ONE VISION:

NATIONAL SPANISH LANGUAGE NEWS MEDIA AND THE LATINO POLITICAL IDENTITY

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Over the past thirty years, academics, journalists, and public leaders have focused on the increasing specialization, fragmentation and polarization of the mass media in the United States. In many ways, the approach taken by two largest Spanish-language television networks, Univisión and Telemundo, stand in contrast to the broader micro-targeting trend. The relegation of such a large number of people coming from a diverse range of political, economic and social histories to a unitary market of language and/or colonial minorities makes the audience in this market notable, if not outright peculiar. In this paper, I explore whether the efforts of Univisión and Telemundo to consolidate and sell a Spanish-language commercial market have resulted in more homogenous *real and perceived* Latino political identities. To do so, I look at the effects of two specific elements of Spanish-language television news media: the far more frequent references to Latino pan-ethnic labels than on non-Spanish language television, and the use of the Spanish-language. I suggest that these elements of Spanish language news amplify the sense of social, cultural and political proximity among viewing Latinos, thereby fostering a shared understanding of the Latino political identity. I further suggest that passing encounters with these elements of Spanish-language television contribute to an image of a uniform Latino population among non-Latinos as well.

This study draws from the 1990 Latino National Political Survey, 2006 Latino National Survey, and two population-based survey experiments administered by Knowledge Networks as

part of their KnowledgePanel Latino. Using this mixed-methods approach, new measurement techniques, and the use of a representative sample of Latinos that has not been primed to think about their ethnicity, I evaluate whether the efforts of Univisión and Telemundo to consolidate and sell a Spanish-language commercial market have resulted in more homogenous real and perceived Latino political identities. In turn, this paper sheds light on the development, meaning and future of the Latino political identity in the United States.

ONE VISION:
THE EFFECTS OF SPANISH-LANGUAGE MEDIA ON LATINO POLITICAL IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

Over the past thirty years, academics, journalists, and public leaders have drawn attention to the increasing specialization, fragmentation and polarization of the mass media in the United States. Americans are no longer selecting from three or four television networks that offer programming speaking to the median public preference, but are now choosing from hundreds of stations catering to a myriad of political, economic and social identities (Prior, 2007). Some might argue that the development of Spanish-language television has been consistent with this trend. Capitalizing on the rapidly expanding Latino population, Spanish-language media giants Univisión and Telemundo have focused their efforts on cultivating this audience and convincing advertisers of their value as a niche market. They have persuasively pointed out ratings that have outpaced those of English-language counterparts in major media markets (Univision and Telefutura Television Groups, n.d.), as well as financial resilience in the face of an international economic recession, as indicators of a Latino market that has been effectively captured by this pan-ethnic approach (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010). The addition of many other Spanish-language cable options further exemplify this trend

Yet in some respects the trends of Spanish-language television stand in contrast to the broader micro-targeting trend. In particular, the relegation of such a large number of people coming from a diverse range of political, economic and social histories to a unitary market of language and/or colonial minorities makes the audience in this market notable, if not outright peculiar. In the midst of a niche-marketing revolution, the diversity of the Latino population would seem to make it as ripe as any for further micro-targeting. Advertisers know that political conservatives often watch Fox, those who enjoy food and cooking often watch the Food Network, and families with young children often watch PBS, however, it is not clear that Latinos as a collective subscribe to a comparable set of shared political, economic or even cultural interests. Why should recent immigrants from Peru be interested in the same programming as second or third generation Latinos of Puerto Rican descent? Regardless, the two most popular Spanish-language news broadcasts have continued approaching Spanish-speaking Latinos as a relatively homogenous collective of shared interests, and are selling the audience to advertisers as such. In doing so, they have at minimum reinforced, and maybe even reified, the notion of a Latino collective (Dávila, 2001).

