ISOJ 2021: Day 5, Research Panel 2

Challenging the status quo: New pathways to understanding news audiences today

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Chair: Amy Schmitz Weiss, *San Diego State University*, ISOJ Research Chair & #ISOJ Journal co-editor
- o Mark Poepsel, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, *Thematic analysis of journalism engagement in practice*
- o Jessica Retis, University of Arizona and Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón, San Diego State University, *Mapping digital-native U.S. Latinx news: Beyond geographical boundaries, language barriers, and hyper-fragmentation of audiences.*
- o Ryan Wallace, University of Texas at Austin, *The language of online news: How science and health reporting in English impacts Latinx Audiences*

Rosental Alves Howdy, welcome back. We are heading out to the very last panel, very last panel of ISOJ 2021. It has been fast. The ISOJ week has been very strong and very fast, very quick. This is the 20th session of ISOJ 2021, and I am especially delighted to introduce the second research panel of the year, featuring winners of the blind peer review process of #ISOJJournal, our official research journal of the International Symposium on Online Journalism. The panel, Challenging the Status Quo: New Pathways to Understanding News Audiences Today, will be chaired by my friend and longtime ISOJ partner, Dr. Amy Schmitz Weiss, a professor at San Diego State University, ISOJ research chair and #ISOJJournal coeditor. Remember, we first have the presentations by the scholars, and later on we're going to have a Q&A with the questions from you. So let's start with the very last ISOJ 2021 panel.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Hello, everybody, welcome to our last panel of ISOJ. We always save the most amazing part for last, which is the research. We are so happy to have with you today our three remaining articles from the paper competition that we held that also appear in the ISOJ Journal. It's going to be available in print, and you can also check it online at ISOJ.org/research to read the amazing work of these three great articles that we have today. Our panel of scholars today are looking specifically at the evolution of Latinx media, and also we're taking a deep dive into what does journalism engagement mean in today's environment. So with this, we're going to go ahead and jump in. And we have our first presenter, Mark Poepsel from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and he's going to jump in and tell us specifically how do we see journalism engagement being done now and where can we go from here?

Mark Poepsel Well, thanks very much, Amy. It's a pleasure to present again at ISOJ. This is obviously not my first time presenting here. Let me make sure that I'm sharing the appropriate screen. If everyone can see my screen, I'm going to go ahead and proceed from here.

My paper was called the Thematic Analysis of Journalism Engagement in Practice. This was done obviously while at SIU Edwardsville, where I've been for several years, and this was part of sabbatical research. And some background, of course, engaged journalism goes by many names. It's just that engaged journalism or engagement journalism seems to be winning out over these other terms that still show up in the scholarship. So they'll still

appear in a literature review and any discussion of this type of research, but the sort of umbrella term engagement journalism does cover participatory journalism, civic or public journalism, citizen journalism, at least when it gets incorporated into professional practice as engaged journalism and, of course, solutions journalism.

A good definition comes from Jake Batsell's book, "Engaged Journalism: Connecting with Digitally Empowered News Audiences" from 2015, his award winning book, and this is the one that I'm using in my study. Engaged journalism is that which must actively consider the needs of an audience and wholeheartedly embrace constant interaction with that audience, and so it's the interaction part that I'm focused on in this research, what kinds of interaction and what for. Some possible "what fors." Kind of setting up the study. Of course, to inform folks is to provide news content. Also to engage citizens with the news organization to produce content to influence the news agenda, but also to engage with citizens in discussion, possibly problem-solving with each other. That was one of the things that interested me in doing this study from the outset was, you know, there seemed to be a surprising number of times when news organizations are engaging with members, people formerly known as the audience, as Jay Rosen might say, not just to produce content, but just to basically host events, and get out in the community, and bring the community together.

So another purpose of studying this engaged journalism and this practice is to see if there's at least a little bit of reciprocity going on. If we're starting to build these engines of social engagement, these engines for social capital, how is that being done, and how might we be doing it better, which is basically taking a broad view of what kinds of practices are out there and asking which ones are best at fostering a community. Good community is a factory for reciprocity, the exchange of ideas, expertise, services, goods. Relationships do matter. And it is interesting when news organizations foster relationships and engage in communities. In some cases, reasserting their position as leaders of community discussion, and just as community leaders in general.

So the study is about that type of engagement, not about the audience metrics side. If you want to read more about the division in the industry between reception oriented metrics, the kind that you might see, like Chart Beat type measurements of engagement, that's a different study. This is more on the production-oriented side, more about journalism, audience relationships. So my production oriented research question was this: What do news organizations actually do when they practice engaged journalism, and how prevalent is the function of fostering community conversation as opposed to the function of fostering collaborative content creation? And so to find out, you need some examples. And I went looking for existing databases, being on sort of a limited time frame, limited budget at SIUE for my sabbatical, I wanted to find a database that already existed. And of course, Gather came to mind immediately. There's a great community of people putting together these Gather case studies and really encouraging each other to do this type of journalism.

So it was actually 50 case studies of some length and then 50 research briefs found and written by journalists, University of Oregon grad students, faculty, other engaged journalism leaders. And so the methodology, the method approach, that I used in doing my study was thematic analysis. It's a nice qualitative kind of generic, big picture kind of research method. And basically, you just break down a large body of data into a global theme, some organizing themes, and then beneath those or building into those, some basic themes. And so the global theme, of course, is engaged journalism. The organizing themes I found in looking at roughly 100 case studies and blurbs were content collaborations, facilitating conversation, which I already alluded to. Of course, I was going

to find those. I was looking for those. And what I'm calling random acts of empowerment, which I'll explain.

