LATINOS IN WALDO: A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF CONTACT VERSUS MEDIA EXPOSURE ON RURAL AMERICANS’ ACCEPTANCE OF HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS

By

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN MASS COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2016
To my loving and supportive parents, William and Wallace Weathersbee
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First I want to thank my parents, William and Wallace Weathersbee, not only for their moral and financial support as I pursued my master’s degree, but for raising me to appreciate education and learning as a tool not only for intellectual and economic advancement but as one for following my dreams. Secondly, I want to thank my longtime friend and mentor, DeWayne Wickham, for exposing me to journalistic opportunities that piqued my interest in Latin America and the world, and for encouraging me to seek a degree that would enable me to parlay those experiences into a broader field of work. Thirdly, my deepest thanks goes to my thesis committee chair, Dr. Michael Leslie, whose patience, guidance and inspiration was invaluable during my research, as well as fellow committee members Dr. John Richard Stepp and Churchill Roberts. I am extremely fortunate to have worked with such a stellar committee of academicians who hail from a variety of backgrounds. Lastly, I would like to thank the Waldo residents and businesspeople who granted me access into their personal space and lives to complete my research – which I hope will add to the body of knowledge in redefining the role that communication can play in illuminating demographic and cultural changes in a country that continues to be reshaped and redefined by immigration.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Content, Opinion Holding and Social Contact</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Media Use</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Stereotypes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda Setting</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priming</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses and Gratifications</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Hypothesis</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Case Study Approach</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexivity</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnographic Observation</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 RESULTS</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Media Effects</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Contact</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Molino</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waldo Farmers and Flea Market</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneauto Used Car Dealership</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighthouse Global Ministries</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of Study</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>The words represented in the larger fonts were the words which were mentioned the most frequently, and which characterize the interviewees’ overall impressions of Latinos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-2</td>
<td>Context from one of the interviewees –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>News consumption by Waldo interviewees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-4</td>
<td>Contact conditions observed in Waldo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-1</td>
<td>Postmaster Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2</td>
<td>Postmaster news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-3</td>
<td>Retired trucker Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-4</td>
<td>Retired trucker news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-5</td>
<td>Blueberry farm owner Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-6</td>
<td>Blueberry farm owner news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-7</td>
<td>Right Price Auto owner Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-8</td>
<td>Right Price Auto owner news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-9</td>
<td>Right Price Auto sales manager Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-10</td>
<td>Right Price Auto sales manager news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-11</td>
<td>Independent insurance underwriter news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-12</td>
<td>Independent insurance underwriter Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-13</td>
<td>Used car saleswoman news views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-14</td>
<td>Used car saleswoman Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-15</td>
<td>Waldo All-In-One feed store proprietor Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-16</td>
<td>Waldo All-In-One feed store proprietor Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-17</td>
<td>Church congregant Latino views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-18</td>
<td>Church congregant news views</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A-19  Sign company owner Latino views ................................................................. 84
B-1  Light TV watchers’ views on whether Latinos are law-abiding or criminal .......... 85
B-2  Heavy TV watchers’ views on whether Latinos are law abiding or criminal ....... 85
B-3  Light TV watchers’ views on whether Latinos are legal or illegal ...................... 86
B-4  Heavy TV watchers’ views on whether Latinos are legal or illegal ...................... 87
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May 2016

Chair: Michael Leslie
Major: Mass Communication

For the past two decades, Hispanic settlement has been reshaping the U.S. demographically and culturally. In the 1990s, Latino immigration to this country increased dramatically after the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement became a catalyst in displacing Mexican farm workers by flooding its agricultural market with subsidized U.S. goods (Ensinger, 2011), and sparking a wave of illegal immigration from that country. In recent years, Central American immigrants fleeing violence by drug gangs have also been using Mexico as a land bridge to travel to the U.S. (Krogstad, 2016)

The political and social changes that are occurring as a result of the influx of Latinos have been widely reported and acknowledged – a main one being that they are poised to double in population – from 14 percent to 29 percent – by 2050. (Passel & Cohn, 2008) Yet a lesser-publicized demographic and social development surrounding Latino immigration is how they are increasingly settling into rural areas in the Southeast and Midwest, as opposed to the traditional gateway areas of the Southwest and West.
Through surveys, field observations and interviews, this qualitative case study examines how the media effects of television have impacted the views of rural residents of Waldo, Fla., toward their acceptance of Latinos, and the extent to which that impact holds up in the face of contact hypothesis. Waldo was chosen as a site for this exploratory study because with a rural population of 1,160 and a Hispanic population of 109 (American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2014), it has begun to bear visible indications of Latino influence, such as a Mexican restaurant that sits right off Highway 301 and a blueberry farm where 40 percent of the full-time workers now hail from Mexico or Latin America.

This study yielded two interesting findings. The first was that contact, as defined by the tenets of contact hypothesis; i.e., equal status, interpersonal relations, common goals and cooperative interdependence, viewed in the interactions among people in Waldo and Latinos, as well as revealed in the interviews, illuminated exchanges that are often unseen or unanalyzed in media frames of Latino immigration. The second was that the majority of Waldo residents who were interviewed about their media use listed Fox News as their main news outlet – an outlet which, back in 2014, referred to Central American children in U.S. border camps who were fleeing drug violence as part of a process of “illegal dumping." (Kittel, 2014)
The results of this study illuminate the possibility that in rural areas such as Waldo, with stagnant or declining populations, the ways in which Latinos are framed in television news and in other mediums have minimal effects on residents’ attitudes and acceptance of Latinos if aspects of contact hypothesis such as cooperative interdependence and common goals play a greater role in their interactions.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

To a large degree, they [Latinos] are like all people. They make a living and a life, and they take every chance in the world to do that. They’re not much different from anyone else.

Blueberry farm owner, Waldo, Fla.

The U.S. is in the midst of a seismic demographic shift. By the middle of this century, the nation’s population will rise to 438 million. (Passel & Cohn, 2008) Of that number, 67 million will be immigrants, 47 million will be their children and three million will be their grandchildren. (Passel & Cohn, 2008) Additionally, by 2050, the Hispanic population is expected to triple in size, to 128 million. (Passel & Cohn, 2008) This change was brought about by a number of factors such as increasing globalization and population movements, changes in U.S. immigration laws, linkages to immigrant families to communities abroad and labor market opportunities. (Passel & Cohn, 2008)

Yet this shift continues to be a source of conflict and controversy. Immigration is a key topic in the 2016 U.S. presidential campaigns, with the frontrunner for the Republican nomination, billionaire Donald Trump, inciting nativist reactions by campaigning on a promise to build a wall on the U.S. and Mexico border to prevent illegal immigration. (Brand, 2015) Two years earlier the U.S. House of Representatives refused to act on passing comprehensive immigration reform legislation aimed at legalizing undocumented immigrants in spite of, among other things, a report by the Congressional Budget Office which show that it will save taxpayers at least $135 billion during the first decade of implementation and another $685 billion over the following decade, including covering the costs to secure the border. (Parker, 2014)
Parker (2014), an associate professor of political science at Washington University, believes there is a deeper reason why House Republicans opposed immigration reform:

He writes:

House Republicans aren’t motivated by true conservatism. Rather, they represent constituencies haunted by anxiety associated with the perception that they’re ‘losing their country’ to immigrants from south of the border.

Yet the irony here is that many of the House Republicans who either outright oppose, or are skeptical of, immigration reform represent districts with rural towns where many Latinos are now migrating and, to an extent, reviving. Republican representative Renee Elmers, for example, whose North Carolina district includes Robbins, where Latinos make up half of the 1,097 people who live there and have bolstered its stagnant economy (Chesser, 2012), opposes amnesty for undocumented workers. (Schoof, 2015) Elmers did, however, vote against a House bill that would halt President Obama’s executive actions on immigration reform. Among other things, the bill would have removed a ban on the deportation of around five million undocumented workers. (Schoof, 2015) Elmers said it was overly broad in scope. (Schoof, 2015)

Florida Republican representative Ted Yoho, whose Congressional district includes Waldo, continues to be a strident opponent of immigration reform; he proposed the bill that Elmers voted against. (Leary, 2014) Yoho also views Hispanic immigrants through the lens of being lawbreakers – he said he believed that allowing undocumented workers to have amnesty was an insult to the immigrants who arrived in the U.S. legally. (Leary, 2014)
While views such as Yoho’s may emanate from personal biases and stereotypes, they may also be fueled by the way in which Latino immigration is often framed in the media. (Fryberg, Stephens, Covarrubias, Markus, Carter, Laiduc & Salido, 2012) For example, a 2011 content analysis of national and Arizona newspapers that covered that state’s controversial immigration bill, AZ 1070, found that support for the bill, which would have granted law enforcement broad powers to stop or detain people suspected of being undocumented, was often framed in terms of threats to economic security and public safety, while opposition to the bill was often framed in terms of civil rights. (Fryberg, et al., 2012) Additionally, a number of studies show that blacks and Latinos are more likely than whites to be portrayed as lawbreakers on television news. (Dixon & Linz, 2000)

The purpose of this study is to add to the body of knowledge of the effects of media on people experiencing cultural and demographic change, and whether the contact hypothesis, which was originally developed by Gordon Allport in 1954, plays a greater or lesser role in mediating those effects. It also aims to offer media scholars and ethnographers preliminary insights on an emerging demographic trend and its implications for the future. Lastly, it aims to offer traditional news media a new window for framing its coverage of Latino immigration outside of the largely episodic lens of conflict and controversy by examining how Latinos are being accepted into rural towns – areas where they are increasingly choosing to live – and how cooperation and mutual benefit are also playing a role in how Latinos will shape the nation’s social and economic future.
Background

For the past few decades, rural areas have been experiencing precipitous declines in population. (McGranahan, Cromartie, Wojan, 2010) Between 1988 and 2008, half of the nation’s rural counties lost population. (McGranahan, et. al, 2010) Over half of "farming-dependent" counties, where farming accounted for at least 20 percent of earnings in 1987-89, had fewer residents in 2000 than in 1990. (McGranahan & Beale, 2003) Those counties comprised nearly two-thirds of the counties with population losses of over 5 percent from 1990 to 2000. (McGranahan & Beale, 2003) A significant factor behind the decline in rural population, however, hasn’t been job losses and career limitations as much as it has been remoteness and lack of amenities.

Writes USDA demographers David McGranahan and Calvin Beale:

Young adults tend to move away from thinly settled, remote rural counties. Without natural amenities, these counties did not attract enough young families and retirees in the 1990s to make up for the loss of young adults. Over 80 percent lost population in 1990-2000. In contrast, only a small proportion of counties with very high amenity scores lost population.

This decline in rural population has become such a concern to rural policymakers that the USDA made repopulating rural areas a top goal of its 2014-2018 strategic plan. (USDA, 2014) It contends that, “outmigration depletes the economic base of the region and discourages outside investment in infrastructure and other resources needed to attract good-paying jobs.” (USDA, 2014)

Yet as this rural demographic shift began to occur in the 1990s, another shift began. For the first time ever, and largely because of the high volume of Hispanics entering the U.S. during that period, states outside of the traditional Southwest gateway states began to become attractive to Latino immigrants. (Kandel & Parrado, 2008) The
Southeast, in particular, became a magnet for Latinos. As a result, for the first time ever, Hispanic growth that was once largely confined to urban areas is mostly occurring in rural areas; roughly half of all nonmetropolitan Hispanics now live outside of the five traditional Southwestern states of Arizona, Texas, California, New Mexico, and Texas. (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004)

Latino migration to rural areas have also become much more apparent. (Parrado & Kandel, 2008) Between 1990 and 2000, Hispanic growth in rural areas was at 67 percent, while their growth in metropolitan areas was at 57 percent. (Parrado & Kandel, 2008) In the Southeast, the percentage of Latinos moving to nonmetropolitan areas there grew from 11 percent to 19 percent, while decreasing from 66 percent to 63 percent in the Southwest. (Parrado & Kandel, 2008)

North Carolina is a state that has experienced significant growth in its Latino population – especially in its rural towns. (Chesser, 2012) One salient example of that growth is the town of Robbins. Located in Moore County, N.C. Robbins, once known mostly for its jobs in poultry processing and textiles, had a population of only 970 people in 1990. That reflected a 22.8 decrease in population since 1980. (Chesser, 2012) In 2010, however, Robbins’ population was at 1,097 – with Hispanics making up 552, or 50.3 percent, of that number. (Chesser, 2012)

Some 28 cities and towns in North Carolina, in fact – with populations ranging from more than 32,000 to 37 – now have Latino populations of 20 percent or higher. (Chesser, 2012) Regarding this trend Owen Furuseth (2012) associate provost for Metropolitan Studies and Extended Academic Programs at the University of North Carolina, said:
What is striking to me about the data are two broad patterns. First, the highest percentages of Hispanics are overly represented in small towns and cities across the state. From the foothills to the coastal plain, Hispanics are an important ethnic group in rural places. And, I suspect without Hispanic in-migration many of these small towns would be emptying out, losing population. Hispanics play an important role in many economic needs of rural N.C. statewide.