My dissertation explores how the pan-ethnic approach to Spanish-language television news has affected the real and perceived political identities of Latinos. Spanish-language television illustrates a relatively unexplored trend in scholarship on market construction – market amalgamation. I focus on this possibility and consider whether the efforts of Univisión and Telemundo to consolidate and sell a Spanish-language commercial market have resulted in more homogenous real and perceived Latino political identities. To do so, I look at the effects that two specific elements of Spanish-language television news media have on both real and perceived Latino political identities: the use of the Spanish-language, and the far more frequent references to Latino pan-ethnic labels than on non-Spanish language television.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

Previous scholarship has presented theoretical support for the idea that Spanish-language media has in many ways shaped the Latino pan-ethnic identity within the United States (Rodriguez, 1999; Davila, 2001; Levine, 2001). Despite criticisms of the pan-ethnic category and its representation in the media, Latinos have internalized elements of the commercially-constructed Latino collective in many ways. An ethnographic study on the effects of the pan-ethnic approach to Spanish-language media illustrated that commercialized notions of Latinos, as constructed by Latino marketing companies and broadcast on Spanish-language media, are actively used by Latinos "to assert their own and others' place and level of 'belonging' to the collective" (Davila, 2001, p. 215). More recent survey research has highlighted associations between Spanish-language media consumption and political attitudes (Abrajano and Singh, 2009; Abrajano, 2010). However, thus far there is no empirical support for a causal relationship between Spanish-language media and pan-ethnic political identities, or Latino identities at all. In addition to affecting individual Latinos' actual sense of political identity, I suggest that Spanish-language television may also affect both Latino and non-Latino *perceptions* of Latino political identity. It has been previously demonstrated that perceptions of group membership have been shown to play significant roles in shaping beliefs about actual commonality and shared interests (Mackie, 1986). This is increasingly notable and relevant given the growing frequency with which the implicitly homogenous Latino vote is discussed. Yet even with the common knowledge of such flippant attributions of uniformity, the perception of Latino political homogeneity has yet to be demonstrated, as does its effects on the development of Latino political identity. Such research would not only shed light on the Latino political identity, but it would carry strong implications on the construction and meaning of other real and perceived political collectives. Accordingly, my dissertation seeks to enhance the theoretical and empirical base of two fields of scholarship that will only grow in relevance to American politics – the effects of specialized media, and the development and meaning of the Latino political identity in the US.

THEORY

The theory I put forth in this dissertation is that the national news programming of Telemundo and Univisión, the most popular sources for Spanish-language news in the US, have a homogenizing effect on the real and perceived political identity of Latinos. I do not argue that the political views of Latinos will become more conservative or more liberal, per se, but that they will become more similar to one another. Spanish-language media serves as a mechanism for socializing people with countries spanning the Americas—each with its own unique history and culture—into one common Latino-American *political* identity. I argue that this effect is due to two particular elements of their news structure: the use of the Spanish language to implicitly define the in-group and out-group, and repeated references in programming to a Latino pan-ethnic community. These elements of Spanish language news media amplify the sense of social, cultural and political proximity among viewing Latinos, thereby fostering a collective Latino political identity.

It is important to note that this effect is not limited to those Latinos consuming Spanish-language media directly. Evidence illustrating that the political views of one generation powerfully influence those of subsequent generations (Campbell et al, 1960) propels the effects of such media onto later generations of Latinos that may or may not be direct consumers of Spanish-language media.

This homogenization effect has spillover consequences for non-Latinos as well. Few non-Latinos consume Latino media. As a result, they see a divide between themselves (non-Latinos)

and the seemingly homogeneous, Spanish-speaking Latino "other" on the opposing side of the linguistic barrier. As a result, Spanish-language media not only cultivates the image of a homogenous Latino political collective among Latinos, but it contributes to such an image among non-Latinos as well.