Basic themes. Let's go to the graphics. So the basic themes include engaging individual citizens and engaging organized groups as part of content collaborations. I found it's important to do that break down because it's kind of at what level of community are these collaborations happening? And then under facilitating conversation, there was person to person, truth to power sessions, and what I called the soul searching journalists. And I can explain more about those a little bit later. But those are all kind of logical breakdowns of the facilitating conversation approach. And then random acts of empowerment was just a term I came up with to try to explain this other sort of miscellaneous category, where journalists, in some cases, we're kind of calling their content itself engaging, even if they don't really do a lot of community engagement. Sometimes I think there's still that definition floating around, that really engaging content or like diversity efforts to do outreach to quote unquote "diversity" under the context of the white male patriarchy, diversity that that might count as engaged journalism. So these are interesting practices, cool projects. Definitely interesting to put in the database to talk about among the gathered community, but not necessarily in fitting with the rest of the research. So they're kind of often a miscellaneous category.

Some takeaways in plain English. Content collaboration obviously dominated. I'm going to go ahead and flip back. I'm not going to do this too often, but content collaborations were nearly two-thirds of the examples that I studied of the cases and research briefs that I studied. Collaboration with individuals appears to be cheaper. Think crowdsourcing. And so that might be one explanation for why there was a lot more content collaboration, and a lot of it was with individual citizens. Facilitating conversation was almost a quarter of the data, so it definitely made an impact. It makes a dent in the databas of Gather. It's something that news organizations are doing, and it's worth further study. But a third of that was news organizations seemingly trying to remind citizens that they exist, just going out there in communities and reminding people, "Hey, we're here, and this is what we're doing." So those are kind of borderline public relations efforts and maybe not to the end of engagement journalism kind of at its most prominent or the highest possibilities. But it is something that news organizations can do and, you know, in tandem with other engagement efforts, it makes sense. These aren't happening, of course, in mutually exclusive conditions, nor should they. But in the research paper, if you want to read that, I explain how I kind of broke down the categories and how I counted things. If there was overlap, I found a way to decide which way they should be categorized, which is part of the fun of qualitative research.

When you achieve outcomes in engagement journalism, you have something for the community to talk about. So that's engagement journalism really out of the realm of PR and branding into reciprocity building. So we should pay special attention to successes in that realm. And so here are a couple of examples to Google later. This one is how Searchlight New Mexico, which is its own independent effort, used crowd sourcing to investigate restraint of students in the Albuquerque school district. Another great example is Cittadini Reattivi, and my Italian is not nearly as good as my Spanish, so I apologize. But this was like a community crowdsourced project looking at environmental issues all over Italy, where people could report and be added to a database. And now Cittadini Reattivi has moved on to sort of doing some citizen journalism training, so they are still around and doing great things. But the specific case that is talked about in my paper was about calling on different people in different municipalities to report at the municipality level where there are environmental concerns. You know, waste sites and that sort of thing. And another one

is Rona Call, community info trees. So just to give you an indication of how contemporary this research is, it went from 2010 all the way through 2020. And obviously the coronavirus and response factor into the Gather database. They did change over their website from when I started the analysis to when I actually finished this research project, this paper. So they're now at letsgather.in, if you want to find more examples of how this could be done.

And I wanted to give a special thanks to Joy Mayer, who is kind of the big name. You know, she's kind of an inspiration for me in doing this type of engagement research. But also, you should know that the folks behind Gather are at the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication. And so that made for a pretty good sabbatical project. And this is me, Mark Poepsel PhD, tenured professor at SIU Edwardsville, a former broadcast journalist and so on. So thanks very much for this opportunity, and I'm going to stop sharing, if that's OK.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Thank you so much, Mark, for sharing your research with us and highlighting those major themes that came to be. Really appreciate it, and I think we're going to have some really great questions in the follow up for the discussion in the Q&A section on what journalism engagement can be and how it's being conceptualized today. Next, we're going to move on to Jessica Retis of the University of Arizona and Lourdes Cueva Chacón from San Diego State University, and they're going to share with us their exciting research that is groundbreaking in looking at the evolution of digital native Latinx news.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Thank you, Amy. We're happy to be here.

Jessica Retis Thank you so much, Amy. This is a product of a collaboration that we are starting with Lourdes. So we're presenting our ongoing findings of a larger project that is mapping digital native U.S. Latinx media. And basically what we're trying to address is the part of Latino media that is also intertwining in the American news media landscape. So we start by addressing the idea and the fact that Latino media has been part of the American news media landscape for more than two centuries. But the rapid change in scenarios in the last years has been challenging for practitioners to revisit in traditional ways of producing news and remaining profitable and keeping financial quality journalism, but also for researchers implementing critical forums about the wide ranging implications of digital technologies for the practice and the study of journalism. And this is what we're facing right now.

So what we address in our paper is the fact that Latino news media outlets have encountered new spaces to communicate with bicultural and bilingual audiences in the United States and beyond. And this is important because we're going to address that transnational characteristics of the Latino media in the United States. We are looking to fill a gap in the investigations about diversity in digital journalism. Specifically, our project is trying to identify these new news media outlets and advance a study on contemporary practices. So what we're doing is mapping digital native U.S. Latinx news media that is produced in the U.S. Right. We're examining their online content. We are trying to understand the strategies that are implemented to produce and disseminate information, but we are very interested also in understanding the way they interact with their audiences. And this is very interesting for us. So we're bringing this concept that is soon to be published in the Encyclopedia of Journalism: What is Latino News?

So Latino News is a product of bilingual journalism practices that require cultural competencies to gather, assess, present and disseminate news information about or

relevant to Latinx communities. You can be offered Spanish and be offered English, and puede ser dicho en dos idiomas, bilingual. So Latino media engages with the understanding of current affairs, what's going on, but also has to take into account the history, the economics, the politics, and the culture of diverse groups, whether they are U.S. born or immigrants in the U.S., as well are their global liaisons with the countries that they trace their origins. And this is very important because that brings the transnational characteristic of U.S. Latinx media. What we're trying to address is how digital journalism is complex, expansive and constitutes massive and ill-defined communications terrain, which is constantly in flux. So we are analyzing a particular momentum, but this can change and it will change. We are sure about that. So we're bringing with you this notion of the multi-ethnic public sphere and advancing this into the understanding of multicultural media system that considers both the availability, so the offering, but also the accessibility of ethnic media for a larger audience. And this is very important because it's the combination with the production and also the consumption of media.

