

**News Outlets, Media Consumption, and Perceptions on Violent Crimes by  
Immigrants**

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COMM491: Honors Research Project in Communication

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May 9th, 2025

**Abstract**

Immigration has risen as one of the most important topics in the United States, a country combatting an increasing political polarization, but perceptions about immigrants are often shaped by the media and how they portray a population. An online survey completed by 112 participants was conducted, with questions ranging from multiple choice to likert scales that examined participants' media consumption patterns for five American news outlets – Fox News, The Daily Wire, ABC, NBC, CNN – and their perceptions on immigrants committing violent crimes – murder, rape, robbery, assault. The objective of the research survey was to compare answers based on political affiliation, gender and other demographic variables of the participants to understand media consumption patterns of groups, their in-group similarities and their out-group differences when it comes to perceiving violent crimes in relation to immigrants as perpetrators. Initial results matched previous research in finding that when compared per political affiliation, Democrats trusted their media news outlets more than Independents but Republicans were almost twice more likely compared to Democrats. Republicans were also more likely to show high concern for violent crimes and view them in their preferred news outlets feed, they also were more likely to believe that immigrants committed certain violent crimes such as murder and robbery. Other findings discovered no statistically significant change in media consumption based on political affiliation, nor when it came to age correlation, however women were more likely to consume CNN, NBC and The Daily Wire. This research further supports media consumption related theories such as the Cultivation Theory, Agenda Setting Theory and Media Framing Theory based on how the media pushes certain narratives and stories that create people's perception of reality, which usually differs based on political affiliation.

**Literature Review**

### **Cultivation Theory**

One crucial theoretical framework to consider is Cultivation Theory which suggests that long-term exposure to media, especially television, influences people's perception of the world. In this research, the specific perception will be on immigrant-committed violent crimes based on five American news outlets. Dixon, T.L. & Williams, C.L. (2015) did similar research but it mainly focused on misinterpretations of race and crime in cable networks by media content-analysis. Martinez R. Jr. & Lee T.M. (2000) published a volume "On Immigration and Crime" that relates to cultivation theory by providing a historical context that shapes our modern attitudes towards immigration. Romer D., Hall Jamieson K. & Aday S. (2003) proves the correlation of fear of crimes with high media consumption. In this research, media consumption will be analyzed in relation to political affiliation. However, Shi, L. Roche, S.P. & McKenna, R.M. (2018) state in their own research about media consumption and crime trends that the cultivation theory was overstated by past research and not supported. I would like to explore if this is still the case.

### **Media Framing Theory**

Similar research on this topic incorporates the Media Framing Theory suggesting that media frames information to its consumers therefore shaping the way they understand and perceive an issue. This is specifically relevant to the five news outlets that will be analyzed in this study since they differ in their political bias and affiliation, using different framing strategies. Esses, V.M., Medianu, S., & Lawson, A.S. (2013) did research on common negative portrayals of immigrants and the uncertainty and dehumanization in the perceptions of its consumers. The researchers proved the media framing theory right on this occasion although they focused on

printed media and did not involve violent crimes like this research. Similarly, the research by Sohoni, D., & Sohoni, T. W. P. (2014) proves in detail that journalists and media take the reins of the story by promoting negative links between immigrants, their legal status and crimes.

### **Agenda Setting Theory**

Agenda Setting Theory is about mass media highlighting certain topics that will be perceived by the public as important. Media coverage influences the perception of certain topics and attracts the attention of governments in their publicization of issues. Particularly, this can be politically biased and affiliated in the United States. The Trump Hypothesis was researched by Green, D. (2016) and delves in whether immigrants are responsible for higher levels of violent and drug-related crimes in the U.S. as stated by Donald Trump. The research proved that this hypothesis was rhetoric-based instead of evidence-based, however the research is outdated by focusing only on the Mexican immigrant group since this rhetoric has more recently shifted to Haitians and Venezuelans. To analyze this political bias and see if the Trump Hypothesis is believable to the media consumers that will take the survey, the survey for this paper had a final question about a viral Donal Trump's statement on immigrants eating pets during the 2024 Presidential Debate to test it out. In relation to this affirmation, trust in the mostly media outlet consumed and media consumption patterns were also analyzed in this paper.

