

Report Prepared for the
National Association of Hispanic Journalists

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An Analysis of the Portrayal of Latinos
in the Nation's Three Leading News Magazines in 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study serves as a benchmark assessing Latino-related coverage in U.S. news magazines for 2005. To date, there have been no comprehensive year-long content analyses on this subject. This benchmark will be a particularly useful way to track Latino representation in U.S. news magazines in the future, especially as immigration has become an increasingly controversial political issue in 2006.

There were several major findings and themes found in this study that should give journalists a starting point from which they can begin reflecting upon the importance of changing the ways in which Latinos are covered in the future.

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Overall News Stories

In 2005, out of 1,547 magazine stories published in *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report*, only 18 stories (1.2 percent) were predominantly about Latinos.

The majority of stories predominantly about Latinos (12 out of 18) focused on immigration.

Only five stories of the 1,547 total (0.3 percent) significantly included Latinos in non-Latino stories.

Of the 1,547 stories published, 214, or 13.83 percent, mentioned (or referenced) at least one Latino. These stories did not stress their ethnicity.

Time:

Out of 656 news stories published by *Time* in 2005, seven (1.1 percent) were predominantly about Latinos and three (0.5 percent) were inclusive of Latinos as a group.

Out of the seven stories published about Latinos, four were about immigration.

Out of a total of 106 Latinos that appeared in *Time*, the largest number, 29 or 27.4 percent, were artists/entertainers or celebrities.

Out of 106 Latinos appearing in *Time*, 66 (62.3 percent) were found in non-Latino stories.

Newsweek:

Out of 509 news stories published in *Newsweek* in 2005, seven (1.4 percent) were predominantly about Latinos and two (0.4 percent) were inclusive of Latinos as a group.

Out of the seven stories published about Latinos, four were about immigration.

Out of 174 Latinos appearing in *Newsweek*, the largest number, 44 or 25.3 percent, were artists/entertainers or celebrities.

Out of 174 Latinos appearing in *Newsweek*, 136 (78 percent) were found in non-Latino stories.

U.S. News & World Report:

Out of 382 news stories published in *U.S. News* in 2005, four (1.0 percent) were predominantly about Latinos and none were inclusive of Latinos as a group.

Out of the four stories published about Latinos, all were about immigration.

Out of 49 Latinos appearing in *U.S. News*, the largest number, 10 or 20.4 percent, were political and government officials.

Out of 49 Latinos appearing in *U.S. News*, 39 (79.6 percent) were found in non-Latino stories.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Immigration Coverage

The majority of stories predominantly about Latinos were about immigration. For all three magazines, a total of 18 stories were predominantly about Latinos. Out of those 18, 12 or 67 percent, focused on immigration.

In these immigration stories, Latino immigrants were portrayed, for the most part, as a negative and disruptive force on U.S. society.

Time:

Out of seven stories in *Time* that were predominantly about Latinos, four were about immigration. A close reading of these four

immigration stories revealed that Latino immigrants were frequently positioned as a “problem,” “disruption” or “menace” to communities around the nation.

Newsweek:

Out of seven stories in *Newsweek* that were predominantly about Latinos, four were about immigration. Two of these four immigration stories focused on crime and perpetuated the stereotype that Latinos are criminals. Another story, about Latino day laborers in New Orleans, portrayed Latino immigrants as irrevocably disrupting communities.

U.S. News & World Report

Out of four stories in *U.S. News* that were predominantly about Latinos, all were about immigration. Every story about Latinos in *U.S. News* focused on the problems caused by immigration. Similar to the other magazines, the themes of out-of-control immigration and new immigrants transforming and fundamentally altering America’s “main street” and “communities nowhere near the border” were evident in these stories.

Coverage of Non-Immigration Stories

For all three magazines, a total of 18 stories were predominantly about Latinos. Out of those 18, 6 or 33 percent, focused on topics other than immigration.

Within these stories, *Time* and *Newsweek* focused on the more positive contributions made by Latinos, such as their growing political power and influence. Both magazines devoted cover stories to these more positive topics.

Time:

Out of seven stories in *Time* that were predominantly about Latinos, three focused on topics other than immigration. These stories about Latinos were about on the growth of the Latino voting influence, Antonio Villaraigosa’s victorious election as L.A. mayor and Gov. Bill Richardson. *Time* also devoted a cover story to the 25 most influential Hispanics.

Newsweek:

Out of seven stories in *Newsweek* that were predominantly about Latinos, three focused on topics other than immigration. These stories featured the increasing power of Latinos in politics, including the election of Antonio Villaraigosa as Los Angeles mayor. Even so, the tone of the headline, “A Latin Power Surge,” served as a warning to the audience of how irrevocably U.S. society is changing.

U.S. News:

Out of four stories in *U.S. News* that were predominantly about Latinos, none focused on topics other than immigration.

Conclusion

Overall, the news magazine coverage of Latinos in 2005 was predominantly about Latino immigration and presented migrants as a problem for U.S. politics, culture, and society. Such representations make it difficult for society to see the broader array of Latino roles and contributions to American communities.

FINDINGS

PART 1. THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This section explains the results of the quantitative portion of this research. The researcher analyzed magazine representations of Latinos with both a quantitative method (content analysis) and a qualitative method which examined the “numbers” in a more subjective, in-depth way.

For the content analysis, all news magazine stories published by the three chosen magazines in 2005 were coded and counted for the following variables: story topics, the Latino focus of the story, and the number and types of Latino representations in each story. For a more detailed discussion of the coding process, and how stories were chosen and defined, please consult the methodology section at the back of this report.

This section will report:

- The topics covered by the stories
- The number of stories that either

exclusively focused on Latinos, featured Latinos as a group within a larger framework, or referenced Latinos

- The makeup of Latino representations

STORY TOPICS

Stories were assigned to 11 mutually exclusive topics ranging from national/regional politics and social issues to arts & culture, as well as human interest/demographic & lifestyle trends (see methodology section for a complete listing).