A sense of social proximity sits at the heart of how I conceptualize pan-ethnic identity in this study. People have a natural tendency to categorize themselves into groups, and to develop a sense of who they are on the basis of membership to that group and/or a lack of membership to other groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Burke, 2006). The resulting perception of community and belonging is critical to how individuals view the world and their position in it. Particularly remarkable is that this perception of commonality and shared interests can be triggered by something as subtle as the mere use of the group label. For example, in his study, Wilder (1990) manipulates in-group and out-group social identity by randomly assigning subjects to one of two groups and : (1) having subjects wear badges with the group's name and (2) putting subjects in a room labeled with the group's name. Even when the messages shown to subjects were identical, subjects were more likely to accept messages they thought were written by members of their own group. Due to beliefs about shared group membership and commonality, people were more willing to accept the messages put forth by other group members. It has consequently been argued that "identity choices may precede, and likely shape, political behavior" (Jones-Correa, 2007, 4). This lends credence to the idea that, by classifying Latinos as a politically homogeneous whole, Spanish-language media supports the image of a common in-group among their viewers.

One might reasonably draw from this that where group boundaries delineate in-groups and out-groups more clearly, group labels and identities will seem stronger. As a clear mechanism for defining group boundaries, the use of the pan-ethnic group label would consequently be likely to reinforce a perception of shared beliefs, values and/ or identity within the group, and dissimilarity from those not defined as falling within group boundaries.

> **H1: Use of the pan-ethnic label in the context of political information increases perceptions of Latinos as holding homogenous political preferences, among both Latinos and non-Latinos.**

> **H2: Use of the pan-ethnic label in the context of political information increases perceptions of Latinos as being politically distinctive from non-Latinos, among both Latinos and non-Latinos.**

These hypotheses imply that when the pan-ethnic label is used to contextualize political issues, it will cause both Latinos and non-Latinos to perceive Latinos as a more politically homogenous collective, particularly when the use of the terms is more regular. Additionally, by increasing the attention given to the idea of a pan-ethnic Latino community within the context of political news, I contend that it also increases perceptions of extra-Latino political distinctiveness.

The perceptions of internal homogeneity and external distinctiveness associated with the use of the pan-ethnic label are likely to only consolidate any direct effect of its repeated usage on Spanish-language news media. Furthermore, the role that ethnic media has played in the assimilation process of immigrant viewers (Park, 1970) endows it with a certain level of authority in defining cultural norms. So if Spanish-language media repeatedly relies on a pan-ethnic label, it will be more likely to be embraced as the more accurate group label by viewers. It is likely, then, that greater exposure to Spanish-language media will increase the strength and likelihood of identification with a pan-ethnic label, as opposed to an American or Latin-American national label.

H3: Exposure to Spanish-language news encourages Latino viewers to identify more strongly with pan-ethnic labels.

The decision to embrace a pan-ethnic label inevitably also signifies a larger shift in how an individual has come to view him/herself in reference to his/her national residence. Consistent with previous scholarship supporting the idea that social identity is based on perceptions of shared attributes with others in that social group (Burke, 2006), I suggest that the decision among Latinos to embrace the pan-ethnic label is indicative of a decision to accept the broader notion of collective pan-ethnic interests. Furthermore, given the relationship between how perceptions of group identity affect actual group identity (Mackie, 1986), any evidence of an effect of pan-ethnic label usage on *perceived* internal homogeneity and external distinctiveness is highly likely to translate into an effect on actual political views and collective homogeneity. I therefore suggest that there is a more general relationship between the strength of a Latinos pan-ethnic identity and the homogeneity of their political views.

H4: Stronger pan-ethnic identities encourage more homogenous political views among Latinos.

Likewise, I suggest that communication in Spanish affects listeners in a way very similar to the pan-ethnic label due to the implicit association it has with people of Latin-American descent, as well as the barriers it erects for the principally non-Latino people who are unable to participate in discussions conveyed in Spanish. Thus, I argue that communication in Spanish increases perceptions of Latinos as a politically homogenous collective, as well as perceptions that they are politically dissimilar from non-Latinos.

H5: Exposure to Spanish-language media increases perceptions that Latinos hold homogenous political preferences, among both Latinos and non-Latinos.

H6: Exposure to Spanish-language media increases perceptions that Latinos are politically distinctive from non-Latinos, among both Latinos and non-Latinos.

If the use of pan-ethnic labels and the Spanish-language do, in fact, increase perceptions of pan-ethnic group membership and a collective Latino community, that will likely, in turn, affect how viewers perceive and process news content. Specifically, I contend that these elements of Spanish-language television news will cause Latinos to emphasize perceived similarities so as to reduce any cognitive dissonance that might result from identifying as a part of the group and not sharing similar preferences.

H7: Exposure to Spanish-language news causes the political views of Latinos to become more homogenous.

Looking at these hypotheses together, I argue that exposure to Spanish-language news media, and particularly the two aforementioned elements, will: increase pan-ethnic identification; strengthen perceptions of political similarity among Latinos; bolster perceptions of dissimilarity relative to non-Latinos; and, cause Latinos to have more similar attitudes on political issues. The manner in which I intend to explore these theories is laid out further in the discussion of the methods of analysis below.

METHODS

Research on Latino political identity and public opinion has grown exponentially in recent years. However, despite the progress that has been made, research on Latino political identity and public opinion continues to be almost entirely defined by survey research. As a result, existing scholarship has really only been able to suggest correlation, without establishing causal relationships. Equally noteworthy is the fact that many (if not all) of these surveys begin with questions about the ethnic identity or preferred language of respondents, and in doing so, they invariably prime the precise concept being studied. Once asked such questions, respondents are inevitably encouraged to think about being Latino before considering their political views, affiliations and identities, thereby running a high risk of distorting results in a way that artificially increases considerations that may be associated with being Latino in the US.

To avoid this, my research largely relies on population-based survey experiments administered by Knowledge Networks of Palo Alto, CA, as part of their KnowledgePanel Latino. The KnowledgePanel Latino consists of a geographically-balanced, random probability sample that includes over 7,000 Latino panelists who, when aggregated, encompass approximately 93% of the US Latino population. Netbooks and internet service is provided for those who do not have them at the time of recruitment to improve the representativeness of the sample, as well as to assist with recruitment and retention. Most notably, however, is the fact that respondents are screened for demographic information during an initial interview prior to enrolling into the panel, and are not asked such information again for the duration of the time that they serve on the panel. This allows researchers to avoid drawing attention to a respondent's ethnic identity (or other demographic information) immediately prior to administering survey questions.

The hypotheses that will be studied using the population-based survey experiments suggest that both the use of the pan-ethnic label (H1 & H2), and exposure to Spanish-language media (H5 & H6) serve to: increase the homogeneity of political preferences among Latinos; increase perceptions that Latinos have homogenous political preferences; and, increase perceptions that Latinos are politically distinctive from non-Latinos, among Latino *and non-Latino* audiences. I propose using two such experiments to explore these ideas and outline them below.

Experiment One
The first of the experiments will manipulate two dimensions of media: 1) whether audiences are shown news content that explicitly discusses Latinos as a collective (and therefore primes the idea of a unified Latino collective) or not, and whether the story is in English or Spanish. Each of the Latino respondents will be randomly assigned to one of five conditions formed by a factorial design manipulating the language (Spanish/ English), and whether it references a pan-ethnic Latino political collective or not (pan-ethnic references/ no references to a specific population). The fifth condition will consist of a control group that will view a clip of a professional dance performance void of speech, political content or indirect or direct references to Latinos. Non-Latino respondents will be randomly assigned to one of the English-language conditions manipulating the use of pan-ethnic references, or the control condition. The experiment will be administered to a nationally representative sample of Latino adults that understand both Spanish and English (discussed further at the end of this section), and to a nationally representative sample of non-Latino English-speakers.

The experiment involves viewing a brief news story about the Republican presidential debates, followed by a post-test. The original version of the story to be used was broadcast in Spanish on Univision's Despierta América in August of 2011. This version was edited to create both an English and Spanish-language version, as well as to manipulate whether it included references to a pan-ethnic Latino community or not. The Spanish-language audio was created

using professionally edited versions of the original Spanish-language news broadcast. The English-language audio was a direct translation of the Spanish-language audio, and was recorded and edited in a professional studio by professional news talent. I collaborated with a reporter from the local National Public Radio station to record the English version of the female anchor, and a former television news broadcaster and producer to record the English version of the male anchor. In both conditions, footage of the news anchors was replaced with generic footage of Republican presidential campaigns so as to eliminate problems synchronizing the mouths of the anchors with the re-recorded English language speech, and to reduce recognition of the anchors and any possible associations that viewers may have with them (i.e. associations with news addressing Latinos). Outside of the language and pan-ethnic label manipulations, the video as well as the audio content of the news story is equivalent across conditions.

The post-test will measure three types of attitudes: the homogeneity of political preferences among Latinos, perceptions of political homogeneity among Latinos, and perceptions of political distinctiveness between Latinos and non-Latinos. To do so, it will rely on four sections of survey items. The first section will entail questions on the subject's views on political issues. Response categories will involve five point scales ranging from strongly oppose to strongly support. The responses will be analyzed to generate data on the homogeneity of Latino opinion.

The second and third components of the survey will focus on much less standard measurements - *perceived* public opinion of Americans and *perceived* opinions of Latinos. These measures will be used to generate responses on the perceived homogeneity of Latino attitudes, as well as the perceived distinctiveness of Latino attitudes relative to those of non-Latinos. The limited studies that have explored perceptions of opinion have largely relied upon quantitative estimation techniques, such as asking people to estimate the percentage of people who would endorse a given attitude statement (Park and Rothbart, 1982), or to indicate how many out of a 100 group members would choose each of the response options (Linville et al., 1989). However, when asked to produce such percentages or distributions of large numbers, people are extremely unreliable and often produce distributions that do not result in the correct total (Krosnick & Fabrigar, forthcoming). Other measures have asked respondents to label important points of a distribution, such as how the average and most extreme group members might view an issue (Jones, Wood, and Quattrone, 1981; Simon and Brown, 1987). While less quantitative, it relies on a concept of distribution that is not particularly intuitive among the general public. To get around these barriers, I created a tool that asks respondents to stack each of 10 stick people (using a drag and drop interface) into one of five response categories displayed in a format akin to a vertical bar chart. This allows people to clearly visualize the distribution of opinions on a single screen. Additionally, it relies on a categorization method that has been shown to result in more reliable responses relative to other measurement methods (Chuang et al, 2008; Rey, 2011). To ensure that the questions are serving as accurate measures, respondents will be asked to complete a practice question so that they can become familiar with the people-stacking question format prior to the first of such questions that will be used to measure a key variable. Additionally, two of the people-stacking questions will be followed by a verification question asking respondents, "just to make sure we understood, do you think most" of the people in the group in question supported, opposed, or are roughly evenly split on the issue in the preceding question. This will ensure accuracy by checking for consistency between a response using the people-stacking format and a response as conveyed through a simplified multiple-choice format.

Given that my dissertation explores effects that I hypothesize result from exposure to Spanish-language news over time, there are obvious limitations as to what effect can be replicated after a single, comparatively brief exposure to a news program. The goal in selecting issues for

the post-test was thus to use issues with which an effect is more likely to be observed after such an abbreviated replication of actual news exposure. I consequently focused on issues on which there was not a deeply-engrained view among the majority of Latinos, and were more likely to be subject to change when presented with new information. These were issues that were either too novel for most people to have a formed attitudes, issues that generated a high number of "don't know" or "undecided" responses in previous surveys, or issues that resulted in very inconsistent attitudes between surveys.

Additionally, the issues were selected based on the idea that the process of political homogenization occurs as a result of either the acceptance of mainstream stereotypes about Latino political views, or the projection of one's own views onto other members of one's identified community. To test for this first possibility, I selected issues that are often associated with stereotypes about Latinos among the American public. These are principally rooted in generalizations that Latinos are Catholics or biblical literalists (and therefore conservative on social issues, such as gays/ lesbians serving in the military), low-income (and therefore support redistribution policies), and in favor of policies designed to accommodate linguistic, ethnic and racial minorities (and therefore support bilingual education and affirmative action)[1]. To test for the latter possibility that Latinos simply project their own views onto the collective when the collective identity/community is primed, I chose another set of issues that are relatively unfamiliar and do not have any well-known associations with Latinos (the establishment of Palestine as an independent nation, and educational vouchers). If my theory is correct, I expect to find that those in the Spanish-language and pan-ethnic reference conditions will offer more homogenous political views on these issues than those in other conditions.

The final section of the post-test will consist of manipulation checks to verify that the treatments worked as I intended. Among these will be two questions designed to measure the effects of the use of the Spanish language and repeated references to Latinos, on the ethnic identification of subjects. This subset of questions will include both an open-ended identity question, designed not to prime any specific identification response, as well as a closed ended question, designed to ensure that respondents offer responses that fit within the ethnic framework being sought. These will be followed by questions verifying that the pan-ethnic references were observed. Respondents will be asked whether there was an ethnic group discussed in the story, and to identify which ethnic group, if any, was discussed in the story. Two questions will be included to ensure that participants paid attention and knew what the story was about. One question will be included asking respondents to rate the quality of the news production to determine whether differences in perceived quality served as a factor in individual responses. A final question will ask whether respondents have any additional comments about the story or survey.

Experiment Two

A second population-based survey experiment will be performed to explore the theory that consuming media in Spanish, even if only very briefly, may affect how people view Latinos. As hypothesized to be true among Latinos, I suggest that exposure to media in Spanish will increase perceptions among non-Latinos that Latinos are politically homogenous, and that they are politically distinctive from non-Latinos. However, because non-Latinos are not generally exposed to full news stories in Spanish, a separate experiment will be employed to explore this theory.

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[1] The existence of these stereotypes is evidenced in many of the marketing studies (Valdes & Seaone, 1995), as well as national news coverage (Curiel, 2004).

This experiment will thus consist of a 30-second Obama campaign ad that manipulates whether the language of the message includes some phrases in Spanish, or is broadcast entirely in English. This experiment will rely on an original campaign ad that was broadcast once entirely in English and once with English and Spanish content – both of which would not be unusual for non-Latinos to see. The Spanish/ English version includes English subtitles when Spanish is spoken to ensure all respondents can fully understand the content. All editing was done in a studio with professional editing software and equipment. Outside of the subtitles, the visual content of the ads is identical, and the audio content is identical in meaning.

The experiment will be administered to a nationally representative sample of Latino adults that understands both Spanish and English (discussed further at the end of this section), and to a nationally representative sample of non-Latino English-speakers. Both groups of respondents will be randomly assigned to either the English or bilingual condition. Following exposure to the ad, respondents will take a post-test that will largely replicate that which followed the first experiment.

One of the key challenges faced in designing the experimental studies study was creating comparable samples for the English and Spanish-language conditions. Significant differences, on average, between English-dominant Latinos and Spanish-dominant Latinos made it unfeasible to simply allow respondents to view the condition consistent with their linguistic preference, or the language in which they generally consume television news. Relative to English dominant Latinos, Spanish-dominant Latinos are more likely to be an immigrant, more likely to have less formal education, and more likely to have a lower income (Hakimzadeh and Cohn, 2007). To ensure comparable subjects across conditions, I used an entirely bilingual sample of Latinos. All Latinos included indicated in their initial screening interview with Knowledge Networks that they understand television programs in both English and Spanish "well" or "very well". This does limit the degree to which the sample represents the larger US Latino population, and the extent to which the results can be said to describe the larger US Latino population. However, the large majority of Latinos in the US are bilingual. More than two thirds of Latinos (68%) say that they can carry on a conversation in Spanish and English "well" or "very well" (Hakimzadeh and Cohn, 2007), and it is likely that even more can understand both languages "well" or "very well." Furthermore, as with most experiments, the goal is not to imply full external validity. Instead, the intention of this study is to create data that can begin to illuminate a causal relationship (in this case, one for which there is no empirical evidence). The mixed-methods approach employed in this study combines the benefits of survey and experimental data to offset the limitations inherent in either design, and thereby provide a clearer picture of how Spanish-language national news media is affecting real and perceived Latino political identity in the US.

The need for editing was initially a concern as well. Despite the fact that the story was recorded by professional news talent and edited in a professional studio, it is possible that the audio and video editing required to create the manipulations could make it seem to be of lower quality than traditional televised news stories and consequently distract subjects from the concepts being manipulated. To mitigate this possibility, the story is presented as a local news broadcast as opposed to a national news broadcast. Local news logos are used in the bottom corner of the screen and respondents are told they will be watching a local news broadcast before it begins playing. Additionally, the videos were pre-tested and the reported quality issues were addressed.

Content Analysis
The experimental methods of exploring the effect of Spanish-language national news media on Latino political identity will be supplemented by a content analysis. An original

analysis of the content of the top Spanish and English language national news programs will serve to both illustrate the magnitude of difference between the programs, and contextualize the approach taken to news production by Spanish-language networks. This data will be collected using the SnapStream TV monitoring software. The SnapStream software will scan two-weeks worth of closed captioned content of the two most watched news programs broadcast on Spanish and English-language TV (Noticiero Telemundo, Noticiero Univision, NBC Nightly News, and ABC World News) for the frequency of references to the pan-ethnic Latino. The surrounding content will be recorded, transcribed and stored for analysis. This will allow me to empirically document key differences between English-language and Spanish-language news media.

Survey Analysis

Building off of this, I will use the 1989-90 Latino National Political Survey[2] and the 2006 Latino National Survey[3] to seek additional evidence of a relationship between exposure to Spanish-language national news media, strength of Latino pan-ethnic identity, and the homogeneity of Latino political views.

Using data from the 2006 Latino National Survey, I will test for associations between the amount of time spent watching Spanish-language television news and the strength of one's pan-ethnic identity (H3). I will measure exposure to Spanish language television using the data on how many days each week that subjects watch Spanish-language television news (daily vs. less than daily) as well as how many years they have been in the United States. I include this latter measure with the evidence in mind that those who watch Spanish-language television have generally watched at least some US-based Spanish-language television since they first began residing in the residence in the US, and therefore, that the number of years that a viewer of Spanish-language television has resided in the US is an indicator of the number of years the respondent has been exposed to US-based Spanish-language news[4][5]. Given the relatively heavy use of the pan-ethnic label in Spanish-language news in the US, I suggest that the more Spanish-language television one watches, the stronger they will identify with a pan-ethnic label.

Both of the surveys will be used to test how the strength of one's pan-ethnic identity affects the homogeneity of Latino political attitudes (H4). The homogeneity of political attitudes will be measured with data on subjects their views on a diverse selection of political issues.[6] If my theory as described earlier is correct, I expect to find that those who identify either 'very strongly' or 'somewhat strongly' with pan-ethnic labels will have more similar political views relative to individuals who identify either 'not very strongly' or 'not at all' with the pan-ethnic label.

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[2] The 1989-90 Latino National Political Survey consists of 2,817 Latino interviews, and 598 non-Latino interviews. The geographic area of coverage for this survey included at least 90 percent of the Mexican, Cuban and Puerto Rican populations (based on 1980 census data). Although other Latino ethnic groups collectively constituted about 20% of the total US Latino population, they consisted of several smaller groups and were not included due to the high cost of obtaining representative samples of other Latino populations that were adequate for separate analysis.

[3] The 2006 Latino National Survey contains 8634 completed interviews (unweighted) of self identified Latino/Hispanic residents of the United States. The Latino National Survey covers 15 states and the District of Columbia metropolitan area. The universe of analysis contains approximately 87.5% of the US Hispanic population.

[4] There is strong evidence that a majority of Latino immigrants consume most media in Spanish, and that this number steadily lessens with each subsequent generation born in the United States (Suro, 2004).

[5] Puerto Ricans will be excluded from this analysis. Given that Puerto Ricans residing in Puerto Rico are exposed to much of the same Spanish-language media content that residents of the mainland US are exposed to (which emphasize the pan-ethnic label), it would not be possible to determine the amount of years the respondent has been consuming US-based Spanish-language news media with this data.

[6] The public affairs questions included in this analysis of political homogeneity include: party identification, appropriate size of government, fairness of government, equality of opportunity among Americans, troops in Iraq, income support, public housing, health care, the Dream Act, legal identification requirements, standardized testing, public education funding, educational vouchers, bilingual education, same-sex marriage, abortion, and immigration.

Building off of the analyses looking at the pan-ethnic label in Spanish-language television news, I will look directly at the effect of exposure to national Spanish-language television news on the homogeneity of political attitudes among Latinos (H7). I suggest that greater amounts of exposure to Spanish-language news will increase the salience of and identification with the pan-ethnic label, and this in turn will cause Latinos to offer views that are more similar to other Latinos, relative to those who have been exposed to Spanish-language television news for shorter periods of time. I will test this theory using data from the 2006 Latino National Survey. The homogeneity of political attitudes will be measured with data on subjects their views on a diverse selection of political issues.[7] Similar to the earlier hypothesis, exposure to Spanish language television will be measured with the data on how many days each week that subjects watch Spanish-language television news (daily vs. less than daily), as well as how many years they have been in the United States[8]. If the theory is correct, I expect to find that those who have been exposed to more Spanish-language television news hold political views that are more similar, relative to those who watch less Spanish-language television.

While this survey analysis will add new insights to the existing scholarship on Latino political identity and public opinion, its principle value is in its capacity to complement and illuminate the experimental findings. Both the limitations of what can be concluded from survey research, as well as flaws in the design of existing surveys with representative samples of Latinos highlight the need for new methodological approaches to advance this area of scholarship further. The second experiment will offer valuable data on how the language of communication affects both Latinos and non-Latinos perceptions of real and perceived Latino political identity. However, the first experiment will produce the first data exploring the existence of a causal relationship between the use of the pan-ethnic label and actual and perceived Latino political identity, among both Latinos and non-Latinos. Furthermore, it will do so in the context of a full news story, thereby adding external validity to the findings on the effects of the pan-ethnic reference and language of communication (Spanish vs. English) on real and perceived Latino political identity.

PRELIMINARY STUDIES

Preliminary statistical analysis of the 1989-90 Latino National Political Survey and 2006 Latino National Survey data indicates 1) that Latinos who watch Spanish-language news daily are more likely to identify with a pan-ethnic label than Latinos who watch Spanish-language news less than daily, while the degree of exposure to English-language tv news did not offer evidence of an effect on pan-ethnic identity; 2) a stronger pan-ethnic identity is associated with more homogenous political views among Latinos across a range of issues (ie the war in Iraq, health care, school vouchers, abortion, gay marriage), and greater perceptions of Latino similarity in terms of political power and representation relative to Latinos who do not identify as strongly with pan-ethnic labels; and, 3) those who watch Spanish-language television news daily are more likely to say that members of one's own ethnic group are similar to other Latinos in terms of political power and representation relative to those who watch Spanish-language TV news less frequently.

In addition to this preliminary survey data analysis, I also ran three pre-tests on Amazon's Mechanical Turk to verify that the quality of video editing was not noticeably different from other local news broadcasts, and that the questions on perceived homogeneity were serving as an effective measurement tool. Amazon Mechanical Turk is one of Amazon's web services

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[7] Ibid

[8] Puerto Ricans will not be included in this analysis either due to the limitations mentioned in footnote 5.

that recruits convenience samples to perform tasks and/ or answer surveys. The data from these initial pre-tests informed the revisions made to final versions of both the question formatting and the videos to be used in the experiments.

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