Research Question 1: How is the consumption of politically affiliated news outlets related to people's perception of violent crimes committed by immigrants in the United States?

Research Question 2: Does a person's political affiliation influence the type of media they consume and trust the most?

Hypothesis 1: Individuals will consume mostly the news outlets that better match their personal political affiliation and create their perception on topics like violent crimes committed by immigrants, they will trust this news outlet.

Research Question 3: Does media consumption differ based on gender and political affiliation?

Hypothesis 1: Males will lean with right-wing news outlets, views and consume the most media, while females will lean with right-wing news outlets, views, and consume less media.

Research Question 4: Does the importance of violent crimes differ based on political affiliation, gender and immigration?

Hypothesis 1: Consuming more right-wing news outlets, being Republican, will increase the perception of violent crimes committed by immigrants in the United States, the opposite will apply for left-wing news outlets, being Democrat.

## **Methodology**

The research used an online survey as its research method. The survey was structured to collect data on the targeted variables of media consumption, media trust, political affiliation, and perceptions on violent crimes (assault, robbery, murder, and rape) as defined by the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2019), committed by immigrants. The survey was distributed online to assess participants' perception of violent crimes committed by immigrants and their significance in five American politically biased news outlets (CNN, NBC, ABC, Fox News, The Daily Wire). The survey took approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The original overarching goal of this research effort was to survey approximately 200 people with different political views to achieve robust insights into the perceptions on violent crimes committed by immigrants and their connection with media consumption patterns. The analysis of the survey data utilizes quantitative methods, including statistical tests (ANOVA, T-Test, F-Test, Chi-Squared, Correlation), to explore the relationships between the variables and derive meaningful conclusions about whether people feel strongly or not about immigrant violent crime based on the media they consume and their trust in it. Through a comprehensive survey methodology and outreach strategy, this study aims to provide valuable insight into political affiliations in relations to media in a politically polarized nation like the United States.

Eventually, I was able to collect responses from a total of 112 participants. The study included participants between the ages of 18 to 55 years old from any political affiliation, education level, gender, and race/ethnicity which were recorded only for inclusion and demographic purposes without any identificatory attribution. For more information and details on the questionnaire and the consent form regarding the survey, you can visit the final Appendix.

### **Sampling Issues**

The goal was to recruit participants from across various political affiliations and sides, however the sample size of Republicans (15) was significantly smaller than for Democrats (52) and Independents (44). This issue resulted from the survey being spread by snowball effect and convenience sampling in Northern Virginia where the majority of the population voted Democrat (Yancey, 2024). The survey was also spread across the George Mason University area, obtaining a majority of younger respondents. In addition, participants were recruited via social media (Instagram and Discord), where there might be limitations in accessibility from older

demographics leaning Republican who have less access to the Internet or use other social media (Nissen, 2023). The results of the survey were analyzed and interpreted taking this sampling issue into account as it might limit the statistical relevance of the findings. Detailed demographic information is displayed below based on participants' responses from the survey.

**Table 1.** What is your gender?

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	28	25.0
Female	79	70.5
Other*	4	3

\* includes “Prefer not to say”, “Non-binary” and missing data

**Table 2.** What is your race/ethnicity?

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
White	63	56.3
Black/African American	15	13.4
Asian	11	9.8
Hispanic	14	12.5
Other	8	7.1

**Table 3.** What is your level of education?

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
High school or equivalent	9	8.0
Some college, no degree	35	31.3
Associate degree	15	13.4
Bachelor's degree	23	20.5
Master's degree	18	16.1
PhD degree	5	4.5
Other	6	5.4

**Table 4.** Are you an immigrant yourself?

Immigrant	Frequency	Percent
No	72	64.3
Yes	14	12.5
No, but my parents are	25	22.3

**Table 5.** What is your political affiliation?



Political Affiliation	Frequency	Percent
Democrat	52	46.4
Republican	15	13.4
Independent	44	39.3

## Results and Data

To find the answers to RQ1 *“How is the consumption of politically affiliated news outlets related to people’s perception of violent crimes committed by immigrants?”*, RQ2 *“Does a person’s political affiliation influence the type of media they consume and trust the most?”*, RQ3 *“Does media consumption differ based on gender and political affiliation?”*, and RQ4 *“Does the importance of violent crimes differ based on political affiliation, gender and immigration?”*, there were several one-way ANOVA analysis run as well as a correlation analysis.