By far, the largest number of stories published by *Time* and *Newsweek* were those about arts & culture (see Table 1). Out of 656 total stories examined for *Time*, 342 (52.1 percent) were arts & culture stories and, out of the 509 stories examined for *Newsweek*, 190 (37.3 percent) were about this topic. The next most frequent type of story published by each was national/regional politics & social issues (123 or 18.8 percent for *Time*, 120 or 23.6 percent for *Newsweek*).

For *U.S. News & World Report*, known for having a much harder national news focus, the most common type of story published was about national/regional politics & social issues. Out of a total 382 stories examined for the magazine, 145 (38.0 percent) were dedicated to this topic. The next most common type of stories centered on business/economy (76 stories or 19.9 percent).

It is not surprising that the main story topics of these news magazines focus on national politics, social issues and arts/culture since these leading publications have a general-interest focus and strive for national relevance.

LATINO FOCUS OF STORIES

Four categories were created to measure the degree to which a news story focused on Latinos. Stories were coded into these mutually exclusive categories:

- Stories predominantly about the Latino community and/or prominently or centrally about individual Latinos;
- Stories that significantly included Latinos as a group within a larger non-Latino framework;

TABLE 1 - STORY TOPICS IN NEWS MAGAZINES

Story Topics	TIME (% of total)	NEWSWEEK (% of total)	U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT (% of total)
1. National/Regional Politics & Social Issues	123 (18.8%)	120 (23.6%)	145 (38.0%)
2. Arts & Culture/Celebrities & Entertainment	342 (52.1%)	190 (37.3%)	17 (4.5%)
3. Health, Science, Medicine, Environment	58 (8.8%)	50 (9.8%)	57 (14.9%)
4. Business/Economy	53 (8.1%)	63 (12.4%)	76 (19.9%)
5. Sports	17 (2.6%)	10 (2.0%)	1 (0.3%)
6. Education	5 (0.8%)	5 (1.0%)	22 (5.8%)
7. Technology	3 (0.5%)	8 (1.6%)	20 (5.2%)
8. Crime	7 (1.1%)	5 (1.0%)	6 (1.6%)
9. Calamities	14 (2.1%)	26 (5.1%)	7 (1.8%)
10. Human Interest/Demographic & Lifestyle Trends	19 (2.9%)	22 (4.3%)	22 (5.8%)
11. Religion	15 (2.3%)	10 (2.0%)	9 (2.4%)
Total Number of Stories	656 (100%)	509 (100%)	382 (100%)

- Stories that reference individual Latinos whose heritage or Latino identity is not the focus of the story (a reference can denote a quoted source or merely a passing mention of a Latino name); and
- Stories that did not have any Latino reference.

Overall, out of a combined total of 1,547 magazine stories that were examined, a mere 18 stories (1.2 percent) predominantly featured Latinos and five stories (0.3 percent) significantly included Latinos (see Table 2). In other words, only 1.49 percent (23 stories total) of all magazine stories published by these magazines in 2005 featured Latinos in a significant way. Considering Latinos now make up over 14 percent of the nation's population, this number is very disheartening.

The majority of stories predominantly about Latinos focused on immigration, but both *Time* and *Newsweek* also included other stories such as the historic win of Antonio Villaraigosa in the Los Angeles mayoral race.

Stories that were inclusive of Latinos included the community within the story in a significant

way, even though the story was not exclusively about them. For example, a story about President Bush included his push to garner Latino voters and another story about the Protestant Church in the United States devoted some of the coverage to the influence of Latinos in the Church.

A breakdown of the individual magazines shows that:

- Of 656 news stories in *Time*, 7 (1.1 percent) were predominantly about Latinos and 3 (0.5 percent) were inclusive of Latinos as a group.
- Of 509 *Newsweek* news stories, 7 (1.4 percent) were predominantly about Latinos and 2 (0.4 percent) were inclusive of Latinos as a group.
- Of 382 news stories in *U.S. News & World Report*, 4 (1.0 percent) were predominantly about Latinos and none were inclusive of Latinos as a group.

It is discouraging to see that there was only a combined total of 18 stories (out of over 1,500) that predominantly featured this community. Latinos now comprise the largest

TABLE 2 - LATINO FOCUS STORIES

Latino Focus	Number of News Magazine Stories		
	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT
Predominantly about Latinos	7 (1.1%)	7 (1.4%)	4 (1.0%)
Significantly Inclusive of Latinos as a group	3 (0.5%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0%)
References one or more individuals who are Latino	68 (10.4%)	111 (21.8%)	35 (9.2%)
None	578 (88.1%)	389 (76.4%)	343 (89.8%)
Total Stories	656 (100%)	509 (100%)	382 (100%)

The largest number of Latinos that appeared in *Time* and *Newsweek* were artists/entertainers/celebrities

ethnic group in the nation, so the media must make a greater effort to increase the number of stories that significantly feature Latinos and Latino concerns.

A positive pattern that surfaced in the research was the significant number of stories that at least referenced Latino individuals, even though they did not stress the individual's ethnicity or their membership in the Latino community. Many of these stories mentioned Latinos as a result of their occupation, e.g., politicians, artists/celebrities, government officials, law enforcement, among others. For example, stories citing current U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales regarding a non-Latino related issue were characterized as mentioning a Latino individual.

Of the 1,547 stories published in all three magazines, 214, or 13.83 percent, mentioned at least one Latino. This percentage approximates the actual representation of Latinos in the country and appears encouraging. *Newsweek* was the leading magazine in this trend with 21.8 percent of its stories (111) referencing Latinos.

Even so, it is important to note that a reference is often a quick, passing mention of a Latino name in a sentence. This does not denote meaningful and significant involvement of Latinos in the news. Occasionally, a reference denoted a Latino who was interviewed as a source, thus their voice was "heard" in the story, although his/her ethnicity was not explicit. This coverage is more significant, but it was not the majority of these instances. In this report, the research methodology did not allow for further exploration of the portrayal of these Latino references in stories. In the future, this area of research will be expanded.