So we're seeing that by mapping ethnic media that's produced in English or bilingually online, we want to help advance the theoretical debates of ethnic media as independent spheres, focusing on speaking and listening to minority voices to move the perspective into understanding what needs to be in place in order to enable these voices to be heard. And for that, we seek to realign to what we believe is an understudied area in the American digital journalism studies, which means how race, language and news information needs to be intertwined in the American news media landscape in the early stages of emergence, dominance and sometimes its survival or extinction conditions. It depends on the different case studies that we are analyzing. In other words, and this is what we're trying to address with this paper, we're looking at the Latinx component of the American digital journalism.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Thank you, Jessica. For this specific study, our research question is what is the current state of Latinx digital native news media in the United States? And we did a study specifically about digital natives in the continental U.S., so Puerto Rico, for instance, is not included in this study. Our methods involve digital ethnography. We look at the news outlets, and how they have their footprints in the digital region. And we also consider the journalists who produce content, but that sometimes extends to the mission or the vision of their own news organizations. We'll also consider that in our study. We did an extensive search and consistent search of reports, projects, directories. Different sources where we can find and identify these organizations. And then once we found them with the qualitative and quantitative content analysis of these variables: ownership, philosophy, technological approach to news, the platform they used, where they were located, the size in terms of the staff, the audience that they're trying to reach, and the language or languages that they use. So we found a total of 103 Latinx digital natives, and we can say that even though they are present in the U.S. from earliest 2001, most of them are young, as you can see in the graph. We also found that more than half of them deliver the content only in Spanish. Twenty-eight percent only in English and 15 percent in both. We only identify one digital news. It was a podcast. The anchor delivered bilingually, so she switched languages during the program to try to make it accessible for both populations. We also found that most of the news outlets are concentrated in four states in the U.S. However, they are also growing and being part of areas where the Latinx populations are growing, such as Nevada, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and New Hampshire. Two-thirds of them are privately funded, and a big chunk of them, 40 percent actually have teams that are four people or less.

In terms of the content that they produce, these are the platforms they use. So they produce original content from messaging apps, websites, social media or podcasts, but about half of them produce original content for more than one platform. You can see there what are the prefered social media. And something that we found interesting is that more than seven percent of them produce content and distribute them through messaging apps such as WhatsApp and SMS. And here is what are the audiences that they're trying to reach. You can see that half of them tried to reach national audiences, but they also are regional, local and hyper local. And the big part of that we want to highlight here is how they are creating these transnational media spaces. So 18 percent of them not only produce content that was related to different parts of the globe, especially Latin America and the U.S., but in addition to that, the people who produced the content were also distributed in different parts of the globe. So they were digital natives that have people reporting from Colombia, Spain and Mexico. Different parts, but the shows were produced, edited here in the U.S. And there are interesting cases, for instance, as refugees, journalists who are refugees from Nicaragua, who also produced news media.

In terms of the discourse, when we analyzed our mission and our vision, we saw that there are three things that they are looking for. They are trying to inform the Latinx community. They want to amplify their voices. And they are also talking about elevating the discourse not only of the Latinx community, but elevating the discourse about the Latinx community. They want to fight bias and be more accurate reporters of the Latinx context.

Jessica Retis So basically, we want to run into our conclusion to sum up what we found. One of the main ideas is that Latinx digital native outlets have been present in very early stages of the digital age, but most of them are very young and therefore they are under research. Also, the fast pace of the technological evolution and the business challenges will probably mean challenges also for us as well as researchers. However, it is important to continually map and monitor these changes as they are part of a larger U.S. multicultural media landscape. As we've seen, Spanish continues to be the dominant language for Latino news media, but they are following the language preference of the different generations of Latinx communities. So the offerings of news in English are growing, as they reflect not only in the English-only news outlets reviewed in this study, but also the bilingual offerings.

Latinx Media continues to be a mostly independent effort. This is very important to understand in where the majority of the outlets have less than 15 people and are not backed by the traditional media conglomerates, but evidence of a growing philanthropic funding either by foundations or crowdfunding out there. The study shows that contemporary digital-native Latinx news media participate in the heightened interconnectivity and intermediality practices beyond geographical boundaries, language barriers and hyper-fragmentation of audiences. And this is us, our last slide. We are Jessica Retis from the University of Arizona and Lourdes Cueva Chacón from San Diego State University. I hope you have some questions for the Q&A session. Thank you. Gracias.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Thank you so much, Jessica and Lourdes, for that really helpful and insightful look at the state of Latinx digital news today. Now we're going to move on to another pathway in looking at Latinx news media, specifically from the perspective of science and health reporting from Ryan Wallace at the University of Texas at Austin. Yay. Hook'em Horns. So he's going to be talking with us about his research and this other additional layer that's crucial to understand in this current moment.

Ryan Wallace Thank you so much, Amy. Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you so much for joining us for this research panel. My name is Ryan Wallace, and I'm a doctoral candidate here at the University of Texas at Austin. Today, I'm going to talk to you about a research project I've been working on this past year titled The Language of Online News: How Science and Health Reporting in English Impacts Latinx Audiences. Last summer, ISOJ put out an open call for papers that asked us to look at important and original areas of online journalism. With the ongoing pandemic, I was really inspired to better understand how diverse news audiences have historically obtained important public health information in times of crisis, from research on the Spanish Influenza of 1918 to the H1N1 outbreak more than a decade ago. What I found was that individuals without the literacy to read the language of the news are at a greater risk of transmitting disease, whatever that may be.