In a one-way ANOVA analysis on the importance of different violent crimes, how often they are committed by immigrants, and how much those articles appear in their preferred news outlet’s feed, the results were analyzed based on the political affiliation of the participants. In all cases, Republicans had a higher score than other political parties. When asked, *“How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes?”*, Republicans were more likely to believe than all other parties that all the four violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery, assault) were more often committed by immigrants. With **murder**, Republicans ( $M = 1.53$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ) were much more likely to believe that immigrants commit the crime than Independents ( $M = 1.12$ ,  $SD = 0.40$ ) and Democrats ( $M = 1.10$ ,  $SD = 0.30$ ). The one-way ANOVA reported the findings as statistically significant,  $F(2, 109) = 8.691$ ,  $p < .001$ . This same question was repeated with other violent

crimes, with **rape** the results were similar with the highest score in Republicans ( $M=1.73$ ,  $SD=.799$ ) than Independents ( $M = 1.23$ ,  $SD = .527$ ) or Democrats ( $M = 1.17$ ,  $SD = .382$ ),  $F(2, 109)=7.187$ ,  $p = .001$ . In regards to **robbery**, Republicans reported the highest mean score ( $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = 0.704$ ), followed by Independents ( $M = 1.37$ ,  $SD = 0.578$ ) and Democrats ( $M = 1.19$ ,  $SD = 0.445$ ),  $F(2, 109) = 6.025$ ,  $p = .003$ . Finally, the same was found for **assault**, Republicans reported the highest mean score ( $M = 1.60$ ,  $SD = 0.737$ ), followed by Independents ( $M = 1.40$ ,  $SD = 0.583$ ) and Democrats ( $M = 1.12$ ,  $SD = 0.323$ ). A one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference among the groups,  $F(2, 109) = 6.896$ ,  $p = .002$ . However, independents surpassed Republicans when it came to the question “*How often do articles on the following violent crime appear in the news feed of the news outlet?*” specifically in regards to rape. Rape-related news articles were more likely to appear to Independents ( $M = 1.70$ ,  $SD = 0.832$ ) rather than Republicans ( $M = 1.53$ ,  $SD = 0.640$ ) and Democrats ( $M = 1.24$ ,  $SD = 0.513$ ),  $F(2, 109) = 5.617$ ,  $p = .005$ . Media consumption patterns were not statistically significant, yet still analyzed.

**Table 6.** Media consumption patterns per political affiliation

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - Fox News	Democrat	20	1.9000	2.35975
	Republican	12	1.9167	3.36988
	Independent	19	1.2632	1.82093
	Total	51	1.6667	2.43036
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - The Daily Wire	Democrat	12	1.0833	1.97523
	Republican	10	1.1000	1.85293
	Independent	17	1.0588	1.67595
	Total	39	1.0769	1.76791
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - ABC	Democrat	27	2.6296	3.61778
	Republican	11	2.1818	5.61815
	Independent	22	1.4545	1.10096
	Total	60	2.1167	3.44000
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - NBC	Democrat	28	2.7143	3.06542
	Republican	11	1.2727	2.10195
	Independent	23	1.9565	2.16329
	Total	62	2.1774	2.62100
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - CNN	Democrat	39	2.4872	2.59424
	Republican	11	1.4545	2.20743
	Independent	27	2.2963	3.02318
	Total	77	2.2727	2.69325

The one-way ANOVA test was also conducted in regards to immigration status and the importance of the topic of immigration. Participants who identified as immigrants ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.204$ ) cared more about immigration along with those with immigrant parents ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.952$ ) than non-immigrants ( $M = 3.10$ ,  $SD = 1.153$ ),  $F(2, 109) = 3.303$ ,  $p = .041$ . When it came to the importance of other crimes or how often they were committed by the immigrant community, no statistically significant results were found. Crosstabs on immigration status and perceptions on crime rate (increasing, decreasing, the same) in the United States was run, the results were not statistically significant.