The migration of Latinos from urban areas in the Southwest to largely rural areas of the Southeast are believed to be linked to a number of reasons. One is that the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, which, among other things, authorized an amnesty for undocumented workers who could prove continuous residence in the U.S. since 1982, prompted a massive wave of legalization that led many migrants who were heavily concentrated in the Southwestern states to emerge from the shadows to apply for agriculture jobs. (Massey, 2008) That caused the agriculture industries in those states, as well as other industries offering low-skill, low-wage jobs, to be suddenly inundated with newly legalized workers. That development created more competition for jobs in California, Texas and other gateway states for Hispanic immigrants, yet it also granted the newly-legalized workers the freedom to seek work in other places in the U.S., such as the Southeast. (Massey, 2008)

Another explanation for Latinos choosing to settle into rural areas is linked to quality-of-life issues. A number of ethnographic studies suggest that Hispanics who choose rural communities outside of the Southwest are seeking better schools, insulation from crime and gang activity, and a more tranquil life, (Parrado & Kandel, 2008) while a third explanation centers around the need for workers for domestic industries which do not offer stable, long-term employment. (Parrado & Kandel, 2008) Those industries, such as the Christmas tree farms in Robbins, N.C., and blueberry farms in Waldo, Fla., tend to
only have a need for seasonal workers – and the jobs that they offer tend to be the
types of jobs that native workers, or rather, those who are largely responsible for the
outmigration occurring in rural areas, shun. (Parrado & Kandel, 2008) Immigrants
alleviate obstacles for employers who seek workers for flexible, low-wage jobs because
the wages they earn in the U.S., called destination country wages, are enough for them
to support themselves according to their home country living standards. (Parrado &
Kandel, 2008)

However, the settlement of Hispanic immigrants into rural, usually mostly-white
areas has evoked various attitudes among the residents who tend to make up the
foundations of such towns. Some worry that their culture will be usurped with Hispanic
traditions and languages, and other aspects of foreign culture. (Jensen, 2006) In some
rural areas with meat-processing plants, towns once exclusively comprised of white,
U.S-born residents, studies have shown that the demographic changes have led to
resentments and expressions of xenophobia from those residents toward Latinos who
are increasingly moving in. (Fennelly, 2008) A 2013 study found that rural residents
were significantly more likely than their urban counterparts to agree that immigrants
would increase crime rates and would take jobs away from the native population,
(Garcia & Davidson, 2013) while opinion polls in Nebraska and Iowa found that many
rural residents believed that their quality of life was being negatively affected by
immigrants. (Fennelly & Frederico, 2008)

University of Pennsylvania demographer Leif Jensen argues that rural residents
are likely to have such reactions to Latino immigrants because while their numbers in
rural areas may be small in absolute numbers, their presence there is more apparent.
However, not all rural residents react negatively to their Hispanic neighbors. In the 2006 report, “New Immigrant Settlements in Rural America: Problems, Prospects and Policies,” he writes (2006):

Although there may be some reason for concern among rural communities, given that compared with their urban counterparts, recent immigrants in rural areas tend to be poorer and less well educated, this group also brings some comparative advantages: they are more likely to be working (albeit more often underemployed), less likely to use welfare programs when poor, more likely to be married, and more likely to own their own homes. They also are more likely to be Hispanic (and more specifically Mexican), and thus are bound by a common language.

The reaction among long-term residents to these influxes has been mixed, with some locals reacting negatively out of concern for presumed detrimental social and economic impacts, some reacting positively and viewing these newcomers as a source of much needed revitalization, and a large number are simply ambivalent. Whether indeed the new arrivals are a bane or a blessing for rural America depends on some blend of reality and perception. That is, new arrivals to a place inevitably bring both good and bad in reality, and natives might either perceive or not perceive these beneficial and detrimental effects. But one thing is certain: rapid increases in immigrant populations will be more acutely felt in rural than urban areas.

**Media Content, Opinion Holding and Social Contact**

The arrival of Hispanics into the U.S. is a topic that continues to generate significant news coverage. Such coverage began intensifying in 2004 – the year when President George W. Bush introduced the Fair and Secure Immigration Reform proposal. (Branton & Dunaway, 2009) The next year, New Mexico governor Bill Richardson declared a state of emergency, claiming that illegal immigration had ratcheted up murders and drug smuggling in the state, while in 2006, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger publicly demanded that Congress take action on illegal immigration and pro-immigration rallies were spawned throughout the country.
Additionally, a significant amount of immigration coverage originates from border states experiencing much of the impact of illegal immigration. (Branton & Dunaway, 2009).

Much of that coverage, however, tends to be episodic in nature, and to revolve around issues that are often enshrouded in alarm and negativity, such as safety and border security. In 2007, for example, an analysis of 70,737 stories of 48 media outlets across five media sectors by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism found that while immigration was the fourth biggest story overall for that year, the coverage was inconsistent. (Pew Research Center, 2008) Additionally, a 2009 content analysis of 1,534 immigration articles in 47 California newspapers published between March 2004 and 2005 found that outlets closest to the Mexico border were more likely to produce a higher number of negative news and opinion articles about immigration than the newspapers that were farther away from the border. (Branton & Dunaway, 2009) That analysis also found that newspapers which were corporately owned, and by extension more profit-oriented, were more likely than privately owned newspapers to generate negative news about immigration. (Branton & Dunaway, 2009)

The influence of cable news has also contributed significantly to the proliferation of content and views regarding Latinos and immigration. Although cable news audiences shrank in 2015, mostly because of the disruption of pay television, cable news still reaches nearly two million people daily. (Holcomb, 2015) Additionally, Fox News, which is associated with negative perceptions of Mexican immigrants and more support for restrictive immigration policies (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa, Valenzuela, 2012) continues to lead with prime time audiences. (Holcomb, 2015) Such predominantly
negative news coverage has impacted U.S. audiences’ opinions about immigration. (Gil de Zúñiga, et al., 2012) A 2012 study of immigration perceptions held by viewers of Fox News – which studies have shown to portray news from a conservative slant (Groeling & Baum, 2008) – found that even after controlling for respondents’ ideologies, watching Fox News was associated with holding negative perceptions of Mexican immigrants and higher support for stricter immigration policies. (Gil de Zúñiga, et al., 2012). Additionally, much of the news about Latinos and immigration is relayed by conservative talk show hosts. (Pew Research Center, 2008) In 2007, Pew also found in its analysis of immigration coverage that during May and June of that year, when the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act was being voted on – a bill that would have included a path to legalization and citizenship, coverage of the issue was highest among conservative radio talk show and cable television talk show hosts, 31 percent and 18.5 percent respectively. According to Pew (2008):

Some argue that the nation’s talk hosts had an important role in the demise of the immigration bill. As stated in of our earlier weekly index reports ‘it’s impossible to document how many votes they changed or how many calls and emails they inspired, but derailing the bill certainly was a major priority of such conservative hosts as Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity and Michael Savage.’ This also showed how immigration as a subject became more political in nature.

Opinion polls continue to illustrate what Pew researchers found in 2007; the fact that immigration continues to emerge as a political, rather than a humanitarian, issue. A 2015 Pew Research Center American Trends panel survey found that of the respondents who identified as Republicans, 53 percent said that immigrants were making the U.S. worse, compared to 24 percent of respondents who identified as Democrats. Seventy-one percent of Republicans who were surveyed also said that
immigrants were making crime worse, compared to 34 percent of Democrats and 50 percent of Independents. (Krogstad, 2015) On the question of whether immigrants made the economy better or worse, 71 percent of Republican respondents said they made the economy worse, while again, 34 percent of Democrats said they made it worse and 45 percent of Independents said the same. (Krogstad, 2015)

Social contact, however, continues to be a mitigating factor in how Latino immigrants are viewed in the U.S. A 2012 survey by Latino Decisions/National Hispanic Media Coalition Survey found that non-Latinos who had positive and constant social contact with Latinos began to shed adverse views of Latinos. (Wilkinson, 2012) Another study, conducted in 2004, that measured how Latinos influenced whites’ support for welfare found that in areas with large Latino populations, white stereotypes of Latinos as being lazy decreased because of the various jobs that Latinos often worked. (Fox, 2004). For areas with few Latinos, the findings were opposite. According to the researcher, Cybelle Fox, the findings suggest the positive effects of contact. She writes (2004):

In areas with few Latinos, the lazier whites think Latinos are, the less whites want to spend on welfare. However, in areas that are disproportionately Latino the more hardworking whites think Latinos are (controlling for whites’ stereotypes about blacks), the less whites want to spend on welfare as well. This last result, this article argues, is the product of a social comparison between black and Latino work ethics.

Additional research, however, suggests that contact may not always foment increased understanding or improved relations between Latino immigrants and others in the communities in which they settle. A 2009 report by the Southern Poverty Law Center, in fact, which examined life for low-income Latinos in the South, found that their willingness to work hard – an attribute for which they are largely admired – can
oftentimes lead to them being exploited by unscrupulous employers. (SPLC, 2009)

Among other things, it found that 41 percent of the 500 low-income Latinos it interviewed in Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana said they had experienced instances in which they were not paid for work they had performed. The report, titled “Under Siege: Life for Low-Income Latinos in the South,” also cites anti-immigrant propaganda in the news media as a reason behind that paradox. (SPLC, 2009)

Additionally, Fox’s findings (2004) also raise another paradox: While whites may admire Latinos for their work ethic but do not want to spend more on welfare for those who fall upon hard times, it suggests that contact, at least in this instance, may lead whites to respect Latinos but not to necessarily empathize with them – a result that contact is often expected to create. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005)

**Rural Media Use**

While there is a paucity of studies on how media effects impact rural dwellers, a 2012 Pew Research Center study examined how the news consumption habits of rural dwellers compared to those of urban and suburban residents. It found that while urban and suburban residents use a number of platforms to receive news and information, rural dwellers rely mostly on television for information. (Miller, Mitchell, Purcell, Rainie, Rosenstiel, 2012) According to Pew:

Those who live in rural communities generally are less interested in almost all local topics than those in other communities. The one exception is taxes. They are more reliant on traditional platforms such as newspapers and TV for most of the topics we queried. And they are less likely than others to say it is easier now to keep up with local information.

The study also found that rural residents were less technologically engaged than other communities, and aside from taxes, were less interested in almost all local topics
than residents of suburban and urban communities. (Miller, et al.,) Also, when it comes to sharing news and information through social media, rural residents are limited in that respect, as well. Even though 60 percent of rural people can now access the Internet, compared to 71 percent of urban residents, they articulate far fewer friends online than do urban dwellers. (Gilbert, Karahalios, Sandvig, 2008)

As Latino migration to the rural Southeast and Midwest regions of the nation continue as native rural populations decline – a problem which has become significant enough for the USDA to address in its strategic plan – it is instructive to examine the forces which may exert influence on how Latinos are perceived and accepted in rural environs. Will rural people welcome Hispanics as providing the repopulation that their areas sorely need? (USDA, 2014) Or will they view them through the media-purveyed lens of usurpers? (Pew Research Center, 2008) The central question of this research is the extent to which the views that people who live in rural areas hold about a growing segment of their population – Latinos – are mediated by contact versus what they are exposed to in the media.
I think they’ll do the work that we [Americans] won’t do. That’s what I think. They are very industrious. I know that when I was in business, I had a hard time finding good people to work, and I had a hard time with crackheads and lawsuits. I didn’t have that problem with the Mexicans.

Retired trucker, Waldo, Fla.

Media and Stereotypes

American writer and political journalist Walter Lippmann explained the concept of stereotyping in his 1922 book, *Public Opinion*, as an oversimplified picture of the world, one that satisfies a need for convenience and economy, as opposed to intimate knowledge, in understanding the world. He writes (1922).

There is neither time nor opportunity for intimate acquaintance. Instead we notice a trait which marks a well-known type, and fill in the rest of the picture by means of the stereotypes we carry about in our heads… The subtlest and most pervasive of all influences are those which create and maintain the repertory of stereotypes. We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of perception. They mark out certain objects as familiar or strange, emphasizing the difference, so that the slightly familiar is seen as very familiar, and the somewhat strange as sharply alien (http://www.columbia.edu/itc/journalism/j6075/edit/stereo.html, para.15 &16).

