

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF '*FRIENDS*': FIGURING THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE
OF ELEMENTS IN THE SUCCESS OF A SITCOM

A Research Paper

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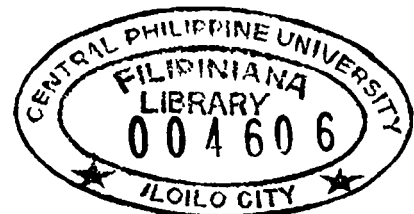
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FIGURING THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF ELEMENTS IN THE SUCCESS OF A
SITCOM

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Abstract

The study is a structural analysis of the season one episodes of the TV series FRIENDS (1994-2004) created by David Crane and Marta Kauffman. This study was conducted based on *Adaptive Structuration Theory* formulated by DeSanctis and Poole, which tells us that there is a relationship between different social systems. This study has selected five elements which include: humor, language used, relatable factors and timeliness, and the studio or the setting. FRIENDS is a situational comedy with the plot revolving around six people who are friends and has their idiosyncrasies. It is set in downtown Manhattan and tells about the story of the six main characters as they go through their lives together. It reflects the realities of living not only in the big city but of life itself. It portrays the struggle of finding true love, friendship, and family. Being one of the most critically acclaimed TV series during its time on television, it was loved by the Americans because it reflects a kind of reality that is universal in nature. The story is not very hard to follow because most of the interactions and situations that happened in the show can happen and have happened in the real world setting. The biggest contribution this TV series gave was to include topics that are too taboo to talk about on television like homosexuality, sex, and racism. Until today, there is an online cult following for the said TV series, they can be found in online platforms like Facebook and Tumblr. The main message of the show is - even if one does not know where he or she is going, there will come a time when everything is going to make sense as long as one works hard for it and as long as one remembers that there are people who will help along the way.