**Table 7.** Crosstabs on immigrant status and perceptions on crime rate.

**Are you an immigrant yourself? \* Crimes in the United States are: Crosstabulation**

Count

		Crimes in the United States are:			Total
		Increasing	Decreasing	The same	
Are you an immigrant yourself?	No	29	14	29	72
	Yes	6	1	7	14
	No, but my parents are	14	5	6	25
Total		49	20	42	111

To respond to RQ3 “Does media consumption differ based on gender and political affiliation?” and get more data on RQ4 “Does the importance of violent crimes differ based on political affiliation, gender and immigration?” several independent sample t-tests for gender were run. When it came to media consumption based on gender for news outlets by independent samples t-test, there were significant results for *The Daily Wire*,  $t(98) = -2.201$ ,  $p = .036$  (two-sided). Females reported a higher mean of 1.44 hours per week ( $SD = 2.10$ ) in comparison to the male counterpart mean consumption time of 0.46 hours per week ( $SD = 0.52$ ). Females consumed more time on media than males when it came to other news outlets like *NBC*,  $t(98) = -2.329$ ,  $p = .023$  (two-sided), where females consumed it with a mean of 2.65 hours per week ( $SD = 3.02$ ) while males with a mean of 1.33 hours per week ( $SD = 1.39$ ). *CNN*,  $t(98) = -2.129$ ,  $p = .037$  (two-sided), showed similar statistically significant results with females on a higher mean of 2.71 hours per week ( $SD = 2.92$ ) rather than males with a mean consumption time of 1.43 hours per week ( $SD = 2.09$ ). There was no statistical significance in relation to frequency of violent crimes appearing in news outlets or perceptions on immigrants committing those crimes, however males still scored slightly higher than females.

In response to the question “*How credible do you think is the story of immigrants eating pets propagated by Donald Trump?*”, females reported a higher mean of 3.82 (SD = 0.58) than males with a mean credibility score of 3.18 (SD = 0.95),  $t(98) = -3.377, p = .002$  (two-sided).

When it came to trusting the information from the news outlets they trusted the most, levels of trust differed amongst political parties but were statistically significant in a one-way ANOVA,  $F(2, 109) = 7.630, p < .001$ . Democrats reported the highest mean trust score ( $M = 3.63, SD = 0.86$ ), followed by Republicans ( $M = 3.53, SD = 1.06$ ), and Independents ( $M = 2.93, SD = 0.87$ ). As for trusting the story by Donald Trump about immigrants eating pets, Democrats reported the highest mean credibility score ( $M = 3.90, SD = 0.36$ ), followed by Independents ( $M = 3.60, SD = 0.79$ ), and Republicans ( $M = 3.00, SD = 1.07$ ),  $F(2, 109) = 10.696, p < .001$ .

Credibility and trust on news outlets based on gender were the same and not statistically significant. There was also no correlation found for age in relevance to the importance of violent crimes, how often immigrants commit violent crimes, how often articles with violent crimes appear in the news feed or other media consumption patterns. Crosstabs tests were run also for other variables, showing a pattern of no significance yet interesting results worth considering for future research on the topic.

**Table 8.** Crosstabs on political affiliation and media consumed political leaning.

**The media you consume leans: \* What is your political affiliation?**  
**Crosstabulation**

Count		What is your political affiliation?			Total
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
The media you consume leans:	Right-wing	1	5	2	8
	Left-wing	28	1	11	40
	Moderate	23	9	28	60
Total		52	15	41	108

**Table 9.** Crosstabs on political affiliation and perceptions on crime rate.

**Crimes in the United States are: \* What is your political affiliation?**  
**Crosstabulation**

Count

		What is your political affiliation?			Total
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
Crimes in the United States are:	Increasing	22	9	18	49
	Decreasing	13	1	6	20
	The same	17	5	20	42
Total		52	15	44	111

**Table 10.** Crosstabs on political affiliation and perceptions on criminality of immigrant groups.

**What immigrant group commits the most crimes based on the news outlet selected in Question 10? - Selected Choice \* What is your political affiliation? Crosstabulation**