While conceptualizations of stereotypes vary across disciplines, Lippmann’s original definition still undergirds much of the research on the portrayals of racial and ethnic minorities in the media – especially in the area of crime news – and how those portrayals fuel oversimplifications that lead to stereotyping of members of those minority groups. In 2000, for example, University of Michigan communications professor Travis Dixon and University of California communications law professor Daniel Linz conducted a content analysis of television news programming in the Los Angeles/Orange County
area to examine the representation of African-Americans, Latinos and whites as lawbreakers and as law defenders. (Dixon & Linz, 2000) Their findings revealed, among other things, that blacks and Latinos were significantly more likely than whites to be portrayed as lawbreakers than as law defenders on television news. The researchers also examined crime rate data, in a process known as interreality comparison, to determine if the television portrayals of blacks and Latinos being lawbreakers mirrored the social reality. They found that African-Americans were overrepresented as lawbreakers compared to their actual crime rates for Los Angeles and Orange County compiled by the California Department of Justice, and that Latinos and whites were underrepresented. (Dixon & Linz, 2000)

A study published two years later also examined the racial and ethnic content of local programming by three Orlando, Fla. news stations. While that study found that blacks were not overrepresented as criminal suspects in relation to their proportion of the population or among those arrested, Hispanics were slightly overrepresented as criminal suspects in relation to their proportion in the population. (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002) It also found that African-Americans and Latino crime suspects were often presented in more threatening contexts than white suspects, and that while blacks were more likely to be presented as criminal perpetrators than as victims or positive role models, such negative portrayals were amplified for Latinos. According to the report, such findings suggest “that local TV news may contribute to the social construction of threat in relation to Blacks and Hispanics, a condition that is associated with fear of crime, “modern racism,” and the mobilization of various social controls and exclusions.” (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002) According to some, “modern racism,” manifests itself in
three ways: Through denial of prejudice and discrimination against minority groups, annoyance at minority groups’ demands for equal treatment and feelings of resentment against minority groups actually receiving help, such as affirmative action, in alleviating inequality. (Swim, Aikin, Hall & Hunter, 1995)

In 2005, another study was published which examined the portrayal of Latinos on prime-time television. During the 2002 prime-time television season researchers systematically examined, over a two-week period, entertainment programming and its characterization of Latinos. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) They observed 67 distinct programs and 1,488 different characters, and found that of that sample, whites comprised 80.4 percent of the representation, followed by African-American characters at 13.8 percent, Latinos at 3.9 percent, and Asians at 1.5 percent. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) At the programming level, the study found that blacks were significantly more likely to be featured in crime dramas than whites, while Latinos were significantly more likely to be featured in sitcoms than whites. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) Latino men were also shown to have lower job authority and were depicted less frequently than white or African-American men in professional occupations. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005)

The overall findings from that study revealed that race and ethnicity continues to play a role in how Latinos are depicted on primetime television, and that Latino images on television are well below real-world representation. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) In 2004, Latinos comprised 14 percent of the U.S. population, (U.S. Population Profile, U.S. Census, 2005) but only 3.9 percent of the prime time television characters represented. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) Asians, who made up 4.2 percent of the
population in 2004 (U.S. Population Profile, U.S. Census, 2005), were also
underrepresented on primetime television at 1.5 percent (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz,
2005) Whites were represented on primetime television in a percentage equal to their
population in 2004 - 80.4 percent. (U.S. Population Profile, U.S. Census, 2005), while
African-Americans were represented on primetime television by a percentage point
higher than their representation in the population – 13.8 to 12.8 percent. (U.S.
Population Profile, U.S. Census, 2005)

The researchers also suggest that such underrepresentation may prove
daunting to overcome, due to the nature of television programming. Of their study’s
results, they write (2005):

This outcome is not surprising, however, given many scholars’ contention
that television programming is a site of cultural politics where reliance on
stereotypes exists, reinforcing the dominant ideology about race rather
than challenging it. Thus, instead of inviting viewers to question Latino
stereotypes, television generally provides hegemonic [negative] messages
about Latinos in the United States.

The impact of media stereotyping on societal attitudes has also been examined
in much of the literature. Dixon and Linz, for example, believe that when African-
Americans and Latinos are disproportionately portrayed as lawbreakers, as opposed to
law defenders, a cognitive association of blacks and Hispanics as lawbreakers might
develop. (Dixon & Linz, 2000) That possibility is rooted in cultivation theory, which posits
that heavy television viewers believe that television reflects the real world (Morgan,
Shanahan, Signorielli, 2002), while stereotype cognition theories suggest that viewers
might form stereotypes about outgroup members if they are constantly watching them in
stereotyped roles for a significant period of time. (Dixon & Linz, 2000) Additionally, a
study released that same year which examined aspects of crime news scripts of stations
operating in the Los Angeles area found that two specific elements of the scripts – violence and race – influenced viewers to become more supportive of strongly punitive anti-crime measures such as capital punishment and mandatory sentencing. (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000) It concluded that exposure to that aspect of the scripts fueled negative attitudes about racial minorities. (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000)

Framing

Framing is a media effects theory that is rooted in psychology and sociology. It posits that news frames serve to guide viewers or readers on how they should interpret issues or events. (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009) Therefore, by extension news frames can exert a substantial influence on the attitudes, behaviors and beliefs of viewers or readers. (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009) On a macrolevel, framing can be viewed as the modes that journalists and other communicators employ to present information to readers and viewers that will resonate with them. (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996) In this sense, framing is an essential tool for journalists to condense complex issues, such as the Affordable Care Act, for an audience so that it fits into limited space and airtime. On a microlevel, framing describes how audiences use the information they receive as they form impressions and opinions about issues and events. (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007)

The process of news framing, however, can easily lend itself to the perpetuation of stereotypes if the entity charged with framing an issue either oversimplifies the issue for the sake of fitting it into a constrained media space, or if that entity is guided by partisan motives. For example, the 2000 analysis of standard crime news scripts of television stations in the Los Angeles area found that the presentation of the news from
the scripts fueled stereotypes of African-Americans as criminals because they were framed around three elements: violent crime; episodic events with no context or collective outcomes; and the accused perpetrator, who was, many times, an African-American. (Gilliam & Lyengar, 2000) One media scholar, Robert Entman of the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University, even posited in a 2007 article that framing, along with agenda-setting and priming, should be organized under the concept of bias so that researchers can understand the larger implications of their applications. (Entman, 2007)

Depictions of Latinos and the issue of illegal immigration on cable news continue to illuminate ways in which frames can fuel biases. An examination of news reports on illegal immigration featured on Fox News and CNN from September to December of 2005 found that, in addition to being depicted as a crime wave or an invasion, immigration was being framed metaphorically as a pollutant. (Cisneros, 2008) J. David Cisneros, assistant professor of communications and assistant professor of Latina/Latino Studies at the University of Illinois, compared how CNN and Fox News’ framing of illegal immigration mirrored the way in which the Love Canal pollution crisis was covered in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Residents of the communities surrounding Love Canal in upstate New York were subjected to contaminated land and poisoned water seeping into their homes when it was discovered that a chemical company had buried thousands of drums of toxic waste there. During that time, much of the visual imagery focused on the poisonous drums, tainted water and hordes of angry and frustrated residents. (Cisneros, 2008) The immigration coverage during the last
months of 2005, as Cisneros viewed it, was similar – except that the Mexican immigrants were framed as the invaders, or pollutants. He writes (2008):

In the case of pollution crises like Love Canal, news coverage conveyed the danger of contamination through piles of broken, leaky drums and images of the pollutants themselves in dark, ominous pools of waste. One clear example of this visual framing was the footage of dented and damaged toxic waste barrels from the ABC News report. Representations of immigration on major cable news networks like Fox News and CNN often portrayed undocumented immigrants through similar visual techniques, creating an impression that immigrants were collecting like piles of potentially dangerous waste or were approaching the viewer as mobile pollutants.

Another example of stereotype-fueled framing, according to Cisneros, was a 2004 report by CNN correspondent Candy Crowley on President George W. Bush’s immigration plan and the Republican Party’s opposition to it. Crowley, he contends, made the metaphorical image of immigrant as pollutant more concrete first by noting the magnitude of the immigration problem, describing it as “ten to eleven million illegal immigrants living and working in the U.S.,” as Republican representative Tom Tancredo discussed the need for more border security. (Cisneros, 2008) Against that backdrop footage of large groups of Latinos are shown milling around the parking lot, looking for work, or standing in huddles or in groups on sidewalks and street corners, disrupting ideas of pristine order. (Cisneros, 2008)

It is that kind of frame, ostensibly designed to compact the complex issue of undocumented workers entering the U.S. into a package that viewers can grasp that can inadvertently generate stereotypes about Latinos. Crowley’s description of millions of illegal immigrants living and working in the U.S., for example, may be accurate in terms of numbers and in terms of the impact their presence may have in certain areas,
but if they are living and working somewhere, they are doing what most people are expected to do, as opposed to introducing an element of toxicity into the country.

Also, the frame of undocumented immigrants as a threat is a prevalent one. (Fryberg, et al., 2012) A content analysis of three weeks of Arizona newspapers and national newspapers in 2010, when AZ 1070 was being debated, found that while political ideology and proximity to the border influenced support or opposition to the bill, which, among other things, gives law enforcement sweeping powers to stop and detain someone who it suspects of being in the country illegally, national newspapers that supported the bill were more likely than the state newspapers to frame immigrants as threats to both economic security and public safety. (Fryberg, et al., 2012) Such frames are problematic because they purvey a distorted reality; economic and public policy research shows that immigrants can be assets to the U.S. economy. (Carr, Lichter, Kefalas, 2012) Additionally, crime actually decreased in various cities in Arizona between 2000 and 2009, a time when the number of undocumented workers in that state increased significantly. (Fryberg, et al, 2012)

**Agenda Setting**

Agenda setting posits that there is a strong correlation between how strongly the media emphasizes an issue and the importance that mass audiences attribute to that issue. (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007) Political scientist Bernard Cohen (as cited in McCombs & Shaw, 1972, p. 120) said that the press "may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about. The world will look different to different people depending on the map that is drawn for them by writers, editors, and publishers of the paper they read."
However, scholars such as Entman have since challenged Cohen’s distinction.

According to Entman:

…the distinction misleads because, short of physical coercion, all influence over “what people think” derives from telling them “what to think about.” If the media really are stunningly successful in telling people what to think about, they must also exert significant influence over what they think. (Entman, 2007).

According to Entman, agenda setting can be seen as another name for successfully performing the first function of framing: defining problems that are worthy of government and public attention. (Entman, 2007) While media scholars continue to debate the nuances of framing versus agenda setting some, such as Entman, have proposed that those two effects, as well as priming, be studied under the conceptual umbrella of bias. (Entman, 2007) Such a notion resonates as logical, because if one considers the example of immigration, the news decisions that dictate which terms will be used to describe illegal immigrants, as well as which photographs to use, which footage to air, how much space to use to print the story and where, and how often to print it are influenced by various factors, and the effects, in turn, influence the audience to draw a conclusion about the issue being presented. Some scholars also believe that the best way to view the relationship among information, persuasion, agenda setting and framing effects is to understand that they all are spawned by exposure to a news message. (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009)

**Priming**

The propensity for the media to prime various stereotypes is a growing area of research. (Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Carpentier, 2009) Basically, priming, which is viewed as an extension of agenda setting and framing, refers to the short-term
effects of news content exposure on people’s behaviors and judgment. For example, being continuously exposed to footage of Mexicans attempting to cross into the U.S. illegally may cause a person to view all Latinos as undocumented workers, and shape his or her individual behavior toward Latinos – such as summoning the authorities to investigate whether a Latino worker is documented. Much of the literature on priming underscores this example, and research on the impact of media priming stereotypes has also shown that it has much more influence on how people respond to stereotyped groups than to non-stereotyped groups. (Johnson, Olivo, Gibson, Reed, Asburn-Nardo, 2009) An experiment involving white participants that tested the influence of media-based priming of black stereotypes on support for government assistance for African-Americans, as opposed to government assistance for white Americans, bear that out. The first experiment, in which photos of black people looting after Hurricane Katrina, photos which primed the “black criminal” stereotype, reduced support for the black evacuees, but did not reduce support for the white evacuees. (Johnson, et al., 2009) In the second experiment, white participants were exposed to sexual rap music and the “promiscuous black female,” stereotype. That exposure resulted in lessened support for a black needy pregnant woman, but not for a white needy pregnant woman. (Johnson, et al., 2009) According to the researchers, the results underscore earlier findings by social scientists which suggest that “priming people with a symbol or representative of a social category or with aspects of a group stereotype itself can be sufficient to activate stereotypic associations, often without attention or awareness.” (Bargh, Chen, Burrows, 1996) Another study of media priming effects on attitudes toward Latinos found that beginning in 1994, the year that NAFTA was enacted and the year that California
introduced Prop 174, a controversial measure that would have ended most social services to illegal immigrants, mentions of Latinos in news coverage of immigration outpaced mentions of other groups. (Valentino, Brader, Jardina, 2012) It also found that attitudes toward Latinos accounted for most of the impact of ethnocentrism since 1994, (Valentino, et al, 2012) and that based on the focus of news coverage about immigration in the late 1990s and early 2000s, negative attitudes about Latinos were “increasingly salient” relative to other immigrant groups in the county – Asians in particular. (Valentino, et al., 2012) The researchers concluded that the media’s increasing focus on Latino immigration was becoming a better predictor about overall attitudes on immigration – and thereby suggested a group priming process. They wrote (2012):

Bad news about Latino immigrants, but not immigrants of other groups, causes Whites significant anxiety, and this anxiety is critical in triggering opposition to immigration. Thus, while these coverage patterns are not conclusive proof of cause, they are consistent with previous experimental results… Our work suggests that particular groups do, in fact, figure more or less prominently in deliberation over the distribution of rights and resources depending on news salience.