This research suggested that with the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, language barriers may again be exacerbating historical social inequities amongst minority communities across the U.S. While often taken for granted, language has an important part to play in protecting communities. Public health programs formulate health messages in vernacular languages to help diverse communities understand new threats and how they can combat the spread of disease. However, mass media across the United States is primarily constructed for an English-language audience and often neglects the social, cultural and linguistic needs of its minority audiences. Groups like Latinx and Hispanic communities are brought together by common language and shared socio-cultural identities in addition to unique symbol systems, most of which are largely absent from today's news media. And this has sparked growing concern about the disproportionate health disparities that these communities face, in large part because they have limited access to reliable scientific information.

Considering the greater burden of disease amongst minority communities and the ongoing global pandemic, this study sought to better understand the linguistic characteristics of science and health reporting online, as well as the implications of existing journalistic practices. From a journalistic perspective, this research has the potential to inform practical knowledge about the composition of science and health reporting, what biases still exist, and how future reporting could be better improved with a deeper understanding of what audiences are excluded from these conversations. At the core of this study are these following research questions. They focus in particular on the role that language plays in communicating science and health to the public, as well as how these linguistic dimensions of news impact the content that minority audiences have available to them. To answer these questions and paint a clear picture of science and health in digital news media, this study relied on a multimodal discourse analysis of prominent newspapers and popular science magazines across the United States. From the seven core publications, which you'll see on the next slide, this corpus included news content from a total of 17 different websites, one podcast, and one digital newsletter. Additional archival data was also analyzed to better understand changes in these publications over larger spans of time.

At first, each publication was analyzed separately, then together as a part of a larger corpus to draw comparisons. This comparative approach offered deeper insights into differing media logics across publications, how some media are or are not addressing the diversity of their news audiences, and what gaps exist in communicating science and health coverage across linguistic barriers. In answering the first research question, it became quite evident that not all publications are the same. Amongst these newspapers and popular science magazines, there was great diversity in how each publication deals with audiences' linguistic needs, ranging from creating solely English-language content to

creating culturally relevant content for specific audiences in their own languages. In addition to Arabic and Chinese, Spanish-language content was actively produced by several publications, including the Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, National Geographic and The Washington Post. Noting the importance of engaging Latinx audiences and their unique cultural perspectives, publications like The Washington Post prioritize developing media content like the El Washington Post podcast and various opinion sections in Spanish. Other publications like National Geographic and Popular Science, on the other hand, viewed foreign language content editions as a priority for publishers abroad and not domestically in the United States. While some publications like The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times sought to develop content specifically for Latinx and other language audiences, the primary content of all publications was in English, although they vary greatly in the degree to which they developed content in these other languages. By and large, what was seen across these publications was what I described as an English-first approach, and even at times an only English approach.

Content native to the Spanish language developed by Spanish-speaking reporters for specifically Spanish-speaking audiences is by far the rarest type of news. However, in analyzing digital publications to other forms of reporting were also identified evergreen articles that can be published year round and common translations from English to secondary languages. These types of news articles were common across the publications. However, both have significant impacts on the discourse that minority audiences are consuming. As seen in these word clouds below, the English-language websites for National Geographic focused on current events, the coronavirus pandemic, the wildfires in Australia, conservation and a myriad of other scientific topics. The website for the Spanish-language audiences, on the other hand, was not maintained to the same degree or caliber as the English-language site. The stories in Spanish focused primarily on places, destinations and travel, with evergreen stories like the origin of the Caesar salad cropping up year after year. Some translations were also found to be quite problematic in spite of how common they are among publications that do offer content in multiple languages. Rather than interpreting these stories into the social-cultural context of these minority groups or interviewing members of this community for different perspectives, stories are planned, reported and published in English first, and this perspective was definitely seen in the final products. Many articles in Spanish were near verbatim translations of their counterparts in English, and what was even worse was that there were often significant delays in the publishing of these translations. Additionally, while some stories are translated, many are not, which means that the news minority audiences consume is far less diverse.

In the end, the study found that although the U.S. does not have an official language, English is the primary language of news media, and this English-first approach can have significant impacts on the news that minority audiences have available to them. This was particularly concerning given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as minority communities face disproportionate burdens of disease and rely on news media to communicate important updates. If news organizations are not considering the diversity of their audiences when they produce science news coverage, this English-first approach can have devastating implications for the health of these communities. I want to thank you all so much for the opportunity to share my research with you. If you guys have any questions, please feel free to reach out, and I hope that you give my article a read. Thank you.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Thank you so much, Ryan, for sharing that with us today. And with that, we have had a chance to hear from our three different scholars on the research.

We're going to have time here in just a moment for discussion and Q&A. We are also going to first jump into the special ISOJ announcement of the top paper award, as well as talk about the call for papers for 2022.

Hello, everybody. We were having a few technical issues there for just a moment. So we wanted to give a couple of announcements. We were hoping to be able to show you our screen, but unfortunately, we're having some technical issues. So we will just go forward. You know that's what happens in the digital world. So, first of all, we want to go ahead and show you, of course, our ISOJ journal that has just come hot off the presses. And again, you can take a look at any of the articles that are featured on our website at ISOJ.org/research. You can check them out there digitally as well to find out more. We also wanted to give two announcements, as I just said a few minutes ago, about the top paper award. The top paper award is based on the highest rankings that we had from the peer review process, a blind peer reviewed process of our papers. The judges who ranked this particular paper as the highest ranked in terms of the scoring, as well as the quality of what was covered, the uniqueness, as well as the innovative approach to looking at something that is underrepresented currently in the scholarship. And so we are proud to announce that the top paper award goes to Dr. Jessica Retis and Lourdes Cueva Chacón for their study on mapping digital native U.S. Latinx News. So congratulations, Jessica and Lourdes. So you will you be receiving a plaque to your homes. We normally in non-pandemic times would do this in person with an actual plaque, but you will be receiving that soon. So congratulations to both of you for your work on behalf of the ISOJ coeditors and reviewers for this year.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Thank you.