THE MAKEUP OF LATINO REPRESENTATIONS

This section presents the makeup of Latino representation in the magazine stories. In other words, what "types" of Latinos were represented in magazines? Were they professionals, laborers, politicians? And, in what types of stories did they appear and how often? These are the questions the coding analysis answered for this section of the research.

The types of representations that were coded included artists, celebrities, politicians, businesspersons, other professionals, laborers (skilled and unskilled), and individuals not defined by occupation (including students, criminals, community members, etc.). In all, 20 categories of representations were coded (see methodology for full list).

The largest number of Latinos that appeared in *Time* and *Newsweek* were artists/entertainers/celebrities (see Tables 3 and 4). Out of a total of 106 Latinos that appeared in *Time*, 29, or 27.4 percent, fell into this category. Out of 174 Latinos in *Newsweek*, 44 or 25.3 percent, were in this category.

The ever-increasing shift to "infotainment" is evident in the preponderance of stories about artists/celebrities/entertainers. The coverage of Latinos thus lacks a diversity of Latino representations from other walks of life. The coverage focuses on famous or prominent individuals. This finding may simply reflect the general tendency of news media coverage in general.

The data also suggests the preponderance of "official" type Latino representations. *Time* represented Latinos as politicians, government officials, and law enforcement personnel. In addition, non-profit/social service workers

and/or activist/advocates were also high on the list of Latinos appearing in the magazine's stories. Similarly, at the top of the source list for *Newsweek*, were elected and non-elected political officials, non-profit workers, and law enforcement personnel.

U.S. News, which focuses solely on hard news, did not feature any Latino artists or celebrities (with only 3.4 percent of its stories

devoted to arts and culture). The largest number of Latino sources found in *U.S. News* were elected and non-elected political/government officials (see Table 5). Out of 49 Latinos appearing in this magazine, 10, or 20.4 percent, were in this category.

Journalistic practices—such as the necessity of including “credible” sources and the need to rely on easily accessible quotes to meet

TABLE 3 - LATINO REPRESENTATIONS IN TIME MAGAZINE

Latino Representations	Total	Number in Predominantly Latino Stories	Number in Inclusively Latino Stories	Number in Stories that Mention Latino Individual(s)
Artist/Entertainer/Celebrity	29	9		20
Non-Profit/Social Services Worker	11	7	2	2
Local/State/Federally Elected Politician	8	6		2
Political or Govt. Officials/Civil Servants/Professionals (non-elected)	8	1		7
Law Enforcement	7			7
Sports Figure	6			6
Citizen/Community Resident	5			5
Businessperson/Entrepreneur	5	3	1	1
Educator	5			5
Criminal	4	4		
Medical/Health Professional	3	1		2
Researcher/Scientist	2			2
Legal Professional/Lawyer/Judge	2	1		1
Communications Professional	2	2	0	
Skilled Laborer	2			2
Unskilled Laborer	2	1		1
Student	2	1		1
Office Worker	1			1
Engineer/Architect	1	1		
Unemployed	1			1
	106	37 (35%)	3 (2.8%)	66 (62.3%)

deadlines — often lead news organizations to an over-reliance on official sources. This pattern holds true in analyzing Latino coverage.

In all three magazines, the majority of Latinos appeared in stories that were not predominantly about Latinos, but referenced them in some way. Out of 106 Latinos in

Time, 66 (62.3 percent) were found in these stories. For *Newsweek*, the figure was 136 out of 174 (78.2 percent) and for U.S. News, the figure was 39 out of 49 (79.6 percent).

This pattern has both a positive and negative interpretation. On one end, it is encouraging to see that in two of the magazines, close to

TABLE 4 - LATINO REPRESENTATIONS IN NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE

Latino Representations	Total	Number in Predominantly Latino Stories	Number in Inclusively Latino Stories	Number in Non-Latino Stories that Mention Latino Individual(s)
Artist/Entertainer/Celebrity	44	3		41
Local/State/Federally Elected Politician	37	14		23
Businessperson/Entrepreneur	15	3	1	11
Citizen/Community Resident	14			14
Political or Govt. Officials/Civil Servants/Professionals (non-elected)	10	7		3
Medical/Health Professional	8			8
Non-Profit/Social Services Worker	7	4		3
Law Enforcement	7			7
Sports Figure	6			6
Student	5		3	2
Educator	4			4
Criminal	4	1		3
Unskilled Laborer	3	2		1
Researcher/Scientist	3			3
Communications Professional	3			3
Legal Professional/Lawyer/Judge	2			2
Office Worker	1			1
Skilled Laborer	1			1
Engineer/Architect/Technology	0			0
Unemployed	0			0
	174	34 (19.5%)	4 (2.3%)	136 (78.2%)

80 percent of the Latinos appearing in their stories were found in stories that went beyond Latino contexts. In other words, Latinos were not pigeonholed in predominantly Latino stories — they were seen elsewhere in stories dealing with more “mainstream” topics. On the other end, stories that were in this category of

“referencing” Latinos usually included a very superficial mention of the individual. In most cases, Latinos were not interviewed as sources, but instead, were merely mentioned by name, with no other significant involvement. So, although Latinos often appeared in these stories, their involvement was not significant. •

TABLE 5 - LATINO REPRESENTATIONS IN U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT MAGAZINE

Latino Representations	Total	Number in Predominantly Latino Stories	Number in Inclusively Latino Stories	Number in Non-Latino Stories that Mention Latino Individual(s)
Political or Govt. Officials/Civil Servants/Professionals (non-elected)	10			10
Non-Profit/Social Services Worker	8	3		5
Local/State/Federal Elected Politician	6			6
Law Enforcement	5	4		1
Educator	4			4
Citizen/Community Resident	3			3
Unskilled Laborer	3	3		0
Researcher/Scientist	2			2
Skilled Laborer	2			2
Business Person/Entrepreneur	1			1
Medical/Health Professional	1			1
Professional Lawyer/Judge/Legal	1			1
Office Worker	1			1
Sports Figure	1			1
Student	1			1
Communications Professional	0			0
Artist/Entertainer/Celebrity	0			0
Engineer/Architect/Technology	0			0
Unemployed	0			0
Criminal	49	10 (20.4%)	0	39 (79.6%)

PART. 2 THE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative analysis involved multiple readings of all stories that were predominantly about Latinos or included Latinos as a group in some way. The goal was to gain an understanding of the underlying themes, patterns and context of Latino representations.

