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**Patterns of Engagement: Identifying Associations between Listening Styles and
Community News Consumption**

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The authors have no known conflict of interest to disclose. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Eike Mark Rinke, School of Politics and International Studies, University of Leeds, LS2 9JT, United Kingdom. E-mail: e.m.rinke@leeds.ac.uk. Supplementary materials for this chapter are available at the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io/xkbc4/>).

Abstract

In today's hypermediated world, individuals have myriad opportunities to engage with their communities via mediated communication. Such mediated community engagement involves "listening in" or turning to the news, social media, and other outlets. In this chapter, we contend that listening and mediated community engagement are both grounded in a motivational disposition to connect and share in the human experience of others. Specifically, as a form of mediated community engagement, using and attending to community news reflects the same social-moral motivation underlying people's tendency to find social connection and build rapport when listening to others. Exploring the co-expression of listening styles and community engagement in a survey of Latino voters after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, we identify the presence of four distinct types of news users – universally engaged, universally disengaged, community-engaged, and mainstream-engaged – and show that individuals who engage with their community through the media report more relational and less transactional motivations to listen to others. Cognitive listening motivations are less associated with news use that focuses on one's community. These findings suggest that a desire to "listen to connect" may drive mediated community engagement.

Keywords: Community news engagement, News orientations, News environment, Survey research

Patterns of Engagement: Identifying Associations between Listening Styles and Community News Consumption

It is a simple truth that the world around us is complex, and the increasing intricacies of media ecosystems have only posed obstacles to better understanding how individuals navigate their sociopolitical environments (Bail, 2021). Whereas half a century ago, the media landscape was dominated by organized mass media, today's landscape is interactive and evolving, featuring a plethora of outlets with endless news streams and partisan media. From a normative standpoint, one can argue that greater access to information would increase democratic engagement (Dahl, 1989; Delli Carpini, 2004). After all, such access should afford individuals more opportunities to harness specific media channels that would allow them to engage with community issues and public affairs in general. Unfortunately, greater media access does not necessarily translate into such normatively desirable outcomes. Indeed, society today bears witness to heightened political polarization (Mar, 2021; Pew Research Center, 2014), with problems attributed to individuals' unwillingness to talk or listen to those who hold dissonant views. Indeed, social media and technology have created echo chambers and tribes, ultimately eroding vital elements of the public sphere (Arora et al., 2022; North et al., 2021).

At a basic level, given today's hyper-mediated social world, "listening" to one's community involves attending to, interpreting, evaluating, and responding to messages from both mediated and non-mediated sources. Thus, our model of community engagement suggests an important distinction between *interpersonal engagement*, which involves "traditional" forms of listening to others, and *mediated engagement*, which captures the extent to which individuals turn to news media and attend to news about their community. This distinction is critical given longstanding discussions about the effects of mass versus interpersonal communication (e.g.,

Chaffee, 1982; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955) and more recent research illustrating the “differential gains” to be had by individuals who engage in both interpersonal and mediated communication (Hardy & Scheufele, 2005). In short, to fully understand how people engage with media, research should attend also to how people engage with each other, and vice versa.

In the study presented in this chapter, we examine an array of news media consumption behaviors to determine whether a distinct pattern of community-oriented engagement with news exists. We then ask about the extent to which one’s proclivity to use community news media and pay attention to community news content relate to their preferences toward listening. Put another way, we ask: Do people who report distinct “habits” of listening also report differential inclinations to engage with their community through the media?

Scholars have long noted the potential of listening to ameliorate problems arising at the interpersonal (e.g., Bodie & Denham, 2017), small-group (e.g., Bodie & Godwin, 2022), organizational (e.g., Macnamara, 2015), and societal levels (e.g., Bickford, 1996; Dobson, 2014). Regardless of the number or type of individuals impacted by a problem, engagement with that community of stakeholders requires listening, and listening is central to community formation (Purdy, 1991). And, yet, even with the consensus that listening is important, questions of exactly *how* listening relates to community engagement have, to our knowledge, largely escaped scholarly scrutiny. This chapter focuses on how tendencies to listen in particular ways relate to patterns of community news engagement in the context of the 2016 US presidential election. Elections provide much grist for the scholarly mill as campaigns generate heightened levels of media coverage and increase the likelihood of interactions with others around particularly salient or contentious issues. We use a data set collected from a panel of US adults who identify as Hispanic or Latino/a and who voted in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Our investigation is situated in the US Latino/a community because, among those issues registered voters in the US reported as “very important” in 2016 (Pew Research Center, 2016), “[immigration] emerged as the leading substantive issue of the campaign” (Jones, 2015). In addition, immigration became a salient issue given news media coverage of then presidential-candidate Trump’s statements and position on the US southern border with Mexico (e.g., Faris et al., 2017; Joshi, 2017). From the larger data set, we explore the association between interpersonal engagement (in this case: interpersonal listening) and mediated engagement. We examine the extent to which individuals’ specific listening styles, as defined in Bodie et al. (2013), relate to their use of community news media and their attention to news content about their community.

