

US Postal Service
1735 North Lynn Street, Room 5013
Arlington VA 22209-6432
ATT: Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee

RE: Stamp Development

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you to suggest a wonderful subject for a new stamp. Gertrude Berg, born in 1898, was the creator, principal writer and star of the popular 1930's radio show and then the 1950's weekly TV situation comedy *The Goldbergs*. She was a pioneer for women in the entertainment industry, and her show paved the way for later representations of ethnic identity in television. Popular shows like *I Love Lucy* and even *The Cosby Show* have their roots in *The Goldbergs*.

Those of us who have watched her show remember how her vision of immigrant life in a New York tenement defined our visions of America during the war years. *The Goldbergs'* concern with ethnicity, assimilation, and becoming middle class resonated with American audiences.

Many consider Gertrude Berg to be the Oprah of her day. She was well-known nationwide and highly respected for her opinions. That popularity is currently experiencing a resurgence. In April of 2006 the Jewish Museum in New York hosted a conference titled "The Legacy of *The Goldbergs*" that commemorated the 50th anniversary of the show's conclusion. The conference featured dramatic readings from scripts and speakers who examined the show's impact on popular culture.

In 2005, the Museum of Radio and Television honored her as well by hosting a panel titled "The *Goldbergs* to 2005: The Evolution of the Family Sitcom". The panel featured filmmaker Aviva Kempner discussing how *The Goldbergs* defined the patterns that made sitcoms the dominant format on television through the second half of the 20th Century. The event was part of their "She Made It" series that recognizes the impact women have had in shaping the entertainment industry in the past, present, and years to come. Gertrude Berg was recognized by the Museum for her pioneering role in early television.

This growing popularity is capped by "Yoo-Hoo, Mrs. Goldberg", a documentary currently showing in theatres around the country, about Gertrude Berg's life. When subsequently released on television on PBS, the film will increase awareness of her achievements and increase overall interest in her as well. It would be a wonderful opportunity for the United States Postal Service to promote the stamp.

Sincerely yours,