In both *Time* and *Newsweek*, four of their seven stories (each) concerned immigration.

STORIES PREDOMINANTLY ABOUT LATINOS

Time and *Newsweek* each published seven stories that predominantly focused on Latinos. *U.S. News* published four. What were these Latino-focused stories about? Significantly, a majority of the predominantly Latino stories in all three news magazines concerned Latino immigration. In both *Time* and *Newsweek*, four of their seven stories (each) concerned immigration. All four of the *U.S. News* stories about Latinos involved immigration. The following section presents a detailed analysis of these immigration stories in more detail.

TIME STORIES ON IMMIGRATION

Immigration is an increasingly hot-button political and social issue in the U.S. The headlines of the four immigration stories published by *Time* magazine highlight some of the controversies involved:

- “Who Gets the Break?: Should illegal immigrants qualify for in-state college tuition? Inside a brewing controversy.” (July 11, 2005)
- “Serving Up a Conflict: Raucous volleyball games pit new immigrants against old neighbors in a New England town” (August 1, 2005)

- “Stalking the Day Laborers: Border-patrolling Minutemen turn inland in their fight against illegal immigrants” (December 5, 2005)
- “Playing Both Sides of the Fence: The president will try to end a year of mishaps with a victory on immigration reform” (December 5, 2005)

A close reading of the four immigration-related predominantly Latino stories revealed that Latino immigrants were frequently positioned as a “problem,” “disruption,” or “menace” to communities around the nation. For example, the story “Serving Up a Conflict: Raucous volleyball games pits new immigrants against old neighbors in a New England town,” showed how Latino immigrants’ “raucous” pastime disturbed a quintessentially quiet, tranquil, sophisticated and prosperous New England town.

The story about college tuition focused on the debate concerning whether undocumented immigrants should be allowed to qualify for in-state college tuition rates. This debate pits in-state legal residents against immigrant residents. The debate raises fundamental questions about the U.S. ideal of broad popular access to education.

“Stalking the Day Laborers” describes how the Minutemen, an anti-illegal-immigrant group that has garnered considerable media attention for their voluntary efforts to monitor the border, have expanded to inland communities across the nation in an attempt to intimidate immigrant day laborers and those who employ them. The story suggests that a showdown between the Minutemen

and migrants and their employers is inevitable in places where migrants gather looking for work, although violence has yet to occur.

The story about President Bush's immigration reform plans underscores the political crisis surrounding immigration and highlights the American public's stance on the issue. The article also discusses President Bush's attempt to gain political advantage through his immigration reform initiatives.

In general, stories about immigration communicated that Latino immigrants were a negative force in American society. They were represented as disruptive to American communities and traditional ways of life. They were positioned primarily as outsiders and as a problem and threat. What was most remarkable was the inclusion of only one unskilled day laborer as a source (see Table 3) in the sum total of *Time* immigration stories. In fact, there were only a total of two unskilled laborers (the category in which undocumented migrant workers would typically be included) mentioned during the entire year's worth of news coverage. Furthermore, there were no businesspersons as employers of the migrant workers who were interviewed on the subject of immigration.¹ Thus, the immigration stories presented an unbalanced view of immigration issues — mostly from the perspective of those who feel threatened by immigrants.

NEWSWEEK STORIES ON IMMIGRATION

Similar to the results found in the *Time* magazine stories, four out of the seven predominantly Latino *Newsweek* stories were about immigrants and immigration. They were:

- “Crossing Over: Bush's Other Battle. He Hopes His Guest-Worker Plan Will Fill Jobs and Build the Party. But is the GOP onboard?” (February 7, 2005)
- “The Most Dangerous Gang in America: They're a violent force in 33 states and counting. Inside the battle to police Mara Salvatrucha” (March 28, 2005)
- “The New Face of Witness Protection: A Changing Demographic Strains a Storied Program” (May 2, 2005)
- “A New Spice in the Gumbo: Will Latino Day Laborers Locating in New Orleans Change its Complexion” (December 5, 2005)

It is significant to note that two of *Newsweek's* stories were crime-related, perpetuating the stereotype of Latinos as dangerous and criminal. Although the crime-related stories present a serious social concern, *Newsweek's* tendency to neglect stories about Latinos in other walks of life evokes an unbalanced view of Latinos in American society.

One story described the increasing violence perpetrated by mostly Salvadoran and Central American immigrant members of the Mara Salvatrucha gang. About a month later, another predominantly Latino crime-related story also referenced Mara Salvatrucha gang activities. This time, the story focused on the new difficulties faced by the FBI in providing protection for younger, Latino/a gang-members-turned-informants as part of its witness protection program. This story projects younger Latinos as a new challenge to law enforcement, requiring law enforcement agencies to change their traditional approaches.

The story about President Bush's immigration reform plans underscores the political crisis surrounding immigration and highlights the American public's stance on the issue.

Remarkably, there were only two unskilled Latino laborers quoted the entire year, in a year of much immigration controversy.

The other two stories focusing on Latino immigration are predominantly about Latinos as laborers. Similar to the political story in *Time*, *Newsweek* featured a Latino immigration story highlighting Bush's proposed guest worker plan as a solution to the problem of immigration and his own political problems.