Uses and Gratifications

Uses and gratifications is a psychological communications perspective that focuses not on the effects that media wields on audiences, but the extent to which other factors mediate such effects. (Rubin, 2009) According to it, a medium or a message is a source of influence within the context of other influences, and it posits that media consumers are not merely passive recipients of the messages they receive, but are active communicators as well. (Rubin, 2009) The uses and gratifications approach arose in the 1950s and 1960s, as attempts to measure the short-term effects of mass
media campaigns on people yielded disappointing results. (Blumler, 1979) It challenged the notion in other effects theories that viewed the audience member as an entity to be acted upon by the media, as opposed to an entity that could actively select and shape media to his or her own purposes, purposes which could be mediated by other variables. (Blumler, 1979)

Among the assumptions which guide uses and gratifications is one which posits that social and psychological factors guide, filter and mediate behavior, and that behavior responds to media messages which are often filtered through social and psychological circumstances, which may include relationships and channel availability. (Rubin, 2009) Through the lens of uses and gratification, views about Latino immigrants may be mediated by factors that transcend the effects of framing, agenda setting and priming in some circumstances. This approach is a particularly salient one in this age of Internet use and media selectivity; many people, based on their personal interests and needs, can select the type of information they wish to be exposed to and exclude information which does not interest them. Yet even though audiences have numerous preferences in choosing which messages or mediums they wish to be exposed to, certain factors influence their choices, and those factors may or may not have been shaped by media effects that promulgate stereotypes. For example, in 2010 a Huntsville, Ala., television station aired a report about a break-in and an attempted rape at a housing project in that city. The main person interviewed in the report was Antoine Dodson, who thwarted the attempted rape of his sister. (Gallagher, 2010) Sporting a do-rag and filled with flamboyancy, the effeminate African-American man gave an interview in which he urged everyone in the project to “hide 'yo wife, hide 'yo kids, 'cause they
rapin’ errbody up in here.” (Gallagher, 2010) Dodson’s interview transformed him into an Internet sensation, and, among other things, landed him appearances on late night talk shows. (Gallagher, 2010) So an audience member would not have needed to be exposed to the framing effects of a news television broadcast featuring a stereotype of a flamboyant gay man. All he or she would have to do would be to surf his or her YouTube stream, or maybe view the video shared on Facebook by a friend, to be exposed to that image. Overall, however, the uses and gratifications approach explains, to an extent, how other influences can mediate how or whether audiences absorb stereotypes.

**Contact Hypothesis**

In 1954 American psychologist Gordon Allport developed contact hypothesis. Also known as Intergroup Contact Theory, it is based on the premise that reducing prejudice between groups is dependent on the existence of conditions such as equal status among the groups, common goals, intergroup cooperation, support of authority, laws or traditions and personal interaction. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005) It is still one of the most widely used hypotheses regarding how to curb intergroup conflicts, and while it has been revised many times, the basic premise – that contact is an essential element in reducing stereotypes and prejudice – still remains intact. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005)

One reexamination of contact hypothesis occurred in 1997 when Thomas Pettigrew, social psychology professor at the University of California at Santa Cruz, tested four hypotheses related to it through examining self-reports from 3,608 survey respondents in seven 1988 national probability samples of France, Great Britain, the Netherlands and West Germany. (Pettigrew, 1997) The purpose of the survey was to
test attitudes of majority populations (French, British, Dutch and Germans) toward immigrant minorities (Asians, North Africans, Surinamers, West Indians, Pakistanis and Turks) over time. The first hypothesis tested – that intergroup friendship relates to reduced prejudice – was validated. The second hypothesis – that interpersonal friendship will generalize to pro-outgroup policy preferences concerning immigration – was also validated. He found that, “those with intergroup friends are more liberal about immigration policy. They are more likely to believe the presence of immigrants is good for their country’s future, immigrants’ rights should be extended, all immigrants should be allowed to stay and naturalization should be made easier.” (Pettigrew, 1997)

Pettigrew also found that those in-group members who had neighbors and coworkers who were immigrants also felt more positive about immigrants, but not to the same extent as those who had formed friendships with them. (Pettigrew, 1997)

The third hypothesis, that intergroup friendship effects would generalize to other outgroups, and the fourth hypothesis, that the causal path from friendship to reduced prejudice is larger than the reverse path from less prejudice to more friendship, were also supported. (Pettigrew, 1997) Yet while the findings illuminate intergroup friendships as a strong and consistent predictor of reduced prejudice, they also showed that prejudice reduction, while significant, was lower in those who only knew immigrants as neighbors or co-workers. (Pettigrew, 1997) While all four of Allport’s key contact conditions are less likely to occur in work and neighborhood contexts, feelings of sympathy and admiration for immigrants comprised larger effects for those with contacts with neighbors and co-workers, as well as with friends. (Pettigrew, 1997)
In 2008 Pettigrew and Linda Tropp, social psychology professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, conducted a meta-analysis of the three most-studied mediators of intergroup contact: knowledge enhancement, anxiety reduction and empathy and perspective taking. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008) They found that of the three, “anxiety reduction works as a much stronger mediator,” and allows a “concomitant reduction in prejudice.” (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008)

A study published in 2011 which examined opinions of whites and African-Americans toward Latinos from a 2000 National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey found that the main aspect of the contact hypothesis, the reinforcement of intergroup relations to reduce prejudice, was still salient. (Ellison, Shin, Leal, 2011) The results, researchers claimed, confirmed the importance of close and sustained contact in promoting more favorable views of Latinos. (Ellison, et al., 2011) The results also showed that the contact hypothesis extended into the realm of policy preferences, because people who had Latino friends were “less inclined to accept negative assessments of the consequences of immigration, more prone to believe in the positive effects, and less willing to express support for immigration reform that reduces the number of immigrants allowed to enter the United States.” (Ellison, et al., 2011)

Yet researchers were left with the question of which factors foster or facilitate intergroup friendships. One concern was that 34 percent of the respondents in the data set said they knew Hispanics but did not consider them close. They write:

One issue is that even with opportunities for exposure, some encounters with outgroup members yield only polite, scripted exchanges in which individuals from diverse backgrounds ‘get along’ without sharing their true ideas or concerns (Halualani et al., 2004). (Ellison, et al., 2011).
Yet, they say, propinquity is essential to building trust, and can be enhanced through collaborative efforts to which all parties can contribute to, or benefit from.

According to the researchers:

Neighbors can experience this [propinquity] when working together to improve community life, as can co-workers whose jobs depend on timely execution of project tasks, military personnel whose lives depend on trusting their fellow soldiers in combat, and students who depend on their classmates to complete group exercises.”(Ellison, et al., 2011).

The findings from this review not only underscore the prevalence of media effects which present Latino immigrants stereotypically. They also raise the question of whether a key tenet of media, which is to simplify and compact news and messages to appeal to a broad audience, inadvertently contributes to the perpetuation of such stereotypes. If illegal immigration is framed mostly in the context of being a problem, then that frame provides the oversimplification – the one that Lippmann warned about when he wrote that “we notice a trait which marks a well-known type, and fill in the rest of the picture by means of the stereotypes we carry about in our heads” (1922) – that makes it easier for audiences to grasp the issue and for news organizations to present it, but leaves behind the collateral damage of the image of all Latinos being potential lawbreakers or invaders. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) At the same time, research findings which test the veracity of the contact hypothesis also illustrate that the tenets of contact; i.e., intergroup relations, cooperative interdependence, common goals and equal status or perceived equal status continue to be effective, albeit in varying degrees, in promulgating acceptance toward immigrants and other outgroups.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

There is this [Latino] guy who comes here and picks up all the pine needles along the highway…these Hispanics are picking up pine needles day and night. Try getting some Americans to do that.

Insurance underwriter, Waldo, Fla.

Theoretical Framework

This case study is designed to gauge the extent to which tenets of the contact hypothesis hold more of an influence of Waldo residents’ reactions to, and interactions with, Latinos in their rural town than the effects of the media they consume. Current research shows that media effects such as framing, agenda-setting and priming have been prevalent in news about immigration, and Waldo, with a population of 1,160, is home to 109 Hispanics – nearly 10 percent of its population. (American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2014) Seventy-eight percent of its population is white, while 22 percent is black. (American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2014) It also is home to blueberry, vegetable and citrus growing operations that rely on seasonal agricultural labor that attracts Latinos.

Located 14 miles east of Gainesville, Waldo was once a major railroad stop in the state. It thrived because the railroad and the Santa Fe Canal made it possible for it to transport citrus and other agricultural products, such as blueberries, to various commerce points before it slipped into decline after the Great Depression and the demise of the Seaboard Air Line Railway route. (City of Waldo, 2016) The town has no daily or weekly newspaper – although the Waldo Phoenix, a monthly newsletter published by the Waldo Historical Society and sponsored by advertisers – includes
news items of local interest. The Gainesville Sun is also circulated in Waldo. It is also served by three area television stations; WCJB-20 and WUFT-5 in Gainesville and WOGX-51 in Ocala.

Comcast and Direct TV also operate in Waldo – and they provide residents with access to cable network news and entertainment shows.

**The Case Study Approach**

According to John W. Creswell, professor of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a case study is a qualitative inquiry approach in which the researcher explores a “real-life, contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems. (Creswell, 2013) Case study research begins with identification of a specific case, which can be a concrete entity such as an individual, a small group or an organization or partnership. (Creswell, 2013) It can also be a less concrete entity, such as a community, a relationship, a decision process or a specific project, and is typically done over a period of time. (Creswell, 2013).

According to sociologist Earl Babbie, the chief purpose of a case study can be descriptive, as when an anthropologist describes the culture of a preliterate tribe, or the in-depth study of a particular case can yield explanatory insights, such as when community researchers Robert and Helen Lynd (1929, 1937), and W. Lloyd Warner (1949) sought to understand the structure and process of stratification in small-town USA. (Babbie, 2005) Robert K. Yin, an American social scientist and foremost expert on case study research, states that all case study research begins with the desire to “derive an up-close or in-depth understanding of otherwise in-depth understanding of a single or small number of “cases,” set in their real-world context. (e.g., Bromley, 1986,
The closeness aims to produce an invaluable but complex understanding—an insightful appreciation of the “case”—hopefully resulting in new learning about real world behavior.” (Yin, 2012) According to Yin, the first and most common condition that governs a case study is that interest in a case covers multiple conditions extending over time. (Yin, 2012) He maintains that, “analyzing the temporal pattern can be the explicit subject of a case study, as in the unfolding of key events that might explain some culminating event—or as in a developmental case study that could track human or animal behavior (e.g., Denenberg, 1982).” (Yin, 2012) He further states that, “if a temporal pattern is not a direct topic of inquiry or is fairly short (e.g., Bromley, 1986, p. 5), it can create a continual flow of variables that may be relevant and that cannot be ignored.” (Yin, 2012) Those variables include important events that occur at different points in time and may become an essential part of understanding a case. (Yin, 2012) Another condition for a case study is an in-depth inquiry into the case, while another is contextual conditions. For example, if the case is a small group or an organization, data about cultural, economic, social, and political conditions and trends would be counterpart components. (Yin, 2012)

According to Creswell, a good case study involves a variety of qualitative data to produce an in-depth understanding of the case. (Creswell, 2013) Such data includes, but is not limited to, interviews, observations, documents and audiovisual materials. (Creswell, 2013) Case studies are also not limited to any particular type of data or evidence. (Yin, 2009) Both qualitative and quantitative data may be relevant, and should be included as part of a case study. (Yin, 2009) Creswell also states that while he prefers to select cases for purposeful sampling that show different perspectives on a
problem, process or event that he wants to portray, he may also select ordinary cases, accessible cases or unusual cases. (Creswell, 2013)

The goal of qualitative case studies in which purposeful samples are used to address specific research questions are not to generalize the findings externally, but to develop an in-depth description, interpretation, and explanation of a specific case or cases. (Creswell, 2013) Nonetheless, the research should strive for validity. One method of achieving that is through a process known as triangulation. Triangulation is a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources to form themes or categories in a study. (Creswell & Miller, 2000) As a validity measure, triangulation is a step taken by those who are only employing the researcher’s lens, and it is a systematic process of sorting through the data to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas. (Creswell & Miller, 2000) Qualitative researchers tend to provide corroborating evidence collected through multiple methods to devise a narrative account. (Creswell & Miller, 2000) The narrative account is valid because researchers go through the process and rely on multiple forms of evidence rather than a single incident or data point in the study. (Creswell & Miller, 2000)

The case study method of research is particularly beneficial for this study. Hewing to the triangulation concept, the researcher began with a pilot questionnaire administered to 20 Waldo residents to determine the extent to which they were encountering Latinos in their lives, and the impact that television viewing had on their views toward Latinos. (See Appendix C) The survey of 20 people was administered in the spring of 2015. The following winter, the researcher conducted a series of field
observations over three weeks and in four purposeful selected sites – El Molino Mexican restaurant, Waldo Antique and Flea Market, Veneauto used car dealership and Lighthouse Global Ministries Pentecostal Church – to examine interactions between Latinos and local residents. Finally, the researcher selected a purposeful sample of ten people who lived in or near Waldo at Waldo sites where they might be likely to encounter Latinos. The researcher then conducted interviews with them regarding their general views about Latinos and their news and entertainment show preferences.

