

RAQC: THE RADIO POWER PLAYER

Stephanie Nolasco October 3, 2017



RaqC may still be recognized by fans Janney “Chiquis” Marin’s BFF on 2010’s hit reality TV series *Chiquis & Raq-C*, but the celebrated radio personality has carved out her own identity as the “Queen of Spanglish Media” since then — and she has zero plans to slow down. Raquel Cordova, who has long advocated girl power among Latinas, is still ruling the airwaves with the weekly hour-long show, “Amber Rose Presents: Risqué with RaqC and Rubi.” However, RaqC’s rise as a leader who’s fearlessly raising awareness on the importance and coolness of bilingualism, didn’t have an easy journey to success.

RaqC spoke with *LLERO* about pursuing radio for the first time, the many challenges she faced and how she feels about her mentors and reality TV past today.



‘LL: What inspired you to pursue radio back in 2000?’

RaqC: I just kind of landed in radio to be really honest with you. My original vision was to become a reporter. I was the girl who watched the news. I wasn’t the type to watch novelas. So radio was never really on my radar. When I was 17, I used my sister’s ID and I went to a club in Hollywood. I used to always listen to a radio station called *Power 106*. At that time, there were two guys called ‘Goodfellas’ and they used to rock the airwaves. I used to love their energy during the afternoon drive home. So one day I went to a club and they just happened to be there. I just couldn’t believe it. I was dancing of course, but really my goal was to reach one of those guys and ask them how they got to where they are. I just felt I could do that. And if I could get paid on top of that? Even better. So that night, I went to Romeo and told him I wanted to do this. I think a lot of DJs are used to groupies or people that just want something from them. But he listened to me and he’s like, ‘Let’s set it up.’ I emailed him the very next day. He invited me to the radio station and when I sat in that studio to observe them, I just knew this was something I was going to do. It all just happened from there. I ended up interning for two semesters at an L.A. radio station. It led to my first radio job, which was in Palm Springs. After Palm Springs I went to Chicago and after Chicago, I came back to L.A. in 2005. It was a journey of five years.

‘LL: Why the move from Palm Springs to Chicago?’

RaqC: I was offered to do a Spanish radio show in Chicago and I was terrified. Because even though I understood Spanish, I wasn’t practicing my Spanish that much. Even though we spoke Spanish at the house with my dad, I wasn’t very fluent in it. I couldn’t finish my sentences. I would get stuck when I had to talk. So when this company presented this opportunity, I told them the truth. My boss at that time, who to this day is still one of my mentors, believed in me more than I believed in myself. He explained my role was going to be Spanglish. I was worried people were going to bash me. But he said, ‘It doesn’t matter. We are going to create something new. We’re going to make Spanglish cool.’ And that’s what I did in Chicago for about a year. I moved there by myself from L.A. I broke up with my first real boyfriend. But I thought — love or an opportunity? It was scary. I didn’t know the city. Cell-phones didn’t have navigation at that time. I would always get lost on the train. It was a different world for me. Every single day of my life while I was in Chicago, I was uncomfortable. Life always found a way to put me in uncomfortable situations so that I can grow. I was in Chicago from the end of 2013 and stayed there for about a year.

‘LL: You described going back to the west coast, your home, was a risk. Why?’

RaqC: When I came back to L.A., I didn’t have a job. But, when I was in Chicago I was working for a Mexican regional radio station. It wasn’t music that I liked and I’m very honest about that. I’m El Salvadorian. I grew up listening to a lot of tropical music. I didn’t grow up listening to banda. To me Mexican regional music – I didn’t know anything about it. So when I was there, I wasn’t there for the opportunity. I was there for the experience. I was there because my boss believed in me. And with all that came a great salary. I didn’t know what to do with all of that money. All I did was shop. I had a shopping addiction [laughs]. It was crazy. I didn’t enjoy the music, but I [got] the on-air experience.



‘LL: Is that what made you leave Chicago?’

RaqC: My sister called me one day and said ‘Hey, there’s a bilingual radio station that just popped up in L.A.’ They were playing reggaeton and hip hop, so it moved me. This was the format that I wanted to work for. I jumped on the phone with my boss and told him that. I didn’t want to work in Chicago anymore. I wanted to rock the mic there. My boss told me they needed me in Chicago, being bilingual was becoming a hit. That’s how I earned the title the Queen of Spanglish Media. It was so fluid that it sounded like its own language. I would always get criticized on the radio, but I wanted to make it cool. I didn’t visualize myself working at a place I didn’t enjoy. So I quit. I did not have a job when I got to L.A., I didn’t have anything secured. I had to pay my dues again. I’m talking about the bottom of the radio. I was a little resentful, but I proved myself. A month later, I was offered a three-year contract to do nights on *Latino 96.3*.

‘LL: What’s it like running a radio podcast with Amber Rose?’

RaqC: Listen, Hispanic millennials are a trillion dollar market. That’s the market everyone’s trying to tap into. And Amber is a visionary. As much as people say she’s wild, she’s crazy, she’s very much a businesswoman. This was her first step in tapping on the Latin market. When we proposed the idea of a bilingual podcast, she was very excited about it. She loves her Latino brothers and sisters. It made a lot of sense to her. She knew America needed more diversity. It’s going to be one year in November.

‘LL: What are some of your favorite memories from your time working with Jenni Rivera?’

RaqC: Working with Jenni and her family was a huge learning experience in my career. Reality television was so new to me. I started my relationship with Jenni and her family through her business manager at the time. We always talked about doing a show together. She was always dropping knowledge of being a woman with a successful business. She always said if you want longevity in this business, you need to come from a place of integrity. Not the easy way. One thing I learned from her is how to truly use your femininity. Some of my most cherished memories of her were of me just listening to her. The world will know of you based on what you choose to put out there. You are in control of your image. I learned how to be a better businesswoman. I learned not to be so impulsive. She believed in me. She was an angel in my life. To this day, I still get opportunities just because people remember me from that time. I’m really good friends with her brother Juan and of course, I still talk to her daughter Chiquis. It’s still hard to accept Jenni’s no longer here, but I’ll always be so forever thankful that she believed in me and elevated my career.

With her mentors, wisdom, drive and integrity it’s pretty easy to see why RaqC’s become the radio power player she is today!

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