Another story on Latino laborers showed evidence of similar themes found in *Time*. This story showed how American communities were irrevocably and fundamentally changing as a result of the influx of Latino immigrants. Alluding to the prevalence of Latino day laborers migrating to New Orleans to work following the Hurricane Katrina disaster, the theme of the story is captured through its tongue-in-cheek headline, "A New Spice in the Gumbo." According to the story, longtime New Orleans residents were disturbed at the increasing number of Latinos in the area.

Representations of Latinos in these *Newsweek* stories were primarily elected government officials (14) and non-elected officials (7) (see Table X). These sources comprised 62 percent of all the sources featured in predominantly Latino stories about immigration. Once again, noticeably missing in these stories about immigration were migrant workers. Remarkably, there were only two unskilled Latino laborers quoted the entire year, in a year of much immigration controversy.

Besides official sources, the other types of Latino representations featured in all of the predominantly Latino stories (regardless of whether it was about immigration or not) came from only four other categories: three were artists/entertainer/celebrities; three were businesspersons; four were non-profit/social

service workers or activists; and, one was a criminal. It is clear that there is not a wide range of Latino sources in varying occupations and status being consulted.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT STORIES ON IMMIGRATION

The stories predominantly about Latino found in *U.S. News* were all about immigration. Unlike the Latino stories in *Time* and *Newsweek*, which also included some stories about growing Latino power and influence in society, *U.S. News* only presented stories associating Latinos with the problem of immigration. Following is a list of the immigration story headlines in *U.S. News*:

- "Under the Sun: A new wave of immigrants is transforming communities nowhere near the border" (June 20, 2005)
- "Local Labor Pains: America's immigration debate lands on Main Street" (October 24, 2005)
- "Special Report—Border Wars: The border with Mexico leaks like a sieve. Why the Feds can't fix it" (COVER STORY) (November 28, 2005)
- "Going After Illegal Aliens: Q&A: Michael Chertoff: Getting tough on illegal immigrants" (November 28, 2005)

Similar to the other magazines, the themes of out-of-control immigration and new immigrants transforming and fundamentally altering America's "main street" and "communities nowhere near the border" were evident in these stories. Two stories about the increase of immigrants in places where large-scale immigration had not traditionally been

an issue highlighted the unease, loss, and fear experienced by longtime residents as a result of Latino immigration.

Unlike *Time* and *Newsweek*, *U.S. News* did not cite any Latino elected or non-elected political officials. Instead, four Latinos (all border law enforcement personnel) were included in the border wars story. Three unskilled Latino laborers and non-profit/social service workers were included in the remaining stories. Overall, ten Latino sources were used in the four predominantly Latino-focused stories. In general, the stories presented a one-sided negative impact of immigration on the nation and in specific communities. For example, in the Q&A piece with Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, only one source is used, thus limiting alternative perspectives on the issue.

TIME MAGAZINE'S NON-IMMIGRATION STORIES

While four predominantly Latino stories appearing in *Time* painted an unbalanced and stereotypical representation of Latinos as an immigrant problem population, there were three additional predominantly Latino-focused stories that were more positive in nature. They included stories with the following headlines:

- “Charming the Angels: L.A. elects Antonio Villaraigosa as its first Latino mayor in 133 years. But can he fix the traffic?” (May 30, 2005)
- “The 25 Most Influential Hispanics in America” (COVER STORY) (August 22, 2005)
- “10 questions: New Mexico’s Bill Richardson” (December 12, 2005)

The *Time* cover story, in particular, was exceedingly positive in its portrayal of successful Latinos in various fields. There were nine artists/entertainers; five non-profit/social service workers and activists; three elected politicians; three business persons/entrepreneurs; two communications professionals; one medical/health professional; one architect; and one appointed government official.² The other two stories focused on the growing influence of Latinos in power profiling Antonio Villaraigosa’s victorious election as L.A. Mayor and Governor Bill Richardson, whom the journalist cited as having the potential to “become the first Latino President.”

Each of these stories was considerably more positive and included a broader representation of Latinos as successful politicians, artists/entertainers, and businesspersons than did the Latinos-as-poor-migrant-workers stories. And, it is noteworthy that the story profiling the top 25 Hispanics in America was a cover story, the ultimate confirmation of a magazine story’s newsworthiness and importance. However, when put into the context of an entire year’s worth of coverage, it is lamentable that such successful Latino individuals were not very evident outside of these few Latino-focused stories. For example, outside of the three Latino businesspersons profiled in the top 25 Hispanics story, there were only two additional Latino businesspersons cited throughout the rest of the year’s coverage. Such is the case with many other less visible professions such as educators and medical/health professionals, among others (see Table 3).

Beyond the low numbers, however, it is troubling to see that, in general, instances of

In general, the stories presented a one-sided negative impact of immigration on the nation and in specific communities.

A New Mayor in L.A. A Decisive Showing in 2004. Latinos are Making their Mark on Politics as Never Before.

Latino inclusion tended to be framed in terms of two opposite ends of the spectrum - either as super-successful leaders and entertainers or as migrant workers threatening America's communities and traditions. This results in a number of negative consequences for the Latino population in the nation. The overall coverage implies that poor, struggling Latinos have no excuse for not succeeding in a culture that has, to some degree, made Latino success stories more visible. On the other hand, the preponderance of Latino stories about immigration suggests that the majority of Latinos are poor migrant workers and that successful Latino individuals are the exception to the rule. Clearly missing are representations of Latinos that do not fall on opposite ends of the spectrum — average, middle-class, 2nd or 3rd generation Latinos who are quiet contributors to American society.