**Reflexivity**

According to Creswell, reflexivity is an approach in writing qualitative research in which the researcher is conscious of the biases, values and experiences that he or she brings to a qualitative research study. (Creswell, 2013) The researcher must also describe how his or her experiences with the central phenomenon of the study can potentially shape the interpretation he or she brings to it. (Creswell, 2013) It is particularly important for researchers to acknowledge and describe their entering beliefs and biases early in the research process to allow readers to understand their positions, and then bracket or suspend those researcher biases as the study proceeds. (Creswell & Miller, 2000) Reflexivity is a validation procedure that uses the lens of the researcher, but is clearly positioned within the critical paradigm where individuals reflect on the social, cultural and historical forces that shape their interpretation. (Creswell & Miller, 2000)

The site selected for this case study, Waldo, was chosen by the researcher because the researcher observed phenomena that indicated an increase in Latino influence. Such phenomena included an authentic Mexican restaurant on Highway 301
near a boarded-up Hardee’s fast-food restaurant, and a car dealership just outside of Waldo that flew Venezuelan, Mexican and Dominican flags. The researcher also observed Latino youths playing basketball in the railroad park that is located in the center of the town, as well as Latinos at the Waldo Antique and Flea Market. These observations piqued the researcher’s instincts as a journalist – which is the researcher’s profession. It also piqued the researcher’s interest as a journalist who has traveled extensively to Latin America and the Caribbean, and has developed an interest in Latin American issues and their connection to U.S. economic and social policy. Additionally, the researcher is an opinion columnist for *The Florida Times-Union* in Jacksonville, Fla., and appears periodically as a news and opinion commentator on Jacksonville television and radio stations. While the researcher does not write regular opinion columns about Latin America and immigration, most of the opinion stances taken by the researcher when she has written about those topics have favored immigration and the acceptance of refugees from impoverished or unstable countries. The researcher also writes frequently about racism, poverty, income inequality and social justice not just for the *Times-Union*, but for media outlets such as *The Root*, an online news site which caters to African-Americans and is owned by Univision, a Latino-operated media conglomerate.

**Data Collection**

The first stage of data collection for this case study began in spring of 2015. A pilot survey, titled: *Latinos in the Waldo Community*, was administered to 20 Waldo residents chosen through convenience sampling. A pilot study is research that is done on a small scale that allows researchers to get a clearer idea of what they want to know.
and how to examine it before proceeding with a larger study, and to test survey questions and to refine hypotheses. (Crossman, 2014) In the case of Waldo, with a population of 1,160 and with limited news coverage and research about demographics and social change, the researcher conducted the pilot study as an essential first step. The questionnaire contained semantic differential formatted questions – 10 questions and eight sub-questions- gauged to determine the extent of contact between Waldo residents and Latino immigrants, and their television viewing habits. The semantic differential format was chosen because it has a greater rigor and structure than other formats, and the data is more suitable for indexing. (Babbie, 2005)

Of the 20 people who agreed to participate in the survey, six were outdoors enjoying a barbecue, one was at Randy’s Seafood Shack, four were at the Waldo flea market, three were at the Waldo Public Library, one was at the public housing complex in Waldo, one was a Subway cashier, another was a Dunkin’ Donuts cashier, and three were part of a group of people having a picnic at the Waldo Community Center. They all were amicable and cooperative, and required little persuasion to participate. While the survey responses were part of a quantitative method, the results provided the basis for the researcher to proceed in designing a qualitative case study approach.

The second stage of data collection began in the late fall of 2015 – after the researcher, in consultation with her thesis committee, decided that a focus study approach would be too problematic – and continued in winter of 2016 with field observations and interviews. To conduct the field observations, the researcher purposefully selected four sites in Waldo. Two were sites which were governed by a Latino cultural presence – El Molino Mexican restaurant and Veneauto Used Car
Dealership – while the other two sites, Waldo Farmers and Flea Market and Lighthouse Global Ministries, were sites governed by a rural, non-Latino presence. The researcher was guided in making those selections because although the Latino population in Waldo is nearly 10 percent, (American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2014) there are not a variety of places where contact between Latinos and non-Latinos in Waldo can be readily observed.

Also, according to Babbie, by going directly to the social phenomenon under study and observing it as completely as possible, researchers can develop a deeper and fuller understanding of it. (Babbie, 2005) He also states that field research is especially appropriate for the study of attitudes and behaviors best understood within their natural settings, as opposed to the somewhat artificial settings of experiments and surveys. (Babbie, 2005)

The researcher chronicled ten sets of observations over a three-week period at the selected sites in the third-person point-of-view. The researcher also conducted the observations as a nonparticipant/observer as participant, (Creswell, 2013) to minimize the issue of reactivity. Reactivity occurs when the subjects of social research begin to react to the fact of being studied, and thereby alter their normal behavior as a result. (Babbie, 2005) While the researcher notified the proprietors of El Molino and Veneauto of her research in order to gain access, reactivity was minimal because the Latino proprietors were not the subjects of the study. No notification was necessary at the Waldo Farmers and Flea Market, because it is an outdoor market open to the public, and the researcher was able to access Lighthouse Global Ministries as a guest. At El Molino the researcher positioned herself as a customer and detailed four interactions
between the Mexican waiter and owner with their non-Latino customers. At the farmers and flea market, the researcher detailed three interactions of Latinos with non-Latinos; a Latina vendor and white customers, a Latino couple and a white concessions vendor, and reactions to two Latino men as they browsed through the market. At Veneauto the researcher sat in a chair next to the desk in the front office and detailed interactions between a white customer and the Dominican sales manager, and an African-American woman and the Dominican sales manager. At Lighthouse Global Ministries, the researcher settled into a pew behind one where a Mexican church member and his wife were sitting to detail interactions between them and the white members with whom he shared the pew.

Lastly, the researcher conducted interviews of 10 Waldo residents over a three-week period to gauge their views of Latinos and their media preferences. The researcher traveled to sites where Latinos were most likely to frequent, and where encounters between Latinos and Waldo residents might occur frequently enough to generate an impression. The researcher conducted two interviews at the Waldo Post Office, one at Straughn Farms, two at Right Price Auto Sales, two at Veneauto, one at Waldo All In One feed and bait shop, one at Lighthouse Global Ministries, and one at Waldo Community Center. The shortest interview was 20 minutes, while the longest was two hours. Open-ended questions – questions for which the respondent is asked to provide his or her own answers – were asked, as qualitative interviews depend almost exclusively on open-ended questions. (Babbie, 2005) While some qualitative researchers believe that a minimum of 30 minutes is needed to develop a coherent account, some, such as University of Massachusetts sociology professor Robert Weiss,
acknowledges that any interchange, no matter how brief, can produce an interesting observation. (Weiss, 1994) This researcher obtained interviews by visiting the selected sites unannounced, and many of the respondents had to accommodate the researcher’s interview request during their work hours. The researcher also decided to visit the sites unannounced to minimize the issue of reactivity, which scheduled interviews on a sensitive topic such as race and ethnicity could produce. The interviews were handwritten in a research tablet and typed into a Word document. While audio recordings are emphasized for most qualitative research, (Creswell, 2013, Weiss, 1994) Weiss recommends that in situations where a tape recorder might be intrusive, or deterrents to candor, then the researcher should take notes. (Weiss, 1994) In the case of this researcher who interviewed strangers who requested anonymity, asking to record their answers could have either been a detriment to candor, or could have resulted in terminated interviews.

Saturation refers to reaching a point at which using the same methods are no longer finding different results, and it remains a concept for validating qualitative research. However, it continues to be a concept that is hard to define and problematic because of the many research designs which exist. (Fusch & Ness, 2015) When and how a researcher reaches saturation will vary from study design to study design. (Fusch & Ness, 2015) The researcher employed a triangulation method to validate research because of resource limitations that would have made it difficult to remain in the field for the extended amount of time needed to achieve saturation with interviews or one form of data collection.
Data Analysis

Results of the pilot study were subjected to quantitative analysis through SPSS Statistics, a software package commonly used for statistical analysis in social science. While the pilot surveys were analyzed through a quantitative means known as cross tabulation, the results provided the basis for the researcher to proceed in designing a qualitative case study approach. Crosstabs were analyzed to compare variables designed to measure television exposure and contact, such as television watching and personal knowledge of Latinos to variables designed to gauge stereotypes, such as whether Latinos are criminal or law-abiding, or legal or illegal. The results of that analysis is presented in pie graphs. (See Appendix B)

The field observations were organized on a clustered column chart, with colored keys initialed with conditions for contact hypothesis: Cooperative interdependence (CI), common goals (CG), equal status (ES) and interpersonal relationships (IR). (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008) Some interactions were categorized under multiple conditions, as the goal is to examine the extent and type of contact. The researcher created the chart to make a visual comparison of commonalities within an observation.

The interviews were analyzed with COADAS NVivo 11 software through the use of word clouds – data visualization which displays word counts in a text. The more a word appears in a text, the larger the word is displayed in the cloud. While researchers have raised concerns about the use of word clouds as a tool of qualitative analysis because they solely rely on the frequency of the appearance of a word and not the context in which it appeared (Henderson & Segal, 2013) and while they are less useful for complex analysis, they can be used in the early stages of analysis to help evaluators
identify descriptive key words in interview and focus group transcripts or to compare multiple data sets or transcripts. (Weisgerber & Butler, 2009) For example, two or more word clouds can be shown together to contrast word usage in the documents. Also, when paired with explanations, they can be used in the initial stages data gathering to illustrate dominant ideas or themes for lay audiences. (Henderson & Segal, 2013) The researcher addresses the concern about missing context with word clouds through pairing excerpts of each individual interview with each corresponding word cloud. (See Appendix A)

**Ethnographic Observation**

According to Lynda M. Baker, an associate professor in the Library and Information Science Program at Wayne State University whose work centers on research methods, observation has a long history as an ethnographic research method. (Baker, 2006) Its primary value is that it allows researchers to study people in their native environment in order to understand “things” from their perspective. (Baker, 2006) Observation requires the researcher to spend considerable time in the field with the possibility of adopting various roles in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the people being studied, and a variety of techniques are used to collect data. (Baker, 2006) Additionally, according to Baker, observation “is a complex research method because it often requires the researcher to play a number of roles and to use a number of techniques, including her/his five senses, to collect data. In addition, despite the level of involvement with the study group, the researcher must always remember her/his primary role as a researcher and remain detached enough to collect and analyze data relevant to the problem under investigation.” (Baker, 2006) In
the role of unobtrusive observer, the researcher observes, but does not participate or interact with the subjects he or she is observing to any great extent. (Baker, 2006) In this particular case study, the researcher, an African-American woman, employed an ethnographic observation method in gathering data because she was particularly conscientious about minimizing the issue of reactivity, as she was seeking to gauge reaction to the issue of Latino immigration; one that is politically charged and racially and ethnically sensitive. The researcher was able to gain a sense of the Waldo community and culture through the time spent and observations made while taking notes at El Molino restaurant, Waldo Farmers and Flea Market, Veneauto Used Car Dealership and Lighthouse Global Ministries. Before that, the researcher learned about the community through locating people to complete the pilot surveys and engaging in limited conversations with them in their yards and at public places such as the Waldo Public Library and the Waldo Community Center. Through this approach the researcher grasped some sense of the context which might serve to explain native residents’ attitudes toward Latino immigrants.

