets, shown in bold, are discussed in the following sections.

It should be noted that analytical decisions and my question criteria have considerable impact on the results. Including necessity (*evaluate person or their behaviour as unnecessary*) in the valuation sub-category resulted in a high number of identifications (Lucy 60%, Ricky 65%), because judging behaviour as *unnecessary* is so closely intertwined with the communicative context of moral negative judgements. The sub-category of sanctity/degradation was not identified as occurring in any inter-character negative judgements. This does not mean that the sanctity of marital roles could not be interpreted as threatened from Ricky's perspective. Rather, this interpretation would be made on a co-constructed level of meaning between the audience and production.

The low frequency of loyalty/betrayal is a result of my analytical decision to consider Lucy's and Ricky's marital relationship as the only in-group. Of course, Lucy's desire to perform in Ricky's shows projects her as a potential member of another group, which she is effectively excluded from. From this perspective, Lucy's negative moral judgements would signify threat of in-group exclusion in a similar frequency comparable to fairness/cheating.

4.3 Negative Judgements of Oppression

Lucy's high frequency of negative moral judgements condemning the excess of oppression are perhaps the most characteristic facet of representing containment. As the word containment implies, her participation in career action is represented as a desired but thwarted opportunity. Her judgements of oppression, then, are triggered by Ricky's turns threatening the actualisation of these opportunities. Example 4 displays three variations of indirect negative judgements condemning Ricky's oppressive behaviour.

In Example 4.1, Lucy juxtaposes Ricky's agency (*someday in spite of you*) with the positive potential of *opportunity* in career practices. Example 4.2 simply contains a negative emotive interjection following Ricky's negative response to her dancing, which restricts her self-actualisation. Finally, Example 4.3 is an instance where comic intent (on the production-audience level) is embedded into a negative judgement by creatively describing Ricky's agency in containing Lucy as sitting on the cork of her bottled up talent. Both 4.1 and 4.3 feature representation of restriction (*in spite of you*, *sitting on the cork*) juxtaposed with a desired event or quality (*opportunity will knock*, *all this talent*).

As a repetitive feature of dialogue, Lucy's negative judgements of oppression not only characterise her ambition as well as defiance of her husband, but also further foreground her positive stance towards career practices with positive tokens for opportunity, which contributes to the representation of containment to the domestic private sphere. However, her negative judgements lack clear tokens of autonomy. While Lucy's access to career practices is represented as restricted self-actualisation, the couple's situational power dynamic,

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Example 4.

4.1	
[Trigger]	RICKY: Oh no you're not going to start that again are you?
[Judgement]	LUCY: Oh I know I know you don't want me in show business but someday in spite of you opportunity will knock and what'll happen? I'll be so big and fat I won't be able to open the door. *I Love Lucy* (1.03)
4.2	
	(Lucy sings and dances in an attempt to convince Ricky)
[Trigger]	RICKY: No.
[Judgement]	LUCY: (displeased) Oh Ricky. *I Love Lucy* (1.06)
4.3	
[Trigger]	RICKY: Look honey you're not serious about this are ya?
[Judgement]	LUCY: I am too! Here I am with all this talent bottled up inside of me and you're always sitting on the cork! *I Love Lucy* (1.19)

Example 5.

5.1	
[Trigger]	LUCY: Oh what kind of acts do you need Ricky? What kind of acts do you need?
[Judgement]	RICKY: Now look Lucy we're not gonna go all over this again you can not be in the show. *I Love Lucy* (1.19)
5.2	
	(In an attempt to audition for Ricky, Lucy is performing a French Apache dance number where she is choking herself)
	RICKY: Lucy.
	LUCY: (makes croaking sounds)
	RICKY: Lucy.
[Trigger]	LUCY: (makes croaking sounds)
[Judgement]	RICKY: (angry) Lucy! *I Love Lucy* (1.12)

where Ricky has the final say over career practices (or Lucy not having the liberty to make her own decisions), is not clearly challenged in the negative judgements of the dataset.

4.4 Negative Judgements of Subversion

On the flipside of Lucy's negative judgements condemning oppressive behaviour are Ricky's judgements condemning subversive behaviour. These occur in two main contexts displayed in Example 5, below.

In the context of 5.1, Ricky negatively evaluates Lucy's repetitive attempts to challenge Ricky's authority and decision making. Similar turns (see 4.1, 4.3, and Example 6, below) containing negative judgements of subversion share the use of emotive interjections as negative attitude markers (*oh no*, *oh Lucy*), message enforcing discourse markers (*now look*) and the establishment of a repeated non-desired behaviour (*this/that again*, *this ten thousand times*), often coupled with a negative assertion or imperative (*we're not gonna go over*). Negative judgements criticising non-desirable repeated behaviour have also been identified as containing judgements of (affective) coping, namely non-desired persistence (or stubbornness).

Example 5.2, on the other hand, is more akin to a sequence that might be expected in a parent-child interaction, with Ricky's repeated attempts at gaining control of a situation ultimately resulting in a negative emotive exclamation that signals blame.

Ricky's negative judgements of subversion re-enforce the default power relations of the couple in the text, characterising Ricky as an authority over Lucy, and representing the patriarchal structure of their relationship, in the context of career practices.

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4.5 Negative Judgements of Fairness and Cheating

Lucy's desire for self-actualisation and opportunity, discussed above, entails a redistribution of resources opposed by Ricky, who is represented as the authority controlling the resources. This conflict of interests results in a high frequency of identified negative judgements of fairness. Lucy's negative moral judgements of fairness most often co-occur with negative judgements of oppression (see discussion of Example 2) and condemn the disproportional distribution of resources.