NEWSWEEK'S NON-IMMIGRATION STORIES

While the majority of *Newsweek's* stories were also about immigration, the magazine featured three predominantly Latino-focused stories about the increasing power and influence of Latinos in politics. These stories were:

- "Won't Get Fooled Again: Villaraigosa seeks vengeance in L.A.'s Mayoral Rematch" (March 21, 2005)
- "A Latin Power Surge. A New Mayor in L.A. A Decisive Showing in 2004. Latinos are Making their Mark on Politics as Never Before. Get Used to It." (COVER STORY) (May 30, 2005)
- "Why Can't a Black Actress Play the Girlfriend?" (March 14, 2005)

Once again, one story described Antonio Villaraigosa as a strong contender in the Los Angeles mayoral race, followed a few months later by a cover story about his victory. In addition to discussing Villaraigosa's victory, the cover story elaborates on how Latino voters, as well as Latino politicians and hopefuls, are becoming major players on the national and local political scene.

Of note, though, is the tone of the headline — "A Latin Power Surge. A New Mayor in L.A. A Decisive Showing in 2004. Latinos are Making their Mark on Politics as Never Before. Get Used to It." This headline reflects a warning statement and an almost reluctant acceptance of this fundamental change in American politics. The prevalent theme in this news story is that Latinos are irrevocably changing American society in fundamental ways and "the rest of us," or "we," as the headline stated, must get used to it. This indicates that the target audience of the magazine is a non-Latino audience that has to "get used to" the growing influence of Latino power. Latinos would not need to "get used to" their community's success.

Finally, the only predominantly Latino story related to arts and culture in any of the news magazines concerned the pairing of black actors with primarily Latina actresses rather than, and almost to the exclusion of, black actresses. The headline was: "Why Can't a Black Actress Play the Girlfriend?" Unfortunately, the story mainly presents the problem as one of African-American actresses versus Latina actresses. There are clearly more complex race relations at play in the movie industry dynamic, such as how receptive, or not, white audiences would be to mainstream movie pairings of two African-Americans or two Latinos, but these issues are not addressed.

STORIES INCLUSIVE OF THE LATINO COMMUNITY

In all, five stories included the Latino community as a significant part of the story, even if the story did not focus on Latinos (three in *Time*, two in *Newsweek*, none in *U.S. News*). These stories, out of all the stories in the magazines, represented the most realistic (and thus positive) portrayal of Latinos in mainstream society.

The headlines of the *Time* stories that included Latinos were:

- “Person of the Year: George W. Bush” (COVER STORY) (January 3, 2005)
- “Bible-Belt Catholics: With spirited preaching and conservative teaching, the South is giving the faith a new flavor” (February 14, 2005)
- “Hail Mary: She was there at the Cross. Yet Protestants seldom talk about Jesus’ mother at Easter—or at most other times. But they are starting to now” (COVER STORY) (March 21, 2005)

For *Newsweek*, the headlines of stories inclusive of Latinos were:

- “The faces of the future: Tom Castro: The Latino RadioHead: He got in early and put Spanish-language radio on the media map” (COVER STORY) (December 27, 2004)
- “Does Cosby Help? He’s railed at black kids for choosing bling over books. What they think - and what the Cos must do to reach them” (December 27, 2004)

These inclusively Latino stories incorporated Latinos in mainstream American culture and politics. In these stories, Latinos were represented as less threatening than the stories with a predominantly Latino focus. These stories serve as a model for Latino portrayals that do not fall on extremes of the spectrum (ultra-successful Latino type stories or Latinos-as-a-problem stories).

While there were few stories that highlighted Latinos in such an ordinary, interwoven, enriching part of American society, it was encouraging to see that three of the five inclusively Latino stories were cover stories. The cover story featuring George Bush as person of the year discussed the importance of his reaching out to Hispanic voters. Another cover story described the trend among Protestants to elevate the role of the Virgin Mary in their religious practices, in small part due to the increasing number of Protestant Latinos. In contrast, another religious story discussed the increasing numbers of Catholics moving South, including the growing number of Latino immigrants, who are adapting some Protestant religious practices.

It was also encouraging to see a Latino included in a round-up *Newsweek* cover story titled “Faces of the Future” that did not specify a particular ethnic “face.” One of the “faces” included in this story was of a Latino Spanish-language radio station owner. Including a Latino in an otherwise non-Latino-focused story is an example of how to incorporate Latinos in mainstream news stories without relegating Latinos solely to stories about minority communities, as tends to happen with stories like *Time*’s “Top 25” story.

The cover story featuring George Bush as person of the year discussed the importance of his reaching out to Hispanic voters.

Although Latino migrant workers seemed to be the main focus of the predominantly Latino stories, few Latino laborers or those who employed them were quoted.

USE OF DEROGATORY TERMS - LATINOS AS "ILLEGALS"

Unfortunately, when analyzing stories that were predominantly and inclusively about Latinos, the use of derogatory labels was evident. *Time* and *Newsweek* primarily used the phrase illegal immigrants when describing Latino migrants, although *Time* used the term "illegal aliens" once in the story about in-state college tuition. *Time* also used that term when citing sources who used it.

Most egregiously, however, *U.S. News* used the nouns "illegals" and "illegal aliens" prominently in stories that were predominantly about Latino immigrants. In the story about immigrants transforming inland communities, the term "illegals" was used in the subheading "Where the Illegals Are," which went on to describe where Latino communities can be found. Furthermore, such derogatory labels were used in the headline featuring an interview with Michael Chertoff, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The profile was titled: "Going After Illegal Aliens." In sum, *U.S. News* used the phrase "illegal aliens" six times in the stories that were predominantly about Latinos, "illegals" two times and the phrase "some illegals" once.

Labeling various ethnic and minority groups with derogatory phrases serves to stereotype, demean and de-humanize individuals. In the case of the Latino community, The National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) has encouraged journalists not to use pejorative terms to describe immigrants. A prominent derogatory term is the use of the word "illegals" as a noun, shorthand for "illegal aliens." NAHJ states that not only is it grammatically incorrect, but the term

criminalizes the person rather than the action s/he is purported to have committed and recommends using the term undocumented workers or undocumented immigrants.

CONCLUSION

This 2005 study serves as a benchmark assessing Latino-related coverage in U.S. news magazines. To date, there have been no comprehensive year-long content analyses on this subject. This benchmark will be a particularly useful way to track Latino representation in the future, especially as immigration from Latin America has become an increasingly controversial political issue in 2006.