The central research questions of this study are as follows:

- RQ1: What views do Waldo residents hold about Latinos?
- RQ2: Are the views that Waldo residents’ hold about Latinos similar to the framing of Latinos in the national media?
- RQ3: What kinds of contact and exchanges do Waldo residents have with Latinos?
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

They’re [Latinos] very friendly. The reason many of them are moving to places like this (Waldo) is because they don’t have time to learn how to live here (in the U.S.) They are looking for a quiet place in the countryside.

Used car saleswoman, Waldo, Fla.

Impact of Media Effects

The first research question asked:

• RQ1: What views do Waldo residents hold about Latinos?

Views of Latinos by Waldo residents were reflected in two sources of data: the pilot survey and the interviews. Because the pilot survey was designed to test hypotheses regarding the degree of television exposure versus contact when it came to Waldo residents’ views of Latinos, only significant findings were analyzed. Results from the crosstab analyses (See Appendix B) of the 20 respondents were as follows:

• On the degree of belief as to whether Latinos are criminal or law-abiding: One strongly viewed them as criminal; two viewed them as criminal; seven held neutral views on whether they were criminal or law-abiding; five viewed them as law-abiding and three strongly viewed them as law-abiding.

• On the degree of belief as to whether Latinos are legal or illegal: One strongly viewed them as illegal; three viewed them as illegal; five held neutral views on whether they were legal or illegal; five viewed them as legal and four strongly viewed them as legal.

• On whether Latinos have changed Waldo positively: Four agreed that they had changed the community positively; 11 somewhat agreed that they had changed the community positively; three were neutral on whether they had changed the community positively and two disagreed that they had changed the community positively.

The survey showed that half of the respondents knew Latinos personally, and 15 of the 20 respondents agreed that Latinos had changed Waldo positively.
The word cloud analysis and summary data reveals that words associated with industriousness – good, work and business – were among the top ten words used to describe Latinos. The word mentioned the most to describe Latinos was people, while the word family describing Latinos was featured in the top ten words: This word cloud represents the combined words of all 10 Waldo residents who were interviewed.

![Word Cloud](image)

Figure 4-1. The words represented in the larger fonts were the words which were mentioned the most frequently, and which characterize the interviewees’ overall impressions of Latinos.

![Context](image)

Figure 4-2. Context from one of the interviewees –
A Waldo sign company owner stated:

I don’t have anything but love for them [Latinos]. They’re God’s children too. I don’t think they’re any different from any other nationality or any other group. “In the businesses that I’ve had, anytime I’ve needed workers I’ve hired them. I’ve hired them for construction jobs and I’ve met them socially. You will always have those who will skirt the laws as far as legalities go, but that’s in every group. “I’ve met them socially and they’re really good people.

While one interviewee mentioned that she had dated two Latino men and found them to be abusive, none of the other interviewees said anything that could be construed as negative toward Latinos. Additionally, the words illegal immigrant or criminal were never mentioned in the interviews.

The second research question asked:

- **RQ2 Are the views that Waldo residents’ hold about Latinos similar to the framing of Latinos in the national media?**

Responses from the pilot study portray an ambiguous picture as to whether the ways in which the illegal immigrant media frame for Latinos (Cisneros, 2008, Fryberg, et al., 2012) impacts Waldo residents’ views about Latinos:

- Of the 10 respondents who said they watched television 30 minutes or less a day, two viewed Latinos as criminal versus law-abiding; six held neutral views on whether Latinos were criminal or law abiding; one viewed Latinos as law-abiding and one strongly viewed Latinos as law-abiding.

- Of the eight respondents (two didn’t answer this question) who said they watched television more than two hours a day, one strongly viewed Latinos as criminal versus law-abiding; one held a neutral view on whether Latinos were criminal or law-abiding; four viewed Latinos as law-abiding and two strongly viewed Latinos as law-abiding.

- Of the 10 respondents who said they watched television 30 minutes or less a day, two said they viewed Latinos as being legal versus illegal; five held neutral views on whether Latinos were illegal versus legal; one viewed Latinos as legal and two strongly viewed Latinos as legal.
Of the eight respondents (two didn't answer this question) who said they watched television more than two hours a day, one strongly viewed Latinos as being illegal versus legal; one viewed Latinos as being illegal versus legal; none held neutral views on Latinos being legal versus illegal; four viewed Latinos as being legal and two strongly viewed Latinos as being legal.

The possibility later emerged that some respondents may not have completely understood the question regarding amount of television viewing, as at least one respondent claimed to watch television less than 30 minutes a day, but listed favorite programs that were an hour long each! Nonetheless, the findings do raise questions about the extent to which media stereotypes are shaping the views of Waldo residents toward Latinos.

Results of the additional interviews this researcher conducted of Waldo residents to gauge the impact of media stereotypes on their opinions about Latinos raise similar questions. Of the top ten words interviewees mentioned when asked to name the news and entertainment channels they watched, Fox [News] was the first news channel mentioned, followed by CNN. Fox is also the fourth most frequently mentioned word in the interviews, followed by CNN. Here’s what the following word cloud illustrates:

Figure 4-3. News consumption by Waldo interviewees
This is significant because Fox News, along with CNN, have been major contributors to the media frame of Latino immigrants as an invasion or pollutant (Cisneros, 2008). Yet the views of heavy television watchers, as well as the general views of the interviewees toward Latinos, do not reflect the anxieties or the nativism that one might expect from being exposed to such framing and priming. One theoretical explanation may lie with uses and gratification; many of the respondents could be using media for the utilitarian purposes and for the connectivity that they need in their rural lives more than as a source of news and influence.

Impact of Contact

The third research question asked:

- RQ3: What kinds of contact and exchanges do Waldo residents have with Latinos?

The contact hypothesis posits that if conditions of equal status (ES), cooperative interdependence (CI), interpersonal relationships (IR), and common goals are present (CG), prejudices and stereotypes can be reduced. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005) While this hypothesis has been refined over the years, most researchers agree with the basic tenets. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005) To gauge the type and the extent to which such contact conditions existed among Latinos and people in Waldo, the researcher conducted field observations at El Molino restaurant, an authentic Mexican restaurant which plays Mexican music and exhibits little non-Mexican décor; at Waldo Farmers and Flea Market, where visitors can find fresh produce amid booths that display Confederate flags and memorabilia; at Veneauto Used Car Dealership, where the Venezuelan owner works to get struggling buyers a good deal; and Lighthouse Global Ministries, where Mexican members now play in the church band.
The researcher made ten observations and categorized them under the Allport contact conditions to which they adhere. The conditions are: Common Goals (CG); Cooperative Interdependence (CI); Interpersonal Relationships (IR); Equal Status (ES).

Figure 4-4. Contact conditions observed in Waldo

As illustrated in the chart, interactions between Latinos and people in Waldo occurred during exchanges or negotiations for goods or services. Common goals was the most frequent contact condition observed, followed by cooperative interdependence. (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). Equal status was the least frequent contact condition observed. Yet while the field observations in Waldo revealed some muted eye contact and indifference in some instances, most of the interactions were polite and respectful, and in three cases in which interpersonal relations were observed, sincere.
Field observations are as follows:

**El Molino**

El Molino is an authentic Mexican restaurant that opened in Waldo in 2004. Its owner and his son and grandson migrated to the U.S. in the late 1990s, and lived in Gainesville for some time before moving to Waldo and setting up the restaurant there. El Molino abuts a crumbling motor lodge, where truckers and migrants often stay during the blueberry harvest season, and without the sign the restaurant is fairly non-descript.

One of the first things that are noticeable is the fact that El Molino has outlasted the Hardee’s fast-food restaurant, which closed in 2012 and now sits boarded-up next to it. Inside, El Molino is uncompromisingly Mexican; Latin music plays in the background and Spanish art – such as a poster announcing a bullfight in Spanish – adorns the walls. The only thing commercially American is the Bud Light sign; Gutierrez’s son is the waiter. The menu also includes an explanation about how not all Mexican food is spicy – and it lists non-spicy choices to patrons. One Friday evening the researcher observed the following interactions:

- **Interaction 1:** A stocky, middle-aged white man, adorned in a camouflage jacket, walks in and takes a seat at the counter. He has placed a takeout order, and the Mexican waiter brings it to him and rings him up. He thanks the waiter as he pays, but barely looks up as he pockets the change from his purchase.

- **Interaction 2:** A young white family walks in and seats themselves in a booth near the rear of the restaurant. The man looks to be in his 20s, and he is also wearing a camouflage jacket and pants. The woman with him also looks to be in her 20s, and she is holding an infant in a carrier. A middle-aged woman, possibly the grandmother, accompanies them. They peruse the menu, then look up at the waiter as they ask him to return later to take their order.

- **Interaction 3:** A middle-aged, white couple seats themselves at the third booth from the front of restaurant. When the waiter comes the woman glances up at him and brusquely orders two tacos and a beef burrito with lots of sour cream on the side, while the man orders the Mexican platter. When the waiter returns with their
order they thank him, but barely look up. They are also engrossed in a conversation about how their home appliances are malfunctioning and they don’t quite know what to do about it.

- Interaction 4: A white woman, who looks to be in her 30s, and her son, a preteen, are seated at a front booth. They are finishing up their meal when they ask to see the Mexican owner. They then engage him in conversation about the old Waldo School, which was recently shut down, and how his children once attended and what a loss it is to the small town. They also discuss his progress on his second marriage, and how they had heard that his restaurant was closing down. He assured them that nothing could be further from the truth, and that his restaurant had survived there for 14 years and would continue to survive. They shared a lot of banter before leaving.

Four of these interactions illustrated three conditions of contact hypothesis.

- The condition of cooperative interdependence was met when the customers respectfully requested service and the proprietors respectfully provided it; an extension of intergroup cooperation could also be realized in the fact that on the menu, El Molino informs customers that “not all Mexican food is spicy,” and guides them to non-spicy choices.

- The condition of common goals was met with the customers’ goal of seeking dinner and the proprietors’ goal of providing it.

- The condition of equal status, or perceived equal status, was not met. However, the customers requested service without any apparent condescension; i.e., talking down, toward the proprietors and the proprietors did not condescend to the customers.

- The only instance of interpersonal relationships was viewed in the proprietor’s conversation with the white female customer and her son. Yet what could be found in that conversation was one possible example of the impact of contact versus media effects. El Molino opened in 2004 – the same year that President G.W. Bush stoked nativist reactions by introducing a proposal that would grant temporary working status to illegal immigrants who already held U.S. jobs. (Collins, 2004) If El Molino was able to open that year with little consequence and generate enough business in a rural area – areas where some researchers have found that the people hold stronger anti-immigrant sentiments than urban dwellers (Garcia & Davidson, 2013) – then its survival may exemplify the impact of contact.

**Waldo Farmers and Flea Market**

Waldo Farmers and Flea Market on U.S. Highway 301 is the main fixture on that highway that announces to travelers that they are in Waldo. A variety of merchants sell
goods ranging from produce, to farm animals to memorabilia. What stands out, though, are the Confederate flags and Confederate memorabilia there. However, it apparently hasn't created a hostile enough atmosphere for Latinos and African-Americans to stay away. Here is what the researcher observed:

- **Interaction 5:** A Latino couple – they were speaking Spanish to each other – arrived at the market around noon. Hand-in-hand, the first place they visited was a food booth, which served hot dogs, burgers and sandwiches. They discussed what they wanted to eat in Spanish, then conveyed their choice – two Italian sausage dogs – in English to the vendor, a white woman. She then asked them, without a hint of exasperation in her voice, as to whether they wanted grilled onions on it. They said yes. After they received their food, the researcher followed them from a distance for another five minutes as they browsed the booths and continued to speak to each other in Spanish. The reactions from others were muted; no one reacted with hostility or revulsion as they communicated with each other in Spanish.

- **Interaction 6:** A Latina vendor is selling used large appliances. She is accompanied by her two young daughters, ages 6 and 4. Her daughters frolic in the aisle, laughing and speaking in Spanish. Two browsers, white people, stop and compliment her on her daughters' beauty, but they barely look at or consider her wares. Later, a white couple stops and the man opens the refrigerator, shuts it, and says not a word to the vendor. After a half hour, around ten people have actually stopped and checked out her wares, but had few questions and purchased nothing. Out of ten who stopped, five asked her more questions about her daughters, such as their ages and where they were from, than about the products she was selling.

- **Interaction 7:** Two Mexican men – they told me they were from Mexico and were communicating to each other in Spanish – walked briskly through the portion of the market where old books and Americana-type paraphernalia were being sold. They were hanging out for the day, and their Spanish didn't attract much reaction or attention on this day, which was midday on a Sunday. The researcher followed them for a while before noticing that her presence made them more nervous than the mostly-white crowds that were arriving.

