

Being Black and Latin@: How Telemundo Articulates Blackness within the Latin American Panethnic Identity

Ser negro y latin@: cómo Telemundo Articula la Negritud Dentro de la Identidad Pan-étnica Latinoamericana

Ser negro e latin@: como Telemundo Articula a Negritude na Identidade Pan-étnica Latino-americana

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Abstract: The representation of minorities in United States Latino media is scarce, as market forces push Latino panethnicity to appeal to a heterogeneous Spanish speaking audience in the country and in Latin America. Nonetheless, the biographical series “Celia” aired by Telemundo in 2015 featured an Afro Latino cast to depict the life of Cuban salsa singer Celia Cruz. This study examines the portrayal of Afro Latinos and Latinas through a content analysis of the telenovela. Even though, Afro Latino characters were depicted in a positive light, they were still portrayed as something other than panethnic. This research contributes an empirical analysis of the representation of minorities in Latino media.

Keywords:

Latino panethnicity, Afro Latinos and Latinas, Afro Cuban, Latino media, Content Analysis

Resumen: La representación de las minorías en los medios latinos de los Estados Unidos es escasa, ya que las fuerzas del mercado presionan a la pan-etnicidad latina para atraer a una audiencia heterogénea de habla hispana en el país y en América Latina. No obstante, la serie biográfica “Celia” transmitida por Telemundo en 2015 presentó un elenco afro latino para representar la vida de la cantante de salsa cubana Celia Cruz. Este estudio examina la

representación de afrolatinos y latinas a través de un análisis de contenido de la telenovela. A pesar de que los personajes afro latinos se representaban de manera positiva, todavía se los retrataba como algo más que pan-étnicos. Esta investigación contribuye con un análisis empírico de la representación de las minorías en los medios latinos.

Palabras clave:

Paternidad étnica latina, afrolatinos y latinas, afrocubano, medios latinos, análisis de contenido

Resumo: A representação de minorias na mídia latina nos Estados Unidos é baixa, pois as forças do mercado pressionam a etnia latina para atrair um público heterogêneo de língua espanhola no país e na América Latina. No entanto, a série biográfica "Celia" transmitida pela Telemundo em 2015 apresentou um elenco afro-latino para representar a vida da cantora cubana de salsa Celia Cruz. Este estudo examina a representação de afro-latinos e latinas através de uma análise de conteúdo da novela. Embora os personagens afro-latinos fossem retratados positivamente, eles ainda eram retratados como mais do que pan-étnicos. Esta pesquisa contribui com uma análise empírica da representação de minorias na mídia latina.

Palavras chave:

Etnia latina, afro-latinos e latinas, afro-cubana, mídia latina, análise de conteúdo

1. Introduction

Empirical research on Afro-Latino and Latina's representation in media is limited. Both United States mainstream and Latino ethnic media promote a panethnic identity that showcases a Hispanicized notion of Latino culture, one that is racial and ethnically fluid (Guzmán & Valdivia, 2004), whereas Caribbean and Latin American nations are an amalgam of Spanish, Indigenous and African races. What is more, Latino media excludes or presents a stereotyped image of Afro descendants and African heritage in an attempt to uphold racial whiteness (Dulutzky, 2005).

In the United States mainstream media depictions of minority characters have increased with time (Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). On the other hand, Latino media in the country seldom represents Indigenous or Afro descendants within their content. Nevertheless, in 2015 *Telemundo*, a Spanish language network television enterprise that caters to Hispanic in the US and Latin America, aired the first series that features an Afro descendant lead in

prime time, the biographical *telenovela Celia*. With rave ratings (Fridmann, 2015; Villafañe, 2015), the series followed the life of Cuban salsa singer Celia Cruz. *La guarachera de Cuba* was internationally renowned and had a musical career that spanned more than 50 years. She started off as the lead singer of the *Sonora Matancera*, one of the most popular orchestras in Cuba. Cruz left her country and settled in the United States in 1960 after the Cuban revolution triumphed headed by Fidel Castro (Cartlidge, 2013). By the end of her prolific life, the Queen of Salsa had recorded 70 albums and 800 songs, and won 23 gold records and 5 Grammys (“Celia Cruz,” n.d.).

Afro-Latino/as are 28 percent of the Latin American population (this includes blacks and mulattoes) (Ribando, 2007), yet there is little quantitative research on the media representation of this critical segment of the population. Since Afro Latinos and Latinas are infrequently depicted in media, a content analysis of *Celia* would contribute to filling the research gap on the portrayal of the minority group in US Latino media.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Latino Panethnicity

Latino panethnicity, also referred to as *latinismo*, has operated as a political tool for the acknowledgment of Latin American immigrant groups in the United States. Panethnicity is an interethnic solidarity constructed in the United States as individuals of Latin American descent shared experiences with discrimination and structural inequality (Padilla, 1985). The labelling of a collective identity for people immigrating from Latin America and the Hispanic Caribbean includes several generations of Latinos and Latinas born in the country, people of distinct socioeconomic status, as well as voluntary immigrants and those who were integrated into the United States as a result of territorial expansion (Puerto Ricans and segments of the Mexican American population) (Itzigsohn, 2004).