Ricky's negative judgements of fairness are less frequent. They seek to conserve the current distribution of the couple's resources and obligations and are triggered by challenges or propositions that threaten the distribution, as displayed in Example 6 below.

Here, Lucy's mutual participation in career and household practices are implied as incompatible. In limiting Lucy's membership to a wife and re-enforcing her obligations towards Ricky (e.g., *cook for me)*, Ricky's turn contains invoked negative judgements of fairness (threat to established obligations).

Example 6 displays Ricky's moral judgement and reasoning in the dataset at its most verbose, and the conversational turn has been identified with negative judgements of subversion, fairness, as well as betrayal, with Lucy's triggering challenge seemingly causing a threat to her group membership as a wife. Ricky's turn effectively re-positions Lucy to the subservient role of a housewife who exists to serve his needs.

Example 6.

[Trigger]	LUCY: Why not?
[Judgement]	RICKY: Oh Lucy we've been over this ten thousand times. I want a wife who is just a wife. Now all you have to do is clean the house for me, bring me my slippers when I come home at night, cook for me, and be the mama for my children.

I Love Lucy (1.06)

5. DISCUSSION

The previous section foregrounded three locations of conflicting interests where moral judgements occur. Ricky's negative judgements condemn Lucy's behaviour as a threat to his authority or their established way of life, while Lucy's judgements condemn Ricky's behaviour as a threat to her self-actualisation and autonomy. Together, this flow of overlapping negative meanings that Lucy and Ricky produce for one another establishes a representation of domestic containment, where a clash of desires for social change and conservation are expressed in condemnations and criticisms negotiating participation in career practices. The findings of this study thus resonate with the discussion of ideological containment in the introductory section (Mellencamp 1992, Gray 1994, Rowe 1995, Landay 2005).

Any overtly progressive reading of the text is, of course, quickly watered down by the ideologically elusive nature of sitcoms as a genre (Marc 1989, Bednarek 2010). From a production-recipient reading perspective, negative moral judgements that challenge or enforce the engendered social roles are often softened in the character's turn in various ways. For example, they may occur in conjunction with self-deprecation (Example 4.1), creativity and comic intent (Example 4.3), or a certain degree of excessiveness such as Lucy's obligation to bring Ricky his slippers in Example 6. Furthermore, moral judgements flow in the text together with personal judgements. Consider, for example, the quality of verbal ridicule apparent in negative judgements of aesthetic appeal and competence. Table 6 showed a differential distribution in judgements of aesthetic appeal and competence between the characters, with Ricky more often evaluating Lucy's personal quality, and, notably, with no negative judgements of Ricky's aesthetic appeal identified in the dataset. It is thus Lucy's talent and physical appearance (and, to a slightly lesser degree, her sanity) that is recursively under scrutiny in career talk. In Example 3, this was apparent on turns 2-3 and 8-9, where Lucy's talent, age, and weight are negatively evaluated, for example. Lucy's lack of a situational position of power over Ricky also leave her negative judgements of competence weaker in their persuasive and coercive function. In Example 3, her negative judgement of Ricky's incompetence (to recognize her talent) on turn 8 (*give me one good reason*), for example, lacks the kind of emotional impact Ricky's insult (*you're too fat*) has on turn 9. Inevitably, these values contribute to the less progressive representation of what Marc (1989) describes as female deference to patriarchal structure.

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Nevertheless, for such an interesting conflict of interests as domestic containment, which nearly two decades later became a central topic of social upheaval, to be represented in inter-character dialogue and negative evaluation in one of the most popular sitcoms of its time is certainly worth appreciating in the scope of the historicity of television series. The extent to which this conflict theme is revisited for entertainment in the first season of *I Love Lucy* is perhaps testament to the allure it had for its production and audience. As a serial plot device, it allowed for a familiar and quick source of tension between the characters to be established within the beginning scenes of many episodes, only to later set up the presentation of Lucille Ball's and Desi Arnaz' talents in slapstick comedy and musical numbers. While negative moral judgements rarely embed comic intent, they provide a comedic rhythm in the text, as the dialogue flows back and forth between the ideological conflict established by negative moral judgements, and the creative ways in which the characters' qualities are then undermined in negative personal judgements.

6. CONCLUSION

By adapting and developing a categorisation for inter-character negative judgements and applying it to a specific negotiation of career practices, I showed how specific conflicts in narrative dialogue can be analysed by the quality of negative judgements occurring in them. The results of my analysis support an interpretation of an ideological representation of domestic containment in career talk in *I Love Lucy*. This is negotiated in character-character dialogue with a differential distribution of negative judgements of oppression and subversion, as well as a high frequency of judgements of fairness.

There are, of course, several limitations to this study. The categorisation and methodological decisions I employed were researched and constructed to establish a level of detail I deemed relevant for the aims of the study. Details of the sub-categorisation of personal and moral judgements are a work in progress, with areas of possible improvement. Another limitation is the scope of the study. While my assessment of negative judgements considered other semiotic modes, such as gestures and facial expressions, as well as heightened emotional reactions, as co-textual evidence, the focus of the analysis was solely on verbally expressed negative judgements.

Despite limitations, there is potential for similar qualitative approaches to investigate television series in different genres with a variety of research questions. The obvious caveat being that the texts require sufficient quantities of inter-character evaluation. Here, it is perhaps the close-relation sitcoms such as the marital or family sitcom that provide the most robust sources for research material. Inter-character negative evaluation allows the production to set contrasting values within a text, affording degrees of moral ambiguity and multiple readily established reading positions for the audience. This article highlighted one such reading position, where a representation of containment is expressed in Lucy's character and her negative judgements of oppression that condemn her husband for depriving her of self-actualisation in career practices.

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TV Series

I love Lucy (1951-1957)

I married Joan (1952-1955)

Make Room for Daddy (1953-1957)

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