Jessica Retis Thank you. Muchas gracias.

Amy Schmitz Weiss De nada. Next, we're going to talk about our call for papers for next year. So, of course, we're always looking to the next ISOJ, and so next year is going to be ISOJ 2022. And so next year, we're going to be focusing on a new theme for next year. So next year's theme is going to be on AI and news. And we are so honored and happy to have Dr. Seth Lewis, UT Austin alum, as well as a fellow ISOJer of presenting his research in the past for ISOJ. We are very honored to have him as our guest editor for next year. And so again, the theme will be on AI and news. So get your ideas going now. In terms of what you'd like to do, there will be a call for papers coming out within the next month or so that we will be posting up on ISOJ.org, so you can check that out.

All right. So let's go ahead and jump in to Q&A. There are a lot of questions that we have to get to here in terms of what we would like to discuss. So why don't we first jump over to Mark? Mark, I wanted to ask you. We'll just wait for Mark to show up. There you go. Hey, Mark. So I wanted to see if you could tell everyone a little bit more about Gather and how you came to see this as a platform to help do your research? Because I think you only gave a couple of seconds about it in your presentation, I think would be helpful for people to know this as a resource from the standpoint of your research, but just in terms of the bigger sense of what Gather represents in this moment.

Mark Poepsel So Gather is a community of people doing engaged journalism. And so there are many case studies, but there's also, I actually looked it up, there's a community of people in the member's only section that is 600-plus members. And then there's also a Slack channel that people kind of use for questions and is broken down into several different subcategories based on what types of participatory or engagement projects

people are working on, and that has almost 2,000 members. So it's really a community of people first, and then a repository of information second. But it's a great publicly available resource, if anybody wants to just sit and read cool case studies of engagement projects all day long. In my study, there were roughly 100 different cases and blurbs that I looked at. And so, you know, 50 of them, 54 of them, I think, are case studies that go up to 3,000 words long, that include, in some cases, the costs, in some cases limited outcomes and what these projects were all about. So it's a great repository of information, but it's also a community.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Excellent. I think it serves as a great place for people to consider, to look at as a resource in these moments when we think about journalism and engagement and building that relationship with the community in particular.

Mark Poepsel It's very open. Like it's a very open and welcoming group. I just want to say that. Like if this serves as nothing else than an ad for go check out, letsgather.in, do it.

Amy Schmitz Weiss And Joy is an awesome person. I'll shout out to Joy here, as well, if she's watching. We have a question from Alfred Hermida, who is actually our guest editor from last year's journal, who has a question for you. How far did you find the relationship with communities that were extractive or reciprocal?

Mark Poepsel I think in terms of, you know, whenever there was fostering community collaboration, so about 25 percent of them, just under that. This was news organizations going to communities and saying talk to each other or talk to us. And those did not tend to be, in my estimation, very extractive. They tended to be like post 2016, we have this kind of insane antipathy from left and right wing America, and can we get them together to sit across the table and recognize that we have things in common, not just differences? And so these are valiant efforts, but often like one offs. Right. And so I would categorize most of the community collaboration, so most of the 25 percent of the hundred case studies and briefs out there to be non-extractive, like real, reciprocal community building kind of efforts. For like the two-thirds where there was a lot of content work, I think many of those were kind of extractive. Like I would break down the content work into database building or database breaking. Like we've got government information. We want to break it down. We want community help, or we want to build up databases. And I just thought it was important to differentiate between individuals and communities, because when you're talking to individuals, they're kind of out there isolated on their own. And that can be kind of an extractive, like just give us our data because we've got to get this story done and we really want to collaborate with you, but in the way that serves us. So maybe two-thirds of those collaborative projects, case studies and briefs were content oriented. And of that two-thirds, I'd say about half of it or more was just individuals like, give us some stuff.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Mark, actually, Ryan's got a question for you.

Ryan Wallace Do you want me to ask it? I can ask it. I was thinking in particular about public health and environmental issues because you mentioned those in your presentation. So I was thinking, what role do you think that journalists should play in supporting these crowdsourcing efforts? And like going beyond the individual level, do you think that news organizations can facilitate better conversations across these projects?

Mark Poepsel I think you're helping me to highlight my favorite case, which is Cittadini Reattivi. Right? So the react of the citizenry in Italy, and the reason I would call that group collaboration is because it was based on what was happening in their own geographic

area, so in their municipality. And so journalists can and should facilitate discussions about improving our environment. I think it's one of the greatest uses of collaborative or engagement journalism for the purposes of reciprocal community fixing. We're literally talking about physically fixing what was broken or messed up environmentally in these communities. And it begins with tracking. It begins with building a database. But in this case, I don't see this as extractive journalism because they continue to track outcomes, if there's any improvements, if there's any legislation. And they continue to train now, having returned to the case studies after doing this kind of original analysis back during my sabbatical, they train citizen journalists. So they're trying to build a network, and they've also done a documentary. Right. So what kind of started as a website database became a film, became a training ground. And that to me is an example of what's possible.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Going over to you, Ryan. Looking at the research that you explored, you brought up the point about how many of these news publications only offered a few sections of coverage in alternative languages like Spanish. And then when they were translated, it was often much later in the news cycle and often lacked the perspective of minority audiences. And you mentioned this may not solely be a question of priority, but maybe a question of resources as well. Right. So I was curious to kind of know from your perspective, what do you think newsrooms should do to address this more specifically moving forward? As we know, the global pandemic is continuing for however long it may be. And looking at public health information and news is so crucial in these moments. So I don't know if you have some insights you can share in terms of what might be able to be done in these moments?