- Three contact conditions were observed in the area of common goals. The Latino couple and the white vendor had the goal of seeking a service and providing it. The Latina vendor, while not successful in making a sale in the half-hour that she was observed by the researcher, exemplified a common goal with her customers simply by being in an arena of commerce and exchange, as did the Mexican men who were browsing in the market.
Two observations met the condition of cooperative interdependence; the Latino couple purchasing sausage dogs and the white vendor asking them, as she did her white customers before them, if they too wanted grilled onions, and the Latina vendor explaining her prices to potential customers who were interested in learning more.

Equal status, or perceived equal status, was observed in the example of the two Mexican men. They were there to browse, as was many other people, and no one challenged them, or even noticed them – aside from the researcher – in their efforts to do so.

**Veneauto Used Car Dealership**

The third site where the researcher observed contact conditions between Latinos and people in Waldo was at Veneauto. It is owned by Luis Argueta, a Venezuelan immigrant who moved to Gainesville about a decade ago. While his business is technically not in Waldo, it sits about a quarter-mile from its boundary on Waldo Road, and attracts a lot of customers from that area. It once flew Venezuelan, Mexican and Dominican flags alongside the U.S. flag until an ordinance that apparently limits the number of flags that can be flown outside a business was enforced. His employees are all Latino; the sales manager, Joshua Vasquez, is Dominican, and his wife and sales representative, Maria, is Mexican. Luis says that about 60 percent of his business comes from Latinos who live in and around the area, while 40 percent of his business comes from natives of Waldo, Gainesville and the surrounding area. The researcher spent two hours over two days in the office and on the lot observing interactions between the staff and non-Latino customers – of which there were only two.

Here’s what was observed:

Interaction 8: A white woman walks in and asks Joshua about a white Tacoma SUV on the lot. She wants to trade in her Tacoma truck which has around 300,000 miles on it. Joshua informs her that the Tacoma on their lot that she is looking to replace it with has 8,900 miles on it, and that it is a stick shift. He asks if she can drive a stick shift. She says yes, but that she isn’t particular about it. She
then points out another Tacoma SUV, a gray 2005 one, and asks whether it is an automatic shift. Joshua says that it is, and she asks how much would he want for it. He replies $7,900. She tilts her head to the side, thinks for about a minute, and says that she thinks she’s going to look around some more. Before leaving, though, she said that she possibly would be back because she heard that they sold good cars.

Interaction 9: An elderly African-American woman, accompanied by a little girl, walks in. She is behind on her car payments, and wants to know if she can have more time to catch up. It is at that point when Luis and Joshua begin to speak to each other in Spanish, and the woman begins to look perturbed. Joshua notices, then explains that they’re speaking to each other in Spanish because it is more comfortable for them to do it that way to determine how they are going to make it all work. She sighs, then says that she’s going to wait outside with her granddaughter while they talk it over. After they finish speaking to each other, Joshua summons her to come back in, and informs her that they will give her another two weeks to pay. She thanks them and promises to catch up by then. Joshua smiles and says, “See you later, Miss Rosa.”

The contact condition of cooperative interdependence was present in both interactions. In the first interaction, the manager was trying to make a sale and explaining to a prospective buyer the vehicles he had available that could possibly meet her needs as she tried to weigh whether what they had to offer would meet her needs. They were depending on her for a sale; she was depending on them for another transportation vehicle. In the second interaction the managers were dependent on the customer to make her car payments so they would not have to repossess, as she was depending on them to consider her financial situation as they worked with her to avoid such a drastic action.

The contact condition of common goals was also present in both interactions. In both instances, each customer had a common goal of working out a deal to obtain or to keep one of the vehicles, while the managers had a common goal of doing what was needed to be done to assist those customers in achieving those goals.

The contact condition of equal status was not met.

The contact condition of interpersonal relations was met in the second interaction when Joshua stopped to explain to the customer, “Miss Rosa,” that he and the other managers were speaking in Spanish to each other to get the best deal for her, and that was how they had to communicate. Even though the customer decided to go outside anyway, that appeared to be an attempt to not talk above a customer who could not understand them. He later said, “See you later, Miss Rosa,” and explained to the researcher that she was a nice woman, but was having trouble making payments on the vehicle because of the sporadic nature of her income, and they were trying to work with her on it.
Lighthouse Global Ministries

The final observation was conducted at Lighthouse Global Ministries – a small Pentecostal church just on the boundary of Waldo and Orange Heights. It has about 200 members, and its pastor, Chip Miller, is currently consumed not only with preaching the Gospel, but in raising enough money to replace the wooden pews with more comfortable, cushioned chairs. Of those members, however, two are Latino. Salvatore is Mexican and a recent immigrant. The other is also Mexican and plays the bongos in the Pentecostal band. On this Sunday, however, the bongo player doesn’t show up, but Salvatore comes in at the beginning of the service with his wife and young daughter – she looks to be about 4 or 5 years old – in tow.

- Interaction 10: After being greeted with hugs from a church elder, Salvatore and his family take a seat in the third pew from the front. After about two minutes an elderly white lady, with her grandson in tow, takes a seat next to them. The white lady asks Salvatore’s daughter what she is reading; they brought a picture book to keep her occupied during the service. The girl doesn’t speak, but simply shows her the book – and the woman tells her how pretty the pictures are. Not long afterward another her to look at take a seat in the middle pew. For a few minutes they are alone, then a white couple with a boy child and an elderly white man seat themselves next to Salvatore and his family on the opposite side. As the service progresses, Salvatore stands along with his wife to clap and witness to the music – the same as their neighbors are doing. Throughout the service – complete with an HD screen with Bible verses for the congregants to follow – Salvatore and his wife stand and follow the admonitions of the pastor. Salvatore also spends much of his time calming his daughter who, like many other children, grew restless and rambunctious during the service. At the point of the service in which Miller was about to deliver the main sermon, he asked that all of the congregants take their children to the nursery. Salvatore and his wife ignored that admonition and continued to calm their daughter by rocking her, and at times Salvatore sat with her and thumbed through her book with her. The child’s disobedience did not attract annoyed looks or vocal disapproval from the rest of the congregants, and the white congregants who had earlier seated themselves next to Salvatore and his family did not move to another pew, but stayed throughout the two-hour plus long service.

This interaction exemplified all four contact conditions.
- The condition of cooperative interdependence was met when Salvatore and his family worshipped at a church which is struggling to recruit members, and Salvatore, as well as the other Mexican member, decided to join.

- The common goal condition was met simply through the idea that everyone was there to worship the same God. The equal status condition was met not solely through all the worshippers being able to sit where they preferred and the like, but through the fact that Salvatore and his family were not ostracized by the members of the predominantly-white congregation; they were joined in their pew by white members on each side. The interpersonal relationship condition was met when the church elder greeted him with hugs and asked him how he and his family were doing.

Interpersonal relations was the third least observed contact condition. The lack of such relationships among Latinos and non-Latinos is, as mentioned earlier, an area of concern for researchers who believe such closeness is essential to reducing prejudice toward Latinos, and that even though more opportunities for exposure exist, the exchanges between Latinos and non-Latinos will be polite and not sincere (Ellison et al., 2011).
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Hispanics have infiltrated our society. They are a part of our society and will be forever more. It’s been an interesting development from Day 1. But people are getting used to it. When you are exposed to something for a long period of time you get change. People oppose change until they get to understand it.

Blueberry farm owner, Waldo, Fla.

Through using a triangulation research approach to measure such attitudes, it was discovered that even with Fox News and CNN being the main news outlets preferred by the interviewees, the episodic and sometimes sensationalist frames in which they often present the issue of immigration (Cisneros, 2008, Fryberg, et al., 2012), were not being reflected in interviews with Waldo residents or in their interactions with them, or even, for the most part, the pilot study.

Some findings, however, stood out more than others – and bear more examination. The finding in which 15 out of the 20 Waldo residents surveyed said that Latinos had changed Waldo positively may reflect what many rural dwellers in towns such as Robbins, N.C. which was stagnant before Hispanics settled there, have come to realize: Latinos bring a value to those areas by dint of their labor and their presence. While Waldo is not Robbins, it is possible that residents there may be less frightened by what they may see on television about Latinos and more afraid about their town slipping further into obscurity.

The finding that residents who watch television 30 minutes or less a day were more inclined to hold negative or neutral views on whether Latinos were law-abiding or legal than those who watched television more than two hours a day was surprising, because it defied media cultivation theories which posit that heavy television viewers
are more inclined to construct social reality by what they view on television. (Morgan, et al., 2002) However, an explanation might lie in two areas. One is that some of the respondents may have erroneously claimed to watch television less than 30 minutes a day, as many of those who responded that way listed shows and programs that lasted an hour or longer as their favorite shows. The other could be that their answers are a reflection of the uses and gratification theory: If they are indeed watching television 30 minutes or less a day, they could possibly be watching half-hour news shows or other programming that present Latino immigrants in stereotypical frames.

The field observations were conducted not to measure Waldo residents’ media use, but to gain a sense of whether the generally positive perceptions of Latinos that were expressed in the surveys and in the interviews about their media use were mirrored in everyday interactions between Latinos and non-Latinos. While the researcher was unable to observe and record interactions of large groups of Latinos with non-Latinos in Waldo – a condition that might have activated “anxiety” reactions in non-Latinos (Valentino, et al., 2013) – the interactions the researcher did manage to observe ranged from gregarious to sincere, to polite to indifferent. The fact that El Molino has been the central eatery in Waldo since 2004 and the fact that local residents, as well as travelers on Highway 301 support it, exemplifies the propinquity that researchers claim is essential to building trust and collaboration along cultural lines. (Ellison, et al., 2011)

Lastly, the chief words that the interviewees used to describe Latinos were words which described their willingness to work and to be industrious. While that may be viewed as a positive stereotype – as earlier research has shown (Fox, 2004) – it can
also become a stifling one if the perception becomes one in which Latinos are only viewed as worthy through their willingness to do jobs that Americans are unwilling to do. That “good” stereotype has left a number of Latino immigrants in some areas of the rural South vulnerable to unscrupulous employers (SPLC, 2009) when the stereotype no longer is a compliment, but an expectation to accept being exploited. Although industriousness is connected to two contact conditions essential to reducing prejudice – common goals and cooperative interdependence – attention should be paid to how it, as well as other generalizations about racial and ethnic groups – can morph into a burdensome stereotype. Yet the interviewees admiration of the industrious Latinos might also be a reflection of what researchers Carlos Garcia and Theresa Davidson, respectively from San Jose State and Samford University, have termed as the “American identity” that many rural people embrace. (Garcia & Davidson, 2013) It may also explain why one of the hypotheses for their comparative study – that living in a rural area is a salient factor in opposing immigration – was not supported. (Garcia & Davidson, 2013).

While current media framing, agenda-setting and priming functions largely portray Latinos through the episodic lens of illegal immigration or dependency, or, currently, through the nativism of Donald Trump and Ted Cruz, leading candidates for the Republican presidential nomination, what this study shows is that such effects appear to have a limited impact, if any, on Waldo residents’ attitudes toward Latinos. It shows that the effects of contact, particularly the type of contact in which Latinos are viewed to be embracing small town values; i.e., church, labor and business, apparently serve to mediate the larger media frames of Latinos as invaders predisposed to
criminality and a propensity to steal jobs and opportunities from deserving Americans. (Cisneros, 2008) Also, while other studies have shown that rural people may be more anti-immigration than urban or suburban dwellers (Garcia & Davidson) what is not clear is whether the rural residents who hold such views are influenced more by how Latinos are framed in the media, or how Latinos are actually impacting their lives. For example, findings that local television may contribute to the social construction of threat in relation to blacks and Hispanics (Chiricos & Escholtz, 2002) may not resonate in Waldo or in many other rural areas if residents view them as bringing advantages – such as being a source of new congregants for a struggling church or an authentic restaurant on the main thoroughfare through town – and not threats. Perhaps the views of Waldo residents toward Latino immigrants reflect what Chesser (2006) found: that the reaction has been mixed, with some rural residents viewing Latinos as possibly having a negative social or economic impact, or as being a source or sorely needed revitalization. It is possible that for Waldo residents, reality may provide a more salient context for their views on Latinos.

**Limitations of Study**

While this study is not meant to be generalizable because of its qualitative nature, it provides preliminary insights on the impact that the effects of media might wield on rural Americans’ views of Latino immigrants during the early stages of immigration. However, the researcher faced some obstacles. Because of financial constraints the researcher was unable to afford to be in Waldo on enough of a continuous basis to complete deeper observations of Latinos, who occasionally visit the Waldo Farmers and Flea Market after church, and lengthier interviews with residents.
The researcher also completed the final stages of interviews and field observations in the months preceding blueberry season in late March. Blueberry season is the time when many Latinos who have settled in Waldo are most visible because of their ties to the Mexican migrants who arrive to harvest blueberries. Because the researcher’s study was due before late March, she was unable to observe more salient instances of interactions between Latinos and their rural neighbors.