Listening Styles and Mediated Community Engagement

Stemming from the Latin root *communitās*, the word community is often equated with kinship, sharing, fellowship, and social relationships. Whether geographically bound or diasporic in nature, or whether bound by profession, avocational interest, or identity, communities offer structures, frameworks, and guidelines through which individuals make sense of their world. As Bellah et al. (1985, p. 153) noted, communities offer “a context of meaning” that allows people to connect their aspirations and interests with the aspirations and interests of those closest to them, as well as the goals of a larger whole. Identifying these connections allows people to understand how their efforts contribute to a common good. Crucial to this process is communication, which creates and sustains community (Purdy, 1991). As some view it, only after individuals have learned to communicate with and accept one another do they become a community (Peck, 1987). This process of learning to communicate with one another includes

speaking, by which individuals' ideas are shared, and listening, by which these ideas are interpreted. Put another way (Purdy, 1991, p. 60):

what is attended to, how information is perceived, the interpretations that are created, the ideas that are remembered, and the response that is given, are all determined to a large degree by the community of which the listener is a member.

Communication and community are thus inextricably linked, as interactions beginning at the interpersonal level shape the community that emerges, and the very rules of this community, in turn, shape the interactions that ensue.

To make sense of the communities and the world around them, individuals attend to information with goals in mind. These goals are in place whether the information comes through media or via conversations with friends and family. In the context of mediated information, individuals process content through their level of attention to news or through their depth of processing (Eveland, 2002). Such cognitive elaboration links this mediated information with other pieces of information (gleaned from media or elsewhere) (Lin et al., 2022), and often reflects a strategy designed to cope with information the receiver deems incomplete, inaccurate, or confusing (Kosicki & McLeod, 1990).

Notably, today's media ecosystem, with its prevalence of social media and partisan media outlets, has complicated matters. With the proliferation and balkanization of media outlets, audiences have become increasingly fragmented. No longer faced with a limited array of outlets to which they can turn, they can actively avail themselves of content that resonates with their political beliefs and attitudes (Stroud, 2011; Van Aelst et al., 2017). In addition, search engines and algorithms create filter bubbles — or information ecosystems that have been personalized (Pariser, 2011) — that insulate individuals from potentially dissonant material and ultimately

restrict the breadth of information to which individuals are exposed. In today's high-choice media ecosystem, messages are amplified and reverberate among likeminded individuals in echo chambers (Jamieson & Cappella, 2010) that fuel group polarization.

Regardless of how simple or complex the media ecosystem, individuals may turn to and process mediated information with particular goals in mind. Decades of research in uses and gratifications scholarship have illustrated that media audiences do not merely passively receive messages. Rather, individuals' selection of media is often "goal-directed, purposive, and motivated" (Rubin, 2002, p. 527). Indeed, scholars have long identified individuals as motivated to engage with news media content, whether to learn about the latest political events (Blumler & McQuail, 1969) or to obtain nuggets of information for social interaction (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1979). Research in the past half century has confirmed this model of an active audience member whose motivations vary in contexts ranging from traditional media to social media (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

Such motivations are only part of a larger array of factors – "prereception orientations" – that determine not only which individuals are more likely to be exposed to a message, but also how that message might impact them (McLeod et al., 2009). These motivations, which include the need for information, can involve cognitive, structural, and/or cultural orientations. For instance, cognitive orientations that relate to individuals' level of democratic engagement can shape news-consumption patterns. Individuals who are more interested in politics or those who feel they are more capable of effecting change are more likely to turn to news content (see Delli Carpini, 2004). In addition, demographic characteristics that are either innate (e.g., race and ethnicity) or structural in nature (based on, for example, education or neighborhood of residence) can shape one's life experiences and the type of media content to which they turn. Similarly,

worldviews and values can influence media consumption. Namely, compared to those who hold strong material values, individuals who express strong post-material values (e.g., political freedom and participation, helping others) are more likely to turn to news content (McLeod et al., 1998). In the political realm, values are inherently intertwined with partisanship, which in today's highly partisan media ecosystem, serves as a heuristic for news use.

Instrumental goals might similarly be in play when individuals engage in interpersonal discussions and listen to their interlocutors (Watson et al., 1995). In fact, listening styles and mediated engagement with one's community can both represent habitual responses to how communication gets processed and how meaning gets ascribed. In other words, individual level listening dispositions may well be based on a set of core orientations that also underlie community engagement.