Count

		What is your political affiliation?			Total
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
What immigrant group commits the most crimes based on the news outlet selected in Question 10? - Selected Choice	Mexicans	14	5	17	36
	Venezuelans	4	1	4	9
	Haitians	1	0	0	1
	Indians	0	0	2	2
	Other	28	9	17	54
Total		47	15	40	102

*Question 10: Which of the following news outlet do you consume and trust the most?*

When it came to correlations, some interesting results were found on the importance of violent crimes and how often they are perceived to be committed by immigrants. The importance of murder as a violent crime was correlated to rape ( $r(92) = .713, p < .001$ ), robbery ( $r(92) = .465, p < .001$ ), assault ( $r(92) = .546, p < .001$ ), and how much murder appears on the news feed

of news outlets ( $r(92) = .232, p = .016$ ). Similar findings were found for the importance of other violent crimes like rape, robbery, assault and then the topic of immigration. The same resulted also for the perceptions of how much a violent crime was perceived to be committed by immigrants. In particular, the importance of robbery was correlated to the media consumption per week of Fox News ( $r(92) = .331, p = .018$ ) and the Daily Wire ( $r(92) = .339, p = .041$ ), which was similar for other violent crimes as well. More detailed numeric data is reported in the correlation table in Table 11.

Table 11. Correlations Table

		What is your age?	How important are the following issues to you? - Murder	How important are the following issues to you? - Rape	How important are the following issues to you? - Robbery	How important are the following issues to you? - Assault	How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Murder	How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Rape	How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Robbery	How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Assault	How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - Fox News	How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - The Daily Wire	How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - ABC	How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - CBS	How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Murder	How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Rape	How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Robbery	How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Assault	Please select where you stand in the political spectrum - Political Spectrum		
What is your age?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.027	-.152	.048	-.208	.059	-.192	.180	.158	.243	.031	-.084	.022	.133	-.057	-.271	.143	-.383	.048	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.884	.296	.743	.152	.686	.186	.215	.285	.032	.882	.890	.904	.488	.729	.062	.132	.342	.067	
How important are the following issues to you? - Murder	Pearson Correlation		1	.714	.465	.548	.001	.108	.811	-.058	.047	-.079	.130	.166	.133	-.140	-.089	.212	.038	.027	
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.001	.001	.001	.999	.001	.001	.629	.410	.483	.313	.312	.277	.440	.016	.039	.782	.178	
How important are the following issues to you? - Rape	Pearson Correlation			1	.314	.531	.001	.081	-.081	-.078	.034	.018	-.052	.093	-.109	-.239	-.150	.290	.119	.038	
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.001	.001	.999	.399	.438	.728	.871	.716	.817	.407	.081	.193	.003	.216	.714	.781	
How important are the following issues to you? - Robbery	Pearson Correlation				1	.450	.001	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.001	.999	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How important are the following issues to you? - Assault	Pearson Correlation					1	.034	-.138	-.034	.001	-.002	.088	.181	.068	.022	-.002	.041	.007	.186	.256	
	Sig. (2-tailed)						.999	.151	.722	.593	.340	.541	.271	.464	.863	.783	.872	.315	.056	.034	
How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Murder	Pearson Correlation						1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)							.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Rape	Pearson Correlation							1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)								.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Robbery	Pearson Correlation								1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)									.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How often do immigrants commit the following violent crimes? - Assault	Pearson Correlation									1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)										.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - Fox News	Pearson Correlation										1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)											.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - The Daily Wire	Pearson Correlation											1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)												.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - ABC	Pearson Correlation												1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)													.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How many hours a week do you spend consuming the following news outlets? - CBS	Pearson Correlation													1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)														.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Murder	Pearson Correlation														1	.110	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)															.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	
How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Rape	Pearson Correlation															1	.110	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)																.001	.001	.001	.001	
How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Robbery	Pearson Correlation																1	.110	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)																	.001	.001	.001	
How often do articles on the following violent crimes appear in the news head of the news outlets? - Assault	Pearson Correlation																	1	.110	.110	
	Sig. (2-tailed)																		.001	.001	
Please select where you stand in the political spectrum - Political Spectrum	Pearson Correlation																		1	.110	.110
	Sig. (2-tailed)																			.001	.001