Ryan Wallace Yeah, I think that Mark actually touched on this at the end of his paper as well. But I think that a lot of these sections where this kind of show and tell where they're allowing these communities to speak for themselves, just highlights the fact that there's not enough diversity within our own newsrooms. So journalists are not bringing necessarily that cultural perspective to their reporting. So instead of receiving public health information that might be tailored to minority audiences, they're just translating it verbatim. And I think that one of the things that was most shocking and kind of upsetting to see is that especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, new technologies have made translation verbatim very easy, but there is often a significant delay between the English publications and these other alternative languages. And it's not because more content is being added. It's not because another context is being considered. It's just kind of a secondary priority is kind of what it feels like. And in the end, these minority audiences, like I mentioned, have disproportionate burdens of illness within these communities. So if you're not getting the news to wear masks before you go out to protect yourself at the beginning of the pandemic until two, three days later than the rest of the nation, that can have significant impacts on health. So I think that including better diversity within our newsrooms can really help address that perspective. Because like I, myself, I grew up consuming different languages of news media from across a wide variety of sources, and if other people in the newsroom share that experience, they can speak to that.

Amy Schmitz Weiss There's a question here for you, Ryan, that someone has posted. They said this seems so much like core periphery international news coverage with NG in Español versus regular Nat Geo. It's like you can taste the hierarchy in the Spanish-language coverage. So what socio-cultural norms does that reinforce with Latinx communities? What does it say to the diaspora to tie it to Jessica and Lourdes's paper.

Ryan Wallace Yeah, I think that at the end of the day, I had mentioned it within the paper, but some publications treat it basically as other languages is a concern for international

editions. That's not the American publication's responsibility, and NG in Español is a good example of that in that it's a lot of evergreen news. It's not necessarily hard news that is impacting communities every day. And there's something else that I think is echoed to the diaspora, similar to the other types of media that we consume with our music and stuff. It's like you have to go outside of your own country to consume the media that should speak to your community when our communities are already here. So I think it's something interesting to consider. And a lot of publications are doing great things. But like I mentioned, Scientific American was one example that I really love because they still currently publish an edition in Arabic every day. However, the Spanish publication has been kind of left behind since about 2017, I think, and it's disheartening to see that because of resources, we're not necessarily capitalizing on the frameworks and the publications that we already have. If you have an existing website that is filled with content, why are we not keeping that up, even if it's just translating works back and forth?

Amy Schmitz Weiss There's an interesting question here which asks how are health and political disinformation different in Latinx communities, and how are they being confronted? I know that wasn't the focus in your article, Ryan, but there does seem to be some tangential aspects to that, too, to look at.

Ryan Wallace I think there's definitely overlap, but it's also it's own entirely different beast because of the fact that Latinx communities, even here domestically consume media through different platforms, even like chat-based applications versus Facebook. The types of misinformation and the ways that they're being spread is very unique and very different. And there's a growing group of researchers who are really tackling these sorts of issues, and I think that COVID-19 has just given a massive context for better understanding these types of phenomenons.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón If I can add something to that, Amy?

Amy Schmitz Weiss Of course, Lourdes.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón So Latinx news media are actually trying to reach Latinx communities at the places where they are gathering their information. So we've all probably heard how a lot of political misinformation was going on through WhatsApp in Florida, for instance, during the elections. And so we found not necessarily the ones talking about politics, but we found Latinx media that works on the border. So, for instance, Connect Arizona and Migrante were using mobile applications, either WhatsApp or SMS. And more at the interior in California, we have El Tímpano. They use SMS. And then Que Hay de Nuevo in New Hampshire. They also use WhatsApp. And so they have different levels of engagement with their communities, but they tried to reach them at the places where they usually gather the most. And they also prepare material in a way or content in a way that it's focused to fight this misinformation. So for WhatsApp, they prepare small graphics that are easy to forward. And with SMS, they tried to be very personal, asking people to ask questions or tell the organizations what are the main problems they are facing with COVID, rent and things like that.

Amy Schmitz Weiss It's really important for us to understand that, Lourdes. Thank you. And going to both you and Jessica, there are several questions that we can dive into. But one of the first questions I wanted to ask both of you is you were looking at the 103 organizations across the country, and as your findings showed, that most are being funded through crowdsourcing efforts and philanthropic aspects, what do you think will be ways for them to build their business model moving forward beyond these areas? I don't know if

there's any insights that you might have knowing that those two aspects can be precarious in moments, right, in terms of a funding model.

Jessica Retis Lourdes, do you want to go?

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Sure. Well, on this first one, we did more like an assessment, so we tried to figure out how small or large they were and how were they funded. Another step in our longer research is to actually interview them, to ask them what is it that you're trying to do? But we found the confirmation of a trend that most of the Latinx media is privately funded by the crowd sourcing and the nonprofit funding through foundations and so on was increasing comparing to the past. So it looks like they are looking toward getting this type of funding in a larger amount than before. And the other thing that is important is that, you know, large organizations like Univision and Telemundo, they still produce new digital content, but they stay like at 25 percent of the funding. So they are still also an actor in this landscape, where they fund new digital natives.

Jessica Retis So a couple of things that I would like to share is like with the results of the last elections, it was very interesting to see headlines saying that Latinos are not a monolithic vote. Right. So that was interesting because my students in my classroom were saying, "Profe, they should be in your classroom. We already know that. Why are they writing those headlines?" Right. So one of the things that we need to address is that we cannot talk about this like it's a homogeneous and static picture. You cannot. Such as a Latino communities, we are very diverse. And as we are very diverse, the media we produce, distribute, and consume is very diverse in several aspects. So we have to go through the intersectionality lenses to understand these. We are very diverse. And regarding funding is very interesting because there is a huge strain of big funders trying to help grassroots ventures. But what I think is very interesting because maybe they are not that aware of what they are and how they function, and that's why we want to address this with this research. Because we are both, Lourdes and myself, we are also journalism educators and bilingual journalism educators, so we consume this media. So we check the media that we are, and we understand this media. So we understand the synergies, and we understand that this is very diverse. And the fact that we are interested in this topic is because what we see and what we're addressing in our paper is there is a lack of understanding of this. There's a huge gap in diversity within digital journalism in the U.S. because we're not talking about something different from the American landscape. That's the other part that we really want to address. This is the Latinx part of the American landscape. So we are part of the American landscape, and this country is going to be the largest Spanish-language country also in the world. So this is part of all these synergies.