Research has traditionally conceptualized listening styles as "attitudes, beliefs, and predispositions about the how, where, when, who, and what of the information reception and encoding process" (Watson et al., 1995, p. 2). This early work identified four different dimensions, each involving a specific orientation. Listening might be *people-oriented*, which means that individuals' listening is driven by their concern for others. Put another way, people-oriented listening foregrounds care and concern, with individuals attempting to build rapport and establish common interests. Listening can also be *action-oriented*, often reflected in individuals' preferences for concise, well-organized presentations that are devoid of errors. When people engage in *content-oriented* listening, they pay attention to details presented and evaluate the information provided before passing judgment; these listeners are not averse to receiving complex information. Finally, *time-oriented* listeners are prone to engaging in efficient communications, partaking in brief or hasty interactions. To be clear, while these four listening

styles represent different tendencies, they are not mutually exclusive, with individuals relying on multiple styles depending on the situation (Imhof, 2004).

After finding evidence that the LSP-16, the original scale developed to measure listening styles, failed to produce robust validity data (Bodie & Worthington, 2010; Williams et al., 2012), more recent scholarship (e.g., Bodie et al., 2013; Gearhart et al., 2014) has relabeled these four narrative listening styles as: *relational* (in which listeners build rapport and work to understand others' feelings); *analytical* (in which listeners withhold judgment and consider multiple sides of an issue); *task-oriented* (whereby the listeners work to ensure that their time is not being wasted); and *critical* (when listeners work to identify errors and inconsistencies).

How do these listening styles relate to engagement in one's community? Relational listening, which is motivated by an individual's desire to build relationships and connections, might be characterized as one listening to or hearing out one's interlocutor to remain in a particular social system or to create connections among otherwise disconnected elements of the community. Individuals who engage in analytical listening might be most strongly motivated by their need to obtain information, engage in surveillance of the information environment, and attain a good epistemic (i.e., not necessarily social) understanding of one's community. Task-oriented listeners might be most strongly motivated to "get things done" and be pragmatic in their communication styles, striving to solve problems. This particular listening style may imply that the individual possesses an ego-centered orientation that is at odds with a general concern for one's community. In other words, task-oriented listeners may focus their attention on community information relevant to addressing and solving their own problems, perhaps at the expense of not learning about or dealing with issues that impact the community at large. Finally, motivated to find errors and inconsistencies in information they receive, critical listeners may be

agnostic to whether the information is oriented toward the community, and thus it is unclear whether they are any more or less inclined to engaged with their community via news media.

With these orientations toward information communicated via media and interpersonal discussions, our study empirically examined three research questions related to interpersonal engagement with one's community (via listening) and mediated community engagement:

RQ1: To what extent can we identify patterns of community news engagement?

RQ2: Does community news media use relate to interpersonal listening styles?

RQ3: Does community news attention relate to interpersonal listening styles?

Methods

To examine patterns of community news use and how listening styles relate with such mediated community engagement, we drew on data from a single wave of an online Qualtrics consumer panel survey fielded from December 7 to 17, 2016. The panel comprised adults self-identifying as Hispanic or Latino/a¹ who lived in the United States or its territories and had voted in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Quotas were set to recruit an equal number of male and female participants as well as a variety of ethnicities ($N = 720$). The mean age of participants was 33.8 years ($SD = 12.8$), and just over half (50.3%) identified as female. Participants averaged just over three decades' residence in the U.S. ($M = 31.0$, $SD = 13.0$) and were diverse in educational background (median education level = some college or an associate degree). Of the sample, 66.5% identified as Mexican American, 11% as Puerto Rican, 7% as Cuban American, 3% as multiethnic Hispanic, and 2.1% Dominican; the rest were divided among other Central, South American, and Spanish ethnicities.

¹ As an inclusion criterion, the survey asked respondents whether they identified as "Hispanic or Latino/a." To simplify our references to group membership, we will use 'Hispanic' or a version of 'Latino/a'.

As shown in Table 1, our sample reflected the Hispanic population in terms of gender breakdown. It also generally resembled the Hispanic population in terms of Latino identification, though it included a slightly larger proportion of Mexican Americans and Cuban Americans. However, our sample was more educated than the Hispanic population at large, where more than three in five had earned at most a high-school education or equivalent.

Table 1: Sample Demographics and Latino Population

	Sample of Hispanic Voters (%)	Census Data of Hispanic Voters in 2016 (%)	Census Data of Hispanic Population (%)
<i>Education</i>			
Less than high school	2.8	N/A	31.5
High-school graduate/GED	19.3		30.6
Some college or associate degree	45.4		21.5
Four-year degree	23.3		11.1
Advanced degree	9.2		5.3
<i>Latino identification</i>			
Mexican	66.5	N/A	60.0
Puerto Rican	11.0		10.8
Cuban	7.0		3.8

Other Latino	15.5		24.0
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	49.8	45.0	50.2
Female	50.3	50.0	49.8

Note: Census data of Hispanic voters in 2016 come from the Current Population Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016a). Census data of Hispanic population come from the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016b, 2016c).

Interpersonal Listening Styles

We measured listening styles using an eight-item short form of the Listening Styles Profile-Revised, the LSP-R8 (Rinke, 2016; see also Bodie & Worthington, 2017). This short form allows for the self-report measurement of listening styles in general-population surveys. To the best of our knowledge, the survey we draw on in this chapter was the first general-population survey ever that implemented a validated measure of interpersonal listening styles.