There were several major findings and themes revealed in this study that should give journalists a starting point from which they can begin reflecting upon the importance of changing the ways in which Latinos are covered in the future.

- The number of Latino sources was low and the diversity of sources used was limited. Although Latino migrant workers seemed to be the main focus of the predominantly Latino stories, few Latino laborers or those who employed them were quoted. Mostly elected and non-elected political and government officials were cited. The lack of alternative sources of information is a trend that is not unlike mainstream news coverage in which officials are quoted more often than non-official sources or less powerful sources.
- For every cover story focusing on successful Latino artists and celebrities, many more stories depicted Latinos as poor, illegal, desperate migrant workers

invading the U.S. border and communities nationwide. The status quo, traditions and long-held ways of life in American communities were seen as irrevocably and fundamentally threatened as a result of Latino immigration. Only a handful of news magazine stories (out of more than 1500 in 2005) represented Latinos inclusively as an integral part of American communities, both changing and being changed by U.S. culture and society. Very few stories incorporated Latinos in broader issues and everyday concerns outside of immigration issues and stories about prominent, highly successful Latinos.

- The stories about super-achieving Latinos/as in various professions served as a sharp contrast to the stories about poor, illegal migrants. As is often the case regarding minority groups, the representations seem to fall at the end of two extremes. Latinos were either positioned as a problem/threat, or as the successful exception/role model of their community, even the success of Latinos in politics was often represented with ambivalence and danger. And yet, the majority of Latinos do not fall into either camp. Indeed, the majority of the coverage did not represent Latinos as average Americans leading mainstream lives. It also suggests that Latinos are only newsworthy when they are doing something that marks them as unique. As long as these news practices persist, Latinos cannot be incorporated as full citizens in U.S. society.

- In some ways, even the success of Latinos in the political realm is represented with ambivalence. The subtle message suggests

that mainstream Americans should be on guard and monitor the growing influence of Latino political power.

- Despite attempts to raise awareness of the problematic nature of calling humans “illegals,” such phrases persist in news magazines.
- Stories about U.S. immigration and immigrants rarely feature nationals outside of Latin America.

Overall, the news magazines’ coverage of Latinos in 2005 was predominantly about Latino migrants portrayed as a problem for U.S. politics, culture, and society in general. Such narrowly focused stereotypical representations of the Latino community make it difficult for the society to see the broader array of Latino roles and contributions in American communities. Sadly, such representations may often make it difficult for Latinos to also see themselves beyond these one-dimensional depictions.

By incorporating Latino concerns and Latino sources within a broader range of topics and roles, journalists may be able to slowly construct a more productive debate not only about immigration and the roles of Latinos in society, but also about what it means to be American.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was designed to answer some basic questions about topics, sources and prevalence of Latino coverage in leading U.S. news magazines. As with any study, there are some limitations. Most notably is the use of a

Only a handful of news magazine stories (out of more than 1500 in 2005) represented Latinos inclusively as an integral part of American communities

Much insight could also be gained from coding news magazine sources' positions on various Latino-related issues.

U.S. Census Bureau list of top Hispanic surnames as a way to identify Latinos in the stories. Counting individuals as Latino based on a Hispanic surname and no other explicit Latino identification can raise questions about the criteria for being Latino.

Another limitation was restricting stories to only main feature stories listed in the table of contents of the magazine. While this captured the majority of news coverage found in each issue, it does exclude portions of the magazine that could have featured Latinos including weekly news round-ups, quotes-of-the-week sections, as well as columnists and editorials.

As the influence of Latinos in the U.S. continues to grow, it is even more important to conduct further research to assess the role of the news media and its representations of the largest minority in the U.S. today.

As mentioned, this study provides a benchmark of data about Latino coverage in news magazines. The year 2006 is turning out to be a landmark year for a follow-up study of Latinos considering the large-scale protests, massive policy attention, and presidential statements on the matter. While future studies of news magazines should count and analyze the number of Latino sources and other aspects of the copy, it would also be important to analyze the visual aspects of these types of stories, especially the cover stories representing Latino immigration issues. Much insight could also be gained from coding news magazine sources' positions on various Latino-related issues.

Another point of interest for future research would be an examination of the bylines of these articles to see the makeup of Latino

writers at these magazines, either as authors of Latino or non-Latino stories.

Finally, since the analysis of news magazine coverage in 2005 indicated a growing Latino political power, it would be important to trace the coverage of Latino political leaders in the future to see how they and their policies are depicted.

METHOD

Using Content Analysis

Content analysis studies systematically, quantitatively and objectively measure the characteristics of content such as news magazine stories. The approach requires selecting the characteristics of a text that interest the researcher and determining how to identify and count them. For this study, this involved coding and counting the stories in the news magazines for the following variables: story topics, the Latino focus of a story, and the number and types of Latino sources quoted or individuals mentioned.

Counting Stories

Before coding for the topic of the story, it was necessary to define what constituted a "story" for the purposes of this study. Stories, as defined in this study, were those that were listed as main feature stories in the news magazines' table of contents. Main feature stories in news magazines' table of contents pages are typically bolded. The news magazines' round-up sections on people/celebrities were included as a way to assess the reporting on Latino artists, entertainers and other prominent figures. This included, for example, *Time's* "People," "10 Questions," and "Milestones" sections; *Newsweek's* "Newsmakers" section; and *U.S. News' "Q&A"* section.

Items in the news magazines that were not counted as “stories” included: round-up sections of news blurbs or quotes, consumer-oriented tidbits on health, tech gadgets, travel; editorials; opinion columns; and letters to the editor. Furthermore, stories with a predominantly non-U.S. or foreign focus (e.g., stories about the tsunami in Southeast Asia or civil war in Sudan) were excluded since this study’s purpose was to analyze the national representation of Latinos. However, stories that involved U.S. government actions and foreign policy were counted. A cover story, which features multiple related sub-stories with various sub-headings, was counted as one story.