We are going into what linguistics are talking about right now about trans-languaging, and this is very interesting. Latinx media is trans-languaging everywhere. Vamos para arriba y para adelante, back and forth with langauges. We speak both languages at the same time sometimes, and we can communicate in both languages. So this is a trans-languaging momentum that is also happening in the media landscape. I see that as a neutral public sphere. Right. And you need some cultural competency also to get into these spaces, so it's a very interesting and exciting research topic for us.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Definitely, I think we're all going to want to read the next research that you have published.

Jessica Retis It's going to be a good one.

Amy Schmitz Weiss I think Mark's got a question for both of you that kind of dives into this a little bit more.

Mark Poepsel I think I can state it pretty quickly as well. In diaspora communities, do you see these news organizations creating communities locally or more so serving as a bridge to the quote unquote, "homeland"?

Jessica Retis All of the above.

Mark Poepsel OK, so it's not an either or.

Jessica Retis Exactly, exactly. So it's very interesting because we don't have a right or wrong answer. It's like all of the above, and it depends on your age, or your migratory process, on your gender, on your gender identification, on your political perspective, on your socio-economic status. So that's why it's all of the place.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Yes. And just to mention a few examples like there. I was talking in the presentation about these refugees, these journalists that came from Nicaragua. And so they are still living that exile and their focus on reporting about what's going on in Nicaragua because things are bad there. But then you have cases like El Tímpano, for instance, and they don't care where you are from. They just want to know what is it that you need, what answers you need. You know, what answers do you need right now because of the pandemic? What's the information that you need? And so it doesn't matter. It's just you're here now. Meanwhile, others are focused in different places. And then there are others like El Hilo, for instance, from Radio Ambulante, that what it does is that reach because it reports every week. It tells you what's going on, the main thing going on in one of the countries in Latin America. And so, yes, it all of them.

Mark Poepsel Is there a standard development process for these sites? Because like Animal Politico, right, in Mexico that started as a Twitter account and grew into something much bigger. Is there a mode of growth, or are they all over the place?

Jessica Retis We see it as a Venn diagram. They will interconnect. So sometimes, for example, we are like, Lourdes, did you get access to that particular medium? So we're trying to follow them, and we engage with them. Because for us, it's very interesting because we really, really, really want to understand what's going on and what happens. And this is what we're seeing is like it depends on the momentum. So in a certain moment, it was about elections. Right. Now, the moment is about health. It depends because Latinx communities are interested in various topics. And what I would say in my classroom is we are glocal, right. So we're interested in what's going on locally, but also what's going on globally. Not necessarily with the entire world, but maybe people in Queens are interested in what's happening in Puebla. Right. And that's connection, trans-local connection.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón But I also would say, and this is something we haven't confirmed yet with research, but I would say it's very reactive because of crisis, needs, and things like that. Because there's no permanent interest from investors in having news focused on the Latinx community. So every time that there's a crisis or there's a really strong need for something, then that's when people step up or change. If they are already operating, they change gears. But I would say it's very reactive. It's not organic in the sense of like Animal Politico, that you have time to talk about it, and improve it, and develop it. Right. No, I would say it's a little bit more reactive.

Mark Poepsel There was a case in my data about that happening in Puerto Rico. Right.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Yeah, in Puerto Rico it's it's own animal. That's why we didn't touch that because it deserves its own.

Jessica Retis So it's interesting what's going on also in Florida, in Orlando, and other parts that we have the Puerto Rican diaspora.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Ryan, you also had a question for Jessica and Lourdes, too.

Ryan Wallace I did. I was interested in particular because you guys found that a majority of the organizations were privately funded. Do you think that it impacts the news agenda that they're able to talk about if they're not necessarily funded by Univision? Do you think that they can be more creative in the content that they produce?

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón I think so, but at the same time, they are a little bit more fragile in a sense. Like some of the organizations that we found, like we said, most of them were teams of four people or less. So we could see that some of the operations weren't completely consistent, and they were struggling. And so they were more creative, probably, yes, but there wasn't that consistency. Right. And so in that case, the organizations that were crowd funded or were nonprofits were a little bit more stable, but then those organizations tend to be a little bit more planned from the beginning. And I keep coming back to El Tímpano and Migrante and all of those because we're working on another paper we presented at ICA. But in this case, for instance, it was noticeable how the listening collectives that are now popping up to produce more radio news and more podcasts are being very influential in that sense in creating this type of news organizations.

Ryan Wallace I was just going to say I'll echo that, too. Because even within my paper, I found like El Washington Post podcast, there were some publications in developing like podcast news or opinion sections where maybe the news, like the hard news, was not necessarily getting translated, but there were these other media formats that were freed up, I guess, to speak to Latinx audiences in their own language. And I think it speaks to the long tradition of, for example, radio news in Latinx media. It was very interesting to even see that within American English-language news publications.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Yeah. So I think we're going to be wrapping up here, and so I wanted to give you a couple of minutes to think on the fly here before we end our panel. But each of you dived into looking at the news audience, the communities, in a different way. And just as the title of our panel is about challenging the status quo, so I wanted to ask each of you if you could share with everyone watching right now and those who will watch later, what would you say would be one key takeaway that should help the journalists in the newsroom right now? For the researcher jumping into perhaps this area for their research, as well as the educator who's looking to train the future of journalists tomorrow, how can we better understand, collaborate and connect with audiences from the standpoint of the work that you've done in this research for ISOJ? We'll start with you, Mark.