The LSP-R8 consists of eight items, each using a seven-point Likert scale (“strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) to operationalize four dimensions of individuals’ listening styles. A confirmatory factor analysis showed that the theoretical four-factor model with correlated factors fit the data well, $\chi^2(14) = 30.023$, $p = .008$, CFI = .989, RMSEA = .040, 90% CI [.020, .060], SRMR = .023. For all analyses reported below, item responses for each factor (two items each) were averaged. Table 2 reports descriptive statistics for the four resulting two-item listening style scales.

The items that measure *relational listening* emphasize empathy and concern for others' feelings, emotions, and moods ("When listening to others, I am mainly concerned with how they are feeling" and "I listen to understand the emotions and mood of the speaker"). *Analytical listening*, reflected in one's hearing others out to secure additional information before reaching a conclusion, was tapped by the following items: "I wait until all the facts are presented before forming judgments and opinions" and "I fully listen to what a person has to say before forming any opinions." *Task-oriented listening*, a general desire to have efficient and effective interactions when listening to others, was measured by asking respondents about their level of agreement or disagreement with the following items: "I am impatient with people who ramble on during conversations" and "I find it difficult to listen to people who take too long to get their ideas across." The final two items gauged *critical thinking*, the general tendency to assess and evaluate the accuracy and consistency of messages received in conversation: "I often catch errors in other speakers' logic" and "I tend to naturally notice errors in what other speakers say."

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Listening Styles (LSP-R8)

	Mean	SD	Reliability
Relational listening	5.02	1.23	.65
Analytical listening	5.52	1.20	.77
Task-oriented listening	4.84	1.44	.72
Critical listening	5.22	1.20	.77

Note: Cell entries are the arithmetic mean (Mean), the standard deviation (SD), and the internal consistency reliability as measured by the Spearman-Brown Coefficient (Reliability). All scales ranged from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”).

News Use and Attention

To identify the types of news users within the US Latino population (RQ1), respondents were asked, “In general, how often do you...: Watch local TV news; Watch national network TV news (CBS, ABC, or NBC); Watch cable TV (e.g., CNN, FOX News, MSNBC); Read information and news from social media; Watch local Spanish-language news; Watch national Spanish-language TV news (e.g., Noticiero Univisión); Read a local English-language newspaper; Read a local Spanish-language newspaper; Read a national newspaper (e.g., *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*); and Read magazines (online or in print)?” Responses to each item were measured on a 10-point scale (1 = “never”; 10 = “all the time”). A separate item captured participants’ *attention to community news* by asking them, “In general, how much attention do you pay to: News about your community?” This item also utilized a 10-point response scale (1 = “no attention at all”; 10 = “a great deal of attention”).

Analytic Procedures

We first explored whether US Latino news users form distinct groups that vary in their patterns of news engagement across different news media, including community news channels (RQ1). This was done following a two-step approach to cluster analysis that combines hierarchical and non-hierarchical (*K*-means) clustering for refined identification of groups from the data (see Hair et al., 2019, Ch. 7). In a first step, we used hierarchical cluster methods to identify the number of clearly distinct groups of Latino news users that could be recovered from the data. This number informed the second step of the analysis, in which we improved the clustering solution and classified each participant into one of the clusters (media user groups or ‘types’) in a *K*-means partitioning of the data into the number of clusters, *K*, that was previously identified in the completely inductive first step. We then compared the news media use profiles of the identified types of Latino news-media users to see if they involved distinct patterns of community news engagement.

We next examined how community news use (RQ2) and attention (RQ3) are associated with interpersonal listening styles. Corresponding with earlier findings (e.g., Bodie et al., 2013, p. 76), the four listening styles are correlated with each other to varying degrees. Because our analytical goal in this chapter is to identify the unique associations of each listening style with mediated community engagement, we first estimated the partial correlations of each individual listening style with the three engagement measures; these estimates reflect the correlation that would be observed between the three forms of engagement and each listening style if the other listening styles did not vary. We then followed this correlational analysis up with a canonical linear discriminant analysis. This descriptive analysis goes back to the news-engagement clusters identified earlier to explore how well the identified Latino news-engagement clusters could be

separated from each other based on the four listening styles. The survey questionnaire and analytical code used in this study are available on the Open Science Framework

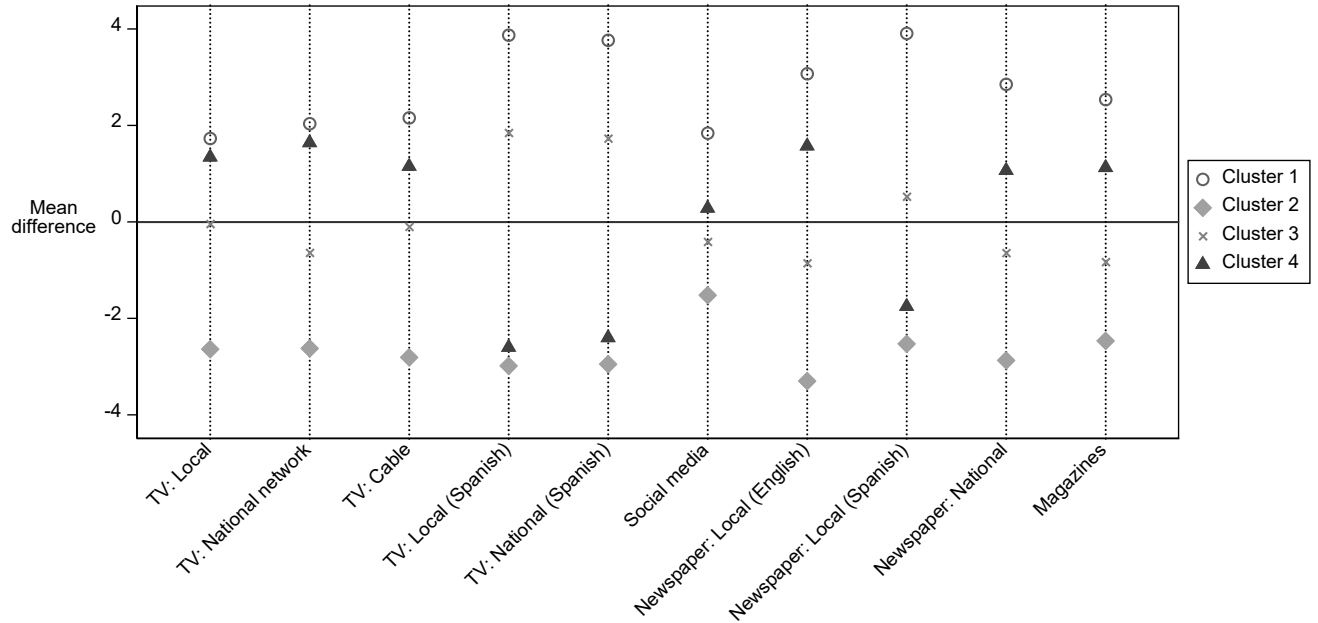
(<https://osf.io/xkbc4/>).

Results

To answer RQ1, whether distinct patterns of community news use exist in the US Latino community, we followed the cluster-analysis approach previously described and generated a taxonomy of Latino news media users.² The results are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *News Use Profile Plot for Four Types of Latino Media Users (Based on K-means Cluster Analysis)*

² We first performed two types of fully inductive agglomerative hierarchical cluster analysis, one using the average-linkage and the other using the Ward agglomeration method (using Euclidian distance and squared Euclidian distance as the distance measure, respectively), to identify the number of news media user clusters (or ‘user types’) in the US Latino sample. Following these analyses, we inspected the respective dendrogram and used the Caliński–Harabasz pseudo- F and Duda–Hart $Je(2)/Je(1)$ indices, two stopping rules that have been shown to allow for valid cluster recovery (Milligan & Cooper, 1985), for solutions of up to 15 clusters to find the ‘best’ number of clusters (i.e., Latino news media user types). The general practice for deciding the number of groups based on the Duda–Hart stopping-rule table is to find one of the largest $Je(2)/Je(1)$ values that corresponds to a low pseudo-T-squared value with much larger T-squared for adjacent cluster solutions. This strategy, combined with the results from the Caliński–Harabasz and dendrogram results, especially for the Ward cluster analysis, indicated that a four-group solution is optimal for the data analyzed here.



Note: Cluster 1 (“Universally engaged,” $n = 177$), Cluster 2 (“Universally disengaged,” $n = 197$), Cluster 3 (“Community-engaged,” $n = 178$), Cluster 4 (“Mainstream-engaged,” $n = 164$).

Despite some ambiguity, the first, fully inductive step of this analysis suggested that four clusters best represent the news media use patterns of US Latinos in our sample. In the second step, we specified four clusters for non-hierarchical K -means clustering, classifying each survey participant into one of the four identified clusters. Following that, we computed for each participant how much they differed from the grand mean of each of our 10 news use variables, as an indicator of how much they differed from the average participant in the sample. Figure 1 plots how much each of the four identified clusters differed, on average, from the sample-wide grand mean on each of the 10 news use variables.

Based on the profiles represented by four different markers in Figure 1, we can identify four types of Latino news users. *Universally engaged users* (Cluster 1, circle) is the group of Latino individuals who most consistently expose themselves to news through each of the 10

media channels included in the analysis. They are “news buffs,” and their media diet includes much use of Spanish-language newspapers and TV news, which they use more than any of the three other clusters of news users. The inverse to them are the *universally disengaged users* (Cluster 2, diamond), who consistently tune out the news and consequently record the lowest average exposure to news use for each of the 10 media channels included in the analysis. A more nuanced picture emerged for the final two types. *Community-engaged users* (Cluster 3, X) are characterized by slightly below-average exposure to news across channels, with an important exception: While not particularly engaged with general news media, they consume an above-average amount of community news media (i.e., local Spanish-language newspapers and TV news) as well as national Spanish-language TV news. Of particular note is that their consumption of (English-language) local TV news is virtually indistinguishable from that of the entire sample. Finally, *mainstream-engaged users* (Cluster 4, triangle) are characterized by the inverse pattern of community-engaged news users: They show somewhat above-average use of non-community “mainstream” news media, but largely tuned out community news media. They follow the general population discourse, but not so much the community-specific discourse provided by these latter media offerings.

In sum, this analysis shows that community news use indeed *is* a distinct pattern of news use within the US Latino community. Roughly a quarter of US Latino individuals surveyed engaged community news as part of a wider pattern of “news omnivorism,” while about half of those surveyed hardly engaged with news from and about their community. Mainstream-engaged Latino news users seemed to act in a targeted manner, side-stepping Spanish-language community news, while universally disengaged Latino users generally avoided news of any kind. But community-engaged news users, which constituted about a quarter of surveyed participants,

could be characterized as engaging with community media in a targeted, specific manner, just like the mainstream news user group – in particular, they exposed themselves to Spanish-language local TV news and Spanish-language local newspapers. Given the results of this cluster analysis, we next focused on individuals’ use of Spanish-language local TV news and Spanish-language local newspapers in a first step towards understanding the link between listening styles and use of “community media.”

Toward answering RQ2 and RQ3, we first estimated partial correlations of the four listening styles with the use of community news media (RQ2) and attention to community news (RQ3), while controlling for the other three listening styles.

As seen in Table 3, relational listening consistently exhibited a small, positive association with all three measures of mediated engagement. Specifically, Latino individuals who report being generally more inclined to listen to others with empathy and concern for others’ feelings, emotions, and moods also tend to make greater use of various media to engage with their community. These media included Spanish-language TV news ($r = .11$) and newspapers ($r = .09$). The data also reveal a similar relational component to people’s attention to community news ($r = .09$).

Table 3: Partial Correlations of Listening Styles with Mediated Community Engagement

	Listening Styles			
	Relational	Analytical	Task-oriented	Critical
<i>Use of community news media</i>				
Local Spanish-language TV news	.11 (.004)	.06 (.124)	-.13 (.001)	-.07 (.078)

Local Spanish-language newspapers	.09 (.017)	.02 (.596)	-.11 (.004)	-.03 (.463)
<i>Attention to community news content</i>	.09 (.024)	.16 (.000)	-.03 (.497)	.03 (.511)

Note: Cell entries are partial correlation coefficients controlling for the three respective other listening style dimensions, with *p*-values in parentheses.

Analytical listening manifested slightly different relations with mediated engagement. It was positively related to paying attention to community news, but not to use of either reading Spanish-language newspapers or watching Spanish-language local TV news. In other words, as individuals who report a tendency to hear others out to get as much information as possible before forming a judgment, analytical Latino listeners do not differ statistically from those less inclined to engage in analytical listening in their use of specific community-oriented news media. However, they are more likely to engage with their community by paying greater attention to news about their community.

Task-oriented listening, which is characterized by a tendency to listen “transactionally” and a preference for interactions to be efficient, was associated with less engagement with community news media (Spanish-language newspapers and Spanish-language local TV news), but not with the degree of attention paid to news about the community. Notably, the partial correlation coefficients for task-oriented listening are in direct contrast to those for relational listening: From this analysis, it would appear that the instrumental nature of task-oriented listening expresses itself in a tendency to avoid using Spanish-language local news media, but without translating into less attention to community news. This pattern suggests that task-oriented listeners are just as interested as non-task-oriented listeners in attending to relevant

community information, but they are less likely to actually use specifically community-oriented news media like Spanish-language local newspapers and TV news.

Finally, in contrast to the other three listening styles, critical listening was not generally associated with mediated community engagement at all. The extent to which individuals report listening to others with the goal of evaluating the accuracy and consistency of what has been said does not appear to make a difference for the degree to which they engage with their community – either through their use of Spanish-language local media or through attention paid to news about their community.

While these broad correlational findings are instructive, we next examined more closely how people's engagement with community news was associated with their interpersonal listening orientations. To do so, we performed a descriptive canonical linear discriminant analysis, in which we treated the four clusters of news engagement found in our initial cluster analysis as a group variable and the four listening styles as variables discriminating the four clusters (i.e., “news-user types” or “news-engagement groups”). This analysis allowed us to assess the separability of the different patterns of Latino's news engagement based on how people tend to listen to others, giving more detailed insight into whether regular engagement with community news is associated with different listening styles. In other words, our goal in this analysis was to identify the relative contribution of the four listening-style variables to the separation of the four Latino news-engagement groups.

The four listening styles (relational, analytical, task-oriented, and critical) were entered concurrently in the discriminant function analysis. The linear equations performed well, with the first two linear discriminant functions accounting for almost all the variance between news engagement clusters (the first function for about 71%, the second for about 29%). According to

Table 4, which shows the standardized discriminant function coefficients (loadings) for these two functions, the dominant first discriminant function contrasts relational listening (.68) to task-oriented listening (-.61). The subordinate second function adds nuance to this, particularly further separating those with lower and higher scores across relational (-.48), task-oriented (-.72), and critical listening (-.32) from each other, but not analytical listening (.03). In all, two of the four listening styles, analytical listening and critical listening, have little discriminating ability for the four news-engagement groups.

Table 4: Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

	Function 1	Function 2
Relational	.68	-.48
Analytical	.19	.03
Task-oriented	-.61	-.72
Critical	.10	-.32

Note: Cell entries are standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients from canonical linear discriminant analysis separating four news use clusters as a function of listening styles. Function 3 omitted as it accounted for a minimal proportion of the total variance in the discriminant scores, Wilk's $\lambda = 1$, $F(2, 710) = 0.08$, $p = .925$.

Table 5 shows the group means on the canonical variables, giving some indication of how the four news-engagement clusters are separated by listening styles. The means on the first function show that the universally engaged and universally disengaged groups are separated

farthest from each other by this function (.29 and -.31, respectively), which separates relational from task-oriented listeners. Thus, the relational–task-oriented contrast seen in the first function (Table 4) appears to be driven mostly by what we have labeled “universal engagement” with news, not by engagement with specifically community or mainstream news. The means on the second function indicate that the community-engaged and mainstream-engaged groups (.15 and -.24, respectively) separated farthest from each other on this function, though the contrast is not overly stark.

Table 5: Discriminant Function Values for Each News Engagement Cluster

	Function 1	Function 2
Universally engaged (Cluster 1)	.29	.03
Universally disengaged (Cluster 2)	-.31	.04
Community-engaged (Cluster 3)	.05	.15
Mainstream-engaged (Cluster 4)	.01	-.24

Note: Cell entries are group means on canonical variables from canonical linear discriminant analysis separating four news use clusters as a function of listening styles. Function 3 again omitted as it accounted for a minimal proportion of the total variance in the discriminant scores, Wilk’s $\lambda = 1$, $F(2, 710) = 0.08$, $p = .925$.

Finally, Table 6 displays the discriminating variable summaries for each of the four news-engagement groups. These data provide a direct look at the differences in average listening styles across the four news-engagement clusters. Specifically, where relational listening is

concerned, community-engaged news consumers do not engage in relational listening as much as the universally and mainstream-engaged news consumers. They were, however, more likely than the universally disengaged to be relational listeners. This particular set of findings adds important nuance to the partial correlations presented in Table 3, whereby relational listening was positively related to all three measures of mediated engagement. It appears that these positive relationships are driven mostly by the universally engaged news consumers, not those who are focused on community news.

Table 6: News Engagement Cluster Means for Each Listening Style (LSP-R8)

	<i>Mean</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Universally engaged (Cluster 1)	Universally disengaged (Cluster 2)	Community- engaged (Cluster 3)	Mainstream- engaged (Cluster 4)
Relational listening	5.04 (0.23)	5.28	4.70	4.96	5.20
Analytical listening	5.52 (0.13)	5.69	5.33	5.48	5.59
Task-oriented listening	4.83 (0.24)	4.56	5.06	4.62	5.09
Critical listening	5.23 (0.11)	5.26	5.11	5.14	5.39
<i>N</i>		176	197	178	164

Note: Cell entries are the grand and group means on listening styles variables for four news engagement clusters, based on estimation sample from canonical linear discriminant analysis, with standard deviation for grand means in parentheses. All listening scales ranged from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”).

In contrast, community news consumers were somewhat less analytical than the universally and mainstream-engaged in their listening style. In other words, analytical motives play a stronger role in general news engagement than in engagement with community news specifically.

The greatest differences between news-engagement clusters emerged in the case of task-oriented listening. A comparison of the community- and mainstream-engaged news clusters indicates the greatest contrast, with the former much less likely to be predisposed to task-oriented listening. However, the relatively low mean levels of task-oriented listening were similar for community-engaged news consumers and the universally engaged. At the same time, mainstream news consumers were almost as task-oriented in their listening as the universally disengaged. Further illuminating Table 3, which revealed community news engagement to be positively associated with relational listening and negatively with task-oriented listening, the findings shown in Table 6 indicate that a less transactional/goal-oriented approach to others predicts a pattern of engagement with primarily community news as well as universal engagement with news.

Finally, the group means for critical listening indicate great levels of similarity across the four news-engagement clusters, although use of community news media is associated with a somewhat less critical approach in listening to others.

Discussion

Against a backdrop of media balkanization, increased access to information, and deepening societal cleavages, talking “across the aisle” has become fraught as individuals attend to information that resonates with their own viewpoints. We examined how individuals’ listening styles are associated with their use of specific types of media and how they might attend to news about their community. Analyzing survey data collected from a national sample of Latino voters shortly after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, we showed how examinations of individuals’ community engagement can be enriched by the simultaneous study of mediated and interpersonal engagement (in this case, listening to others). A multidimensional view of engagement highlights myriad ways in which interest in community life can be piqued, acted on, and potentially sustained by individual motivations, interpersonal relationships, language and culture, and media messages, as well as the interactions among them.

We found, first, that news media use among Latino respondents clustered into distinct patterns. At the more extreme were the universally disengaged and the universally engaged users, individuals who respectively formed the groups with the least and the most use of all media types for news consumption. Between these extremes, the mainstream engaged showed an above-average use of English-language news media, while the community engaged were above-average consumers of Spanish-language local and national news media. Our cluster analysis indicated great variance in the degree to which Latino individuals engage with news about their own community, following a pattern of either community-specific or more general news attention. We thus showed that selective community news use is a distinct pattern of news use among US Latinos.

Second, we examined how interpersonal listening styles relate to community news use. Our data illustrate how different listening styles are indeed associated with specific patterns in how people use community news media. Specifically, Latino/a individuals who report higher tendencies toward relational listening also used community (Spanish-language) news media more. Conversely, more transactional, task-oriented listeners were consistently less like to use media that would present news specific to their community, perhaps because of the extra effort that may be required, lack of Spanish-language proficiency, and/or lack of felt community connection to Spanish-language news media.

Interpersonal listening styles also relate to community-news attention, but these patterns of association differ slightly from how the same styles are related to the use of Spanish-language news media. Namely, relational and analytical listening both predicted greater attention to community news, whereas task-oriented and critical listening tendencies did not appear to be related to attention.

Why would analytical listening be related to how much *attention* individuals pay to community news, but not their *use* of community news media? This differential finding might stem from the primarily cognitive approach to their community taken by analytical listeners, who tend to engage with as much information as possible before forming judgments.

While the requirements of this approach may be satisfied by paying extra attention to mainstream media, relational listeners may be driven by more social-moral motivations and a desire to connect, which may push them to also turn more often to community news media. The extra effort needed to follow community news media compared to just generally paying attention to community news (regardless of medium) might also explain why task-oriented listeners are less likely to use community news media but are *not* any less likely to follow community news in

general. In a transactional approach to one's community, it might just be "cost-effective" to pay attention to news about the community when incidentally exposed to this news, but it might seem prohibitively costly to adapt, and perhaps extend, one's news media repertoire just to follow the community.

With these general relationships emerging between listening styles (here, a reflection of interpersonal engagement) and community news use and attention, it is important to provide some caveats. First, although our survey items on listening styles and news use and attention were framed broadly to elicit general tendencies, it is very possible that the timing of the survey itself – on the heels of a highly contentious election that was still quite salient – may have elicited responses grounded in more recent, contextual behaviors (Tourangeau et al., 2000). In other words, respondents' reported levels of using community news media may more closely resemble campaign-related patterns of mediated engagement than such levels of use during a politically routine period.

Second, while the survey overall measured the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of Latino voters, and while many measures can be adopted wholesale into surveys of other groups, others might not be so easily transferable. In particular, because use of Spanish-language television and newspapers were part of the items analyzed in the fully inductive cluster analyses, it is unclear what specific community-oriented media news consumers who speak only English would use. Regardless, while community engagement, mediated or not, can take many forms and involve multiple tongues, in our view, language can serve as a useful, conservative proxy to indicate actual engagement with a community centered around that language.

Overall, this study uncovered clear differences in the patterns of mediated community engagement within the US Latino community. It also uncovered links between interpersonal

listening styles and the amount of mediated community engagement that warrant further investigation. Specifically, the link between relational listening styles and community-news engagement suggests a systematic affinity between the two. This highlights the social-moral and social-belonging dimension of (mediated) community engagement: Engaging specifically and systematically with one's community, even in mediated forms, has a specifically relational aspect to it. In this sense, community engagement emerges as a "labor of love" that stands in opposition to engagement that is more transactional and instrumental in nature. Two key findings underscore this relationship. First, mediated community engagement, captured empirically in this study by the tendency to consume local Spanish-language newspapers and TV news, *generally* is lower for task-oriented listeners in the Latino community. Second, *selective* mediated community engagement (i.e., consuming community news and not mainstream news) appears to be less attractive to task-oriented, transactional listeners. In other words, people who take a non-transactional approach to connecting with others around them will be more likely to tune into their community, even if they otherwise avoid the news.

In all, this study shows that different patterns of mediated community engagement appear related to different approaches to interpersonal relationships as expressed in different general listening styles. That mediated community engagement *overall* appears to be relationally and socially oriented illustrates that community media may not be serving only an informational function (one they normatively are expected to serve), but also a social one. Such a finding reminds us that, contrary to the traditional view that political engagement is grounded only in issues of substance, information that serves to build connections and foster cohesion may be equally compelling.

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