After obtaining hard copies of *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* at the local public library, researchers analyzed each weekly issue published in 2005. To ensure reliability, a coding guide describing the variables to be counted and coded was constructed. Three coders were trained to use the coding guide. The three coders read all the main feature stories (see method for how stories were defined) found in each weekly issue of each magazine. Thus, the entire population of stories for the year 2005 were examined.

Coding Story Topics

Stories were assigned to the following mutually exclusive topics:

1. **National/Regional Politics & Social Issues**
Stories in this topic category could include those concerning national security, electoral politics, immigration policies, as well as stories about national or regional social issues, conflicts or controversies including race relations, debates about poverty and abortion, among others.
2. **Arts & Culture/Celebrities & Entertainment**
Stories in this topic category could include reviews or discussions of books, television programs, movies, music, and popular culture phenomena, among others.
3. **Health, Science, Medicine, Environment**
4. **Business/Economy**
5. **Sports**
6. **Education**
7. **Technology**
8. **Calamities**
Stories in this topic category may include stories about natural disasters or major catastrophes caused by humans.
9. **Crime**
10. **Human Interest/Demographic & Lifestyle**
Stories in this topic category may feature stories about teens, baby boomers, changing U.S. demographics, Americans’ busy lifestyles, among others.
11. **Religion**

Determining Latino Focus

Four categories were created to measure the degree to which a news story focused on Latinos. Stories were coded into the four mutually exclusive categories: those predominantly about the Latino community and/or about individual Latinos/as; those that significantly include Latinos as a groups; those that reference Latinos as sources or figures and those that include the Latino community or any individual Latinos/as.

1. Predominantly about the Latino community and/or about individual Latinos/as

The story prominently and centrally features Latinos as a group or a Latino.

**After
obtaining
hard copies
of *Time*,
Newsweek
and *U.S.
News &
World
Report* at the
local public
library,
researchers
analyzed
each weekly
issue
published in
2005.**

The coders noted the number and type of Latino sources in the story, whether or not they were quoted or simply referenced by name.

- 2. Significantly inclusive of Latinos as a group

The story includes Latinos as a group or is obviously relevant to the Latino community (e.g., immigration or civil rights stories). It quotes and features Latinos as important characters in the story among other ethnic group members.

- 3. Mentions individual Latinos as sources or references

The story quotes or references Latinos as sources or figures but the story is not about the Latino community or about being Latino/a. For example, a story about crime in Los Angeles might quote police officer Jorge Rodriguez but the story is not about his Latino identity nor is it about crime as it relates to Latinos.

- 4. Non-Latino Stories

The story is not about the Latino community and does not quote or reference any Latino/a individual.

Counting Latino Sources

The coders noted the number and type of Latino sources in the story, whether or not they were quoted or simply referenced by name. When the ethnicity of the source or reference was not explicit but the last name suggested an Hispanic heritage, coders looked up the name in a list of the top 639 most common Hispanic surnames compiled by the U.S. Bureau of the Census' Population Division. Each Latino/a source was coded as a/an:

Professionals

- 1. Artist/Entertainer/Celebrity
- 2. Activist/Advocate for various social causes
- 3. Local, State or Federally Elected Politician
- 4. Non-Elected Political or Government Official/Civil Servant/Professional (includes political candidates, political campaign workers, press secretaries, and appointed officials, among others)
- 5. Law Enforcement (includes those in public safety, military, police, firefighters, FBI, drug enforcement, among other types)
- 6. Sports Figure
- 7. Businessperson/Entrepreneur
- 8. Educator
- 9. Medical/Health Professional
- 10. Researcher/Scientist
- 11. Legal Professional/Lawyer/Judge
- 12. Communications Professional
- 13. Office Worker
- 14. Engineer/Architect/Technology Professional

Laborers

- 15. Skilled Laborer (e.g., auto mechanic, plumber, carpenter, among others)
- 16. Unskilled Labor (e.g., undocumented migrant workers/day laborers, service industry workers; low-wage manufacturing/factory/construction, among other types)

Individuals Not Defined by Labor

- 17. Criminal
- 18. Student
- 19. Citizen/Community Resident or Member
- 20. Unemployed

USING QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

An interpretive approach was used to complement the content analysis and provide meaningful context for the results. The researcher analyzed all of the stories coded as predominantly or inclusively Latino. This analysis required multiple readings of these stories to ascertain their Latino-related themes and patterns. This approach enabled the researcher to assess whether these types of stories were positive, negative or some mix of both. The critical readings also allowed for a closer examination of how Latinos were labeled.

¹ The three businesspersons noted in the predominantly Latino news stories were found in a non-immigration story - the story listing the top 25 Hispanics in America (August 22, 2005).

² The nine artists/entertainers include: a Latina modern art historian (Mari Carmen Ramirez); an author (Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez); a comedian (George Lopez); a singer (Jennifer Lopez); a filmmaker (Robert Rodriguez); a musician (Gustavo Santaolalla); a fashion designer (Narciso Rodriguez); an actress (Selma Hayek); and a TV host (Cristina Saralegui). The five non-profit/social service workers and activists were: a voter registration activist (Antonio Gonzalez); an American Civil Liberties Union head (Anthony Romero); an archbishop (Jose Gomez); a labor activist (Pablo Alvarado); and, an education advocate (Sara Martinez Tucker). There were three elected politicians: Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa; Sen. Mel Martinez - FL; and, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson. There were three businesspeople/entrepreneurs: an HMO CEO (Mario Molina); a Florida developer (Jorge Peres); and, a baseball owner (Arturo Moreno). There were two communications professionals: an advertising consultant and agency head (Lionel Sosa); and a news anchor (Jorge Ramos). Lastly, there was one medical/health professional (Aida Giachello); one architect (Ysrael Seinuk); and one appointed government official (Attorney General Alberto Gonzales).



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