Mark Poepsel Engagement journalism isn't going anywhere, and it really is just a matter of you use it. I think it enables so much crowd sourcing that is just too attractive a means of gathering information for telling stories in a time when newsrooms are shrinking, when there aren't as many jobs, when you can still try to have the reach of two or three people.

There will be a lot of engagement, making sure it's not extractive in nature and making sure it doesn't reinforce racial and gender hierarchies, that's going to be on all of us, especially the researchers to analyze, discuss and try to find solutions for.

Amy Schmitz Weiss How about for you, Ryan?

Ryan Wallace I was going to actually echo what Jessica had said something earlier where I think that even as educators and as journalists ourselves, we're always taught to consider who is our news audience and to not look at that as a hegemony. To kind of think of what are the different aspects of these communities, and what makes up the American news audience is something that need to be thinking about within newsrooms, but also within our research. And I think that one of the big things that this issue brought to light is that we weren't necessarily looking for what news audiences they were talking about. We were looking at what news audiences are missing, and what components or what communities' voices are missing from the dialog. So I think that that's something that's really important in terms of research and journalism for the future of Latinx media.

Amy Schmitz Weiss And Jessica and Lourdes. Both of you can share your takeaways, too.

Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón Sure, if I can go first. One thing that Jessica said. We're also teachers of bilingual students. And I think the one take away that I would like for them to remember is that their biculturalism and their bilingualism is an asset. And I understand the students who are graduating or just thinking about journalism, they look at large and prestigious news organizations as their dream jobs. Right. But working on Latinx, or not Latinx, but digital and news media, maybe a small organizations where they can directly apply those assets, in addition to being very familiar with the digital world and the mobile world, is where they could actually make the most impact. They can get closer to the audiences, engage with them, talk to them in their own languages, understand what they're going through, because they probably share part of how their families are composed, how their families go back and forth through the border, especially now Jessica and I both lived on the border. And so consider that. You already have the assets. You already are a millennial with the skills, the technical skills. You should think about those organizations that can get closer to the audience that need your assets the most.

Ryan Wallace And I would love to say that especially for future journalists, this is a moment to be creative, to be an innovator, to take advantage of what the digital space is bringing to you, and to embrace that. And the other part will be from me is trying to understand that there has been several attempts to cater to the Spanish-language audiences by translating, even Google translating. And that doesn't work. Translation is not the way to go. You need to understand that when you're writing and you're speaking to English-language Latinx communities, there are certain groups that you're talking to about and you're engaging with. When you're speaking Spanish and you're writing in Spanish, it's a different area as well. And the same when you use Spanglish. Translation doesn't work here. It's like being bicultural. I would like to say it's intercultural communication and, you know, talking about diversity, equity, and inclusion, is a trend for educators of this type of research is showing that people are really giving some option to be included in the public discourse. Right.

Amy Schmitz Weiss Well, thank you for sharing those key takeaways. Hopefully, everyone was writing their notes down from each of you on insights to move forward with. This has just been fantastic. Thank you for your time today and sharing with us your

insights, and check out their research associate at ISOJ.org/research. And congratulations again to Jessica and Lourdes on the top paper award. And we just want to thank everybody for joining us on this last panel. We saved the best for last. Research is the best for last for ISOJ. And I'm going to hand it over to Rosental, who is going to give you some last announcements. Rosental, the floor is yours.

Rosental Alves Yes. Thank you so much. And congratulations to Jessica and Lourdes. This has been an awesome panel. I learned a lot, so thank you so much. And just like that, boom, it's over. The amazing panels, workshops and keynotes of ISOJ 2021 have come to a close. But wait, the party is just getting started. Please join us for the ISOJ 2021 Virtual Farewell Party and Happy Hour, hosted by the Moody College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin. Bring your own food and drink because this time we cannot provide. But next year, I promise. Come enjoy a live performance by Carlos Rico, a.k.a. a D.J Cutlos Supreme, a DJ and multimedia journalist based in California. He is really great, and you can enjoy the shindig platform where our virtual party is going to be a great opportunity for you to chat with presenters, mingle among yourselves, and make global connections.

Thank you again to all of our presenters of ISOJ 2021. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and expertise to our global audience. Thank you to all of you watching at home. We hope you have been able to get a lot out of our week-long experience. And now big thanks to our sponsors Google News Initiative and The Knight Foundation. Thanks to Univision Noticias for the Spanish-language translation and to JFK journalism fellowships at Stanford University for the welcome party on Monday, which was very great, like the one now that is coming up, hosted by the Moody College. ISOJ 2021 could not have happened without all the support that we we have received. I couldn't end ISOJ 2021 without thanking Amy Schmitz Weiss, my ISOJ research partner, Mallary Tenore, the Knight Center's Associate Director, Teresa Mioli, and all the Knight center team. And also a huge thanks to BA Snyder and Grace Dearing and their fantastic production and creative team of Veritas Group Agency that has been so, so helpful. Thank you also to the amazing Moody College tech team. And thanks to the great interpreters who work very, very hard and have more work tomorrow with the Iberian American Colloquium in Spanish and Portuguese. But the interpreters led by Steven Mines are always fantastic. We have been working with them for many years. Sorry if I can't mention everybody by my name here.

And with that, we will see everyone in a few minutes on the shindig for our farewell party, hosted by the Moody College of Communication. Find the link for the party in the chat now, and I'll see you there in a few minutes. And I'll see you all here in Austin for ISOJ 2022, in April 2022, hopefully again here on our beautiful campus at the University of Texas at Austin. Thank you so much, and see you soon. Bye bye.