Among Latinos in the US, the use of Spanish-language media fosters a sense of group consciousness (Kerevel, 2011). Nevertheless, many people’s notions of Latino rely on stereotypical shared characteristics disseminated by Hollywood and mainstream media often commoditizing Latin American traditions into a million-dollar business (Marchi, 2009). In particular, Latino media in the United States promotes a Latino panethnicity that negates the African and Indigenous element in the Hispanic Caribbean and Latin American cultures. Television news, talk shows and *telenovelas* have limited representation of Afro and Indigenous Latinos and Latinas. Instead, television networks such as *Telemundo* and *Univision* market an ideal Latino panethnicity that transcends nationalities and appeals to

Latinos in the US and in Latin America (Sommers, 1991). To reach this panethnic market television networks use a “standard” Spanish, which is unaccented and devoid of regionalism. Yet, this neutral Spanish is elitist, reproducing social distinctions and forcing on-air personalities and fictional characters to abandon national and cultural differences (Dávila, 2012).

Media often highlights the contributions of Afro-Latin America in shaping cultural expressions such as music and dance as well as Afro descendants’ participation in sports, yet national discourses praise racial synthesis or *mestizaje* (Dixon, 2006; Dulutzky, 2005). Furthermore, scarce exposure to images of Afro and Indigenous Latinos and Latinas could strengthen the idea of Latinos as panethnic. In fact, Latino media disregards cultural differences to obtain “universal similarity” across Latin American nationalities (Dávila, 2012). Furthermore, the presentation of a panethnic content in Latino ethnic media may contribute to wider social construction of a collective identity (DeSipio & Hensen, 1997). Nevertheless, embracing panethnic stereotypes may foster to the homogenization and racialization of Latinos (Correa, 2010).

On the other hand, to identify Afro-Latinos is a difficult task, given the racial spectrum in Latin America as a result of centuries of miscegenation afforded by European colonialism. Moreover, some Afro-descendants prefer to adhere to national origin in Latin America or a Latino panethnic identity when in the United States (Newby & Dowling, 2007). However, brown (of mixed African ancestry) or black Latino/as could be considered Afro-Latino/a (Wade, 2006).

2.2 Studies on Latinos in Media

To reiterate, since the second half of the 20th century, immigrants who originate from Latin America have organized under the label Hispanic or Latino/a to advance politically (Itzigsohn, 2004). An ever-growing influx of Latino-origin individuals into the country has facilitated the creation of ethnic media that caters to the group. Latino media relies on the concept of panethnicity to unite all Latin American nationalities under one flag. Therefore, panethnicity is a marketing tool as the content aims to target the greater portion of the Latino audience (Martínez, 2004; Sommers, 1991).

While there are some qualitative studies looking into the concept of being black in Latin America and Afro Latino/a in the United States (Hernández, 2004; Newby & Dowling, 2007; Rivero, 2002), there has been no content analysis done regarding the portrayal of the group in media. Scholarship has concentrated in the representation of Latinos as a whole in

United States media. To illustrate, DeSipio & Hensen (1997) conducted a content analysis of the depiction of Latinos in major newspapers in 40 US cities, with at least 10 percent Cuban, Puerto Rican and Mexican origin populations, as indicated in the Latino National Political Survey. The researchers studied stories that appeared in newspapers in California, Texas, Florida, the Northeast and other parts of the nation that explicitly contained references to Latinos, a Latino national-origin group or a Latino surnamed individual. This study stresses the political utility of the Latino panethnicity, rather than an attempt to construct a collective ethnicity.

On the other hand, Mastro, Behm-Morawitz & Ortiz (2007) approach to perceptions of Latinos is framed using mental models as an extension to the cultivation hypothesis. The research studies the link between exposure to television depictions of Latinos and real-world representations of Latinos. The scholars recognize that, regardless of exposure, other external factors affect the “cultivation effect”, such as the level of abstraction of the information and individual differences. Portrayals of Latinos include “characterizations as criminal, unintelligent or undereducated, as well as lazy and unmotivated” (D. Mastro, Behm-Morawitz, & Ortiz, 2007, p. 350).

Next, Martinez (2004) examined the marketing of ethnicity in the bilingual publication called *Latina*. Methods wise, the researcher combined interviews and a textual analysis to analyse Latino panethnicity. This study demonstrated that Latino panethnicity is imagined. Largely a construct of marketers and elite Latinos, when segmenting the Hispanic audience marketers consider that those who consume Spanish-language media are non-white and of lower socioeconomic class (Correa, 2010; Rodríguez, 1996, 1997).

By the same token, Kerevel (2011) assumes that the use of ethnic media influences attitudes and leads to a stronger panethnic identification among Latinos. Furthermore, the author supposes that Latinos who consume Spanish-Language and those who consume English-Language media pose different political views, as language is a measure of assimilation and class status. The study stresses the notion that language is a critical component of Latino panethnicity and a tool to reach US Latinos. In addition, Hispanic media aims to de-nationalize Latinos and foster panethnicity (Davila, 2012). In sum, Kerevel (2011) emphasizes on the effects that consumption of ethnic media has on the audience in regard to group consciousness and maintaining Latino culture, two softer staples of Latino panethnicity which ethnic media has considerