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Examining the portrayals of race and ethnicity within Latinx-centric news sites

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Latinx individuals make up a minority group that faces some of the harshest and inaccurate stereotypes in the media today, despite being underrepresented in most media, especially primetime television (Mastro, Figueroa-Caballero, & Sink, 2017) and news programming (Santa Ana, 2013). Stereotypes include the notion that they are illegal immigrants and criminals (Dixon & Williams, 2015). As a result of these portrayals, Latinx audiences are left with few empowering news outlets to turn to in the mainstream media. This research project began as a means to identify safe and uplifting alternative channels for minority audiences. Specifically, we argue that news sites created for and focused on Latinx individuals might serve as channels of potential empowerment. However, little research has been done surrounding the portrayal of minorities in social identity focused news (SIFN) outlets such as these. Consequently, we began our research project by looking at the quality of this content. We hypothesize that (a) they will over-represent Latinx individuals in their content and (b) will present Latinx individuals more positively than traditional news outlets. News content was compiled from four Latinx online media outlets *News Taco*, *Latino Voices*, *El Día News*, and *Latina*. Our final sample was N=600 unique news stories. Our preliminary results suggest that the portrayals of Latinx individuals in Latinx-oriented SIFN were rated more positively than in traditional news outlets. Furthermore, Latinx individuals were overrepresented in Latinx-oriented SIFN compared to the percentage of the US population they comprise in the Census. This means that Latinx-oriented SIFN offers an alternative and a counter-influence to degrading representations of Latinx individuals in the traditional news media both by representing Latinx individuals more positively and less stereotypically, as well as including more Latinx individuals overall in their news coverage.