

Title: How the News Media Frames Victims of Police Shootings

Presenter: Juan (Kyle) Becerra, Los Angeles Pierce College

Mentor: Denise Robb

Social inequalities exist in some of the most unexpected places of our daily lives. When you watch the news on television or read news articles, it's likely that you are being influenced by the news media to think a certain way about a specific group of people. Existing literature on the news media's influence on public opinion of racial and ethnic groups dominantly focuses on how the news media portrays Black victims of police killings and White assailants in racial violence. Conversely, existing literature neglects how the news media portrays Hispanic victims of police killings. With that being said, this study aims to understand how the news media portrays Hispanic victims of police shootings versus White victims of police shootings. To answer our research question, we conducted a content analysis of Los Angeles-based news media articles that cover police killings where we identified positive and negative information given about the victims, and attempted to identify media coverage bias. The results indicate that Los Angeles-based digital news media articles frame Hispanic victims as perpetrators rather than victims, and frame White victims as good, family-oriented people despite having a controversial past. Research in this area holds strong significance because it can help erode the news media's influence on public opinion by allowing the public to develop opinions on their own and based on factual content. Moreover, research in this area can help alleviate racial and ethnic tension across the nation by educating individuals about news media bias against racial and ethnic groups.

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