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Circles in yellow = statistically significant data

## Discussion

Based on the results and data found for each research question, strong perceptions of violent crimes committed by immigrants in the United States are typically associated with the Republican party which tends to consume right-wing media that frequently showcased said violent crimes. Democrats had the highest trust in the media they consumed, however this might be due to the limitation of having a larger Democrat sample than Republican. Since the media that people consume appears to influence their perceptions of immigrant violent crime, it proves the Cultivation Theory right where the perception of reality is shaped by the media. It also proves that the Media Framing Theory applies since participants believed the information that was presented to them and it influenced their personal views. Additionally, the Agenda Setting Theory was relevant and proven by evidence since the importance of violent crimes was often correlated to how frequently they were shown in the news outlet feed.

When it came to gender, my hypothesis that men would lean more right-wing and consume more media while women would be more left-wing and consume more media, was disproven. In fact, women's media consumption was higher than men for all news outlets regardless of political affiliation or news outlet leaning, they also consumed more right-wing media than men. This concludes that women consume more media than men in general, however an important limitation to consider is the bigger sample of females compared to males for the survey.

For the future, the survey should be done with an equal sample of participants for political affiliation and gender so that sampling issues do not obstruct findings with limitations. It would be also very important to have a bigger pool of participants that is representative of the current demographics of the United States including participants from all over the country rather than mostly from one area. It would also be interesting to test the trust and idolatry in politicians



as well as religious values and their influences in the answers on perceptions of violent crimes. Research in this area should continue to use surveys to assess the American population, and comparisons amongst geographical areas should also be taken into consideration after the finalization of research for valuable insight on if the communication theories are still true for other locations and with other local media. However, content analysis on the American news outlets should also be considered as another relevant methodology to find results that might encourage or disprove the findings of this research which were mostly consistent with similar past literature.

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## Appendix A

### Consent Form

#### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**RESEARCH PROCEDURES:** This research is being conducted to understand the relationship between media consumption patterns and views on violent crimes committed by immigrants in connection to political affiliation.

**RISKS:** There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts from taking this survey. If any of the questions arise emotional distress, you can call the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 for help.

**BENEFITS:** There are no benefits to you as a participant other than to further research and understanding your views on violent crimes committed by immigrants and your media consumption patterns.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** The data in this study will be confidential. Names will not be asked or included in the collected data. Your information will not be used in any research recordings, research notes, or reports that emerge from this project. All collected data will be stored on password-protected cloud storage system folders until the conclusion of the study, after which it will be deleted from all computers or storage services. Regarding storage services, while it is understood that no computer transmission can be perfectly secure, reasonable efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of all transmissions. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) committee that monitors research on human subjects may inspect study records during internal auditing procedures and are required to keep all information confidential. Participants may review the Qualtrics website for information about their privacy statement at <https://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/>. The de-identified data could be used for future research without additional consent from participants.

**PARTICIPATION:** In order to participate, there is no specific inclusion requirement to be met other than your willingness to answer the survey truthfully. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no costs to you or any other party. This survey will be a one-time survey that will last approximately...minutes.

**CONTACT:** This research is being conducted by Valentina Fla from the Department of Communication at George Mason University. She may be reached at [vfala@gmu.edu](mailto:vfala@gmu.edu) or by cell phone at 703-826-3350 for questions or to report a research-related problem. This research is under the guidance of faculty advisor Dr. Kevin Wright, Communication Department, [kwright16@gmu.edu](mailto:kwright16@gmu.edu), 703-993-1090. You may contact the George Mason University Institutional Review Board office at 703-993-4121 or [IRB@gmu.edu](mailto:IRB@gmu.edu) if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research. This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

**CONSENT:** I have read this form, the research staff has answered all of my questions, and by clicking agree, I agree to participate in this study.

☐ AGREE

☐ DISAGREE

## **Appendix B**

### Questionnaire

[Qualtrics Survey Software \(pdf version\)](#)