**Future Research Directions**

Hispanic immigration and their settlement into the rural environs of America is a trend that offers communications scholars and ethnographers a new lens into studying the role that media-shaped perceptions play in regards to their being accepted into rural communities, and the resiliency of those perceptions in the face of contact conditions. It offers ethnographers the opportunity to execute longitudinal studies on the early processes of how ethnic and racial minorities are integrated into mostly-white, isolated enclaves. It offers demographers and political scientists an opportunity to view how Latino immigration to rural towns can impact issues such as reapportionment, and if conservative lawmakers who represent districts with rural areas that have been rejuvenated by Latinos will be able to continue supporting policies that are anti-immigration.

For communications scholars, the trend of Latinos migrating to rural areas offers opportunities to conduct longitudinal studies on how media effects impact how they are accepted by rural residents, and which effects – framing, agenda-setting, priming – play the most significant role in that process. Such studies might also offer insights into how
media can present news about Latinos and other minorities outside of the frame of conflict and pathology – especially if Latinos are fueling the rejuvenation of rural areas. Additionally, if Latinos are experiencing prejudice and injustice in rural environments, that is a development that warrants research and awareness as well.

The nation is changing demographically. Understanding where Latino immigrants choose to live, how rural residents learn about them and how that knowledge is communicated and mediated, will continue to emerge as an important topic.
Figure A-1. Postmaster Latino views

1. Postmaster
   Location: Waldo Post Office:
   Sex: Male
   Race/Ethnicity: White

   General views of Latino immigrants: “They’ve very friendly when they come here. I’ve never had any problems with them. Of course a lot of them can’t speak the [English] language too well, and that causes problems for me from time to time. But most of the time they show up with an interpreter, and that’s good for me because I don’t speak Spanish. But they’re good people.

   News and entertainment shows and media preferences: I watch the History Channel most of the time. I don’t watch cable news too much, but I do watch Channel 4 for weather and sports. The rest of the news, the politics, I don’t pay much attention to.
Figure A-2. Postmaster news views

2. Retired trucker
   Location: Waldo Post Office
   Sex. Male
   Race/Ethnicity: African-American

   General views of Latino immigrants: “I think they’ll do the work that we
[Americans] won’t do. That’s what I think. They are very industrious. I know that when I
was in business, I had a hard time finding good people to work, and I had a hard time
with crackheads and lawsuits. I didn’t have that problem with the Mexicans.”
News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I watch CNN and Fox News. But all I care about [regarding Latinos] is whether or not they do the work.”

3. Blueberry farm owner
   Location: Straughn Farms, Waldo, Fla.
   Sex: Male
   Race/Ethnicity: White
   General views of Latino immigrants: “Obviously there’s been an increase (in Latinos in Waldo). The biggest thing for them is the issue of legality. Around 30 years ago there were practically none, now we have quite a few. Our interest is in the farm
labor, and that’s primarily Latinos. At least 89 percent are from Mexico, Guatemala and Puerto Rico. We have 40 who work here full-time.

“To a large degree, they’re like all people. They make a living and a life, and they take every chance in the world to do that. They’re not much different from anyone else. Most of them are hardworking, but some, like some whites and some blacks, are not worth a damn. A lot of them, I call them professional blueberry pickers. You can take any race, black or Caucasian, and you can find sorry people in any of them.

“The black crews help to settle the watermelons. I grow a lot of watermelons. The Latinos help more with the blueberries. Where the Latinos settle have a lot to do with job opportunities as well as anything else.

“The Hispanics have infiltrated our society. They are a part of our society and will be forever more. It’s been an interesting development from Day 1. But people are getting used to it. When you are exposed to something for a long period of time you get change. People oppose change until they get to understand it.”

Figure A-5. Blueberry farm owner Latino views

News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I don’t watch a whole lot of television. When I do I watch the news on Channel 20. I watch Fox News and CNN every now and then.”
4. Right Price Auto Owner  
Location: N.E. Waldo Road next to Veneauto  
Sex: Male  
Race/Ethnicity: White

General views of Latino immigrants: “I love the culture and everything. The woman I married is Dominican. Every Hispanic family I’ve encountered has been very friendly, and I’m encountering more, because a lot of Mexicans are coming here and into the smaller towns. But there are a lot of racist people in this area, though.

“Also, the church I grew up in was multicultural, so I’m used to different cultures. They do take jobs, but the jobs that they take are the ones that we don’t want to do as Americans anyway.
News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I’m into sports, and I get sports and news off of Yahoo.”

Figure A-8. Right Price Auto owner news views

5. Right Price Auto Sales Manager
   Location: N.E. Waldo Road next to Veneauto
   Sex. Male
   Race/Ethnicity: African-American

General views of Latino immigrants: “They are very business-minded people. Most are entrepreneurs. Eighty-five percent are business-minded entrepreneurs. They are very family-oriented. Many of the Mexicans (that come to the lot) are language-challenged, but many others are bilingual.”

“When you look at America as a whole, we are all immigrants, so no, I don’t have anything against them.”

Figure A-9. Right Price Auto sales manager Latino views
News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “Oh, I watch Fox News, the History Channel and NBC. Every so often I watch CNN.”

Figure A-10. Right Price Auto sales manager news views

6. Independent insurance underwriter
   Location: Veneauto on Waldo Road.
   Sex. Female
   Race/Ethnicity: White

   General views about Latino immigrants: “Hispanics have a different culture. They really do. You really have to learn them, as opposed to the other way around. Many want to come to the U.S. because it’s horrible where they come from.

   “I believe more Hispanics live in this area than we know. Many of them are illegal, and they’re living with relatives who are legal. But I will never find harder working people in my life. They do all the jobs that Americans won’t do. They show deep respect to America, and to the people they encounter. I’d be the first in line to help them all get legalized.

   “There is this [Latino] guy who comes here and picks up all the pine needles along the highway…these Hispanics are picking up pine needles day and night. Try getting some Americans to do that.
“There’s a lot we can learn from them. The way they send money home to their families, and how you never see them asking for handouts. You only see them asking for work, or working.”

Figure A-11. Independent insurance underwriter news views

News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I don’t watch much TV, but the shows I watch are ID [Investigation Discovery] Fox News, and CNN.”

Figure A-12. Independent insurance underwriter Latino views

7. Used car saleswoman
   Location: Veneauto
   Sex: Female
   Race/Ethnicity: White (born in U.S. to Venezuelan parents)
General views of Latino immigrants: “They’re very friendly. The reason many of them are moving to places like this (Waldo) is because they don’t have time to learn how to live here. They are looking for a quiet place in the countryside.”

“But they are workers. They’re great workers. This is a great evolution for them to grow up in.”

Figure A-13. Used car saleswoman news views

Figure A-14. Used car saleswoman Latino views

News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I watch local news, but some Fox News and CNN.”

8. Waldo All-In-One feed store proprietor  
   Location: U. S. Highway 301.  
   Sex: Female  
   Race/Ethnicity: White
General views of Latino immigrants: “I personally have no problems with them. I’ve dated two of them. They were both abusive. But it’s like everything else: In every race, you have good and bad.

Figure A-15. Waldo All-In-One feed store proprietor Latino views

“But we have two Mexicans who are members of our church, Lighthouse Global Ministries, and they’re faithful and loyal members. One of them plays the bongos in the band.”

News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I don’t really catch up with the news much. But I watch a lot of comedy shows, some with Latino comedians…I can’t think of the names, though.”

Figure A-16. Waldo All-In-One feed store proprietor Latino views

9. Church congregant, Lighthouse Global Ministries
   Location: U.S. Highway 301.
   Sex: Female
   Race/Ethnicity: White

   General views of Latino immigrants: “I love our people here. Our bongo player, he’s Mexican. He’s a very outgoing person. He jokes around a lot. Salvatore, he’s quiet.
They’re really good people. The ones who come here, they’re all family to us.

“I love them. I’d hate for them to be gone.”

Figure A-17. Church congregant Latino views


Figure A-18. Church congregant news views

10. Sign company owner, life coach.
    Location: Waldo City Council meeting
    Sex: Male
    Race/Ethnicity: White

    General views of Latino immigrants: “I don’t have anything but love for them. They’re God’s children too. I don’t think they’re any different from any other nationality or any other group.

    “In the businesses that I’ve had, anytime I’ve needed workers I’ve hired them.”
I’ve hired them for construction jobs and I’ve met them socially. You will always have those who will skirt the laws as far as legalities go, but that’s in every group. “I’ve met them socially and they’re really good people.”

Figure A-19. Sign company owner Latino views

News and entertainment shows and media preferences: “I never watch the news or much TV.”
APPENDIX B
SPSS RESULTS

Waldo Light TV Watchers' Views on Whether Latinos are Law-Abiding or Criminal

Figure B-1. Light TV watchers' views on whether Latinos are law-abiding or criminal

Waldo Heavy TV Watchers' Views on Whether Latinos are Law-Abiding or Criminal

Figure B-2. Heavy TV watchers' views on whether Latinos are law abiding or criminal
Figure B-3. Light TV watchers’ views on whether Latinos are legal or illegal
Figure B-4. Heavy TV watchers’ views on whether Latinos are legal or illegal

Figure B-5. Views of respondents who personally know Latinos on whether they have changed Waldo positively
Figure B-6. Views of respondents who know no Latinos personally on whether they have changed Waldo positively
Latinos in the Waldo Community

Hello. My name is Tonyaa Weathersbee, a graduate researcher from the University of Florida. The purpose of this survey, which will take less than two minutes to complete, is to measure Waldo residents’ views of Latinos. Your answers will be used for survey purposes only, and you will remain anonymous.

Thank you very much!

Your Interaction with Latinos in Waldo

1. How often do you see Latinos in your daily life?

______Never______Rarely______Sometimes______Often______Very______Of
ten

2. Do you know any Latinos personally?

______Yes _____ No

b. If yes, how many Latinos do you know well? ______

c. What is the nature of your relationship?

______Friend_____Family_____Neighbor___Teacher

______Businessperson______Laborer_______Parishioner

__________Student______Other (please specify)_______________________

Your Feelings About Latinos in Your Community

4.a. I feel I know a lot about Latinos in my community.
b. I feel I know little about Latinos in my community.

_____Strongly Agree   _____Somewhat Agree   ____ Neutral   _____ Disagree

_____Strongly Disagree

5.a I feel close to Latinos in my community.

_____Strongly Agree   _____Somewhat Agree   ____ Neutral   _____ Disagree

_____Strongly Disagree

b. I feel distant from Latinos in my community.

_____Strongly Agree   _____Somewhat Agree   ____ Neutral   _____ Disagree

_____Strongly Disagree

6. a. Latinos have changed my community positively.

_____Strongly Agree   _____Somewhat Agree   ____ Neutral   _____ Disagree

_____Strongly Disagree
b. Latinos have changed my community negatively.

____Strongly Agree  _____Somewhat Agree   ____ Neutral   _____Disagree

_____Strongly disagree

Your Opinions of Latinos

7. Latinos are…

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Your Television Use

1. How many hours a day do you watch television?

   None   Less than 30 minutes   1 to 2 hours   more than 2 hours

2. When you watch TV, which type of shows do you normally watch?
a. Entertainment shows (Modern Family, American Idol, Law and Order)

b. News shows (FOX, CNN, MSNBC, NBC, CBS).

c. Both

d. Other (Please specify)_______________________________________

Background Information

1. Gender __Male ___Female

2. Age

3. Years in Waldo

4. Occupation ____Professional (Doctor, teacher) _____Non-professional (Welder, Postal Worker) ______Laborer (Construction worker, farm worker) ______Homemaker, Stay-at-home mom ______Clergy

___None

5. Religion ____Protestant (Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist)

____Catholic _____Jewish _____Muslim ______Other (Please explain)______

6. Education _____Less than 12 years _____High School Graduate

_____Community College _____Community College ____College or
University Graduate

7. Race _____White (Caucasian) ____Black (African-American) ____Asian
____Other (Please specify) ________________________________

Thank you very much!
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273


latinopopulation-north-carolina-cities-census


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Tonyaa J. Weathersbee is a longtime journalist and multiple award-winning opinion columnist for The Florida Times-Union in Jacksonville, Fla. She has traveled extensively to Cuba and Latin America, and has always had a passion for learning about people and how they survive and thrive in their respective spaces in the world. Tonyaa entered graduate school in midlife to further nurture her hunger for learning and to carve out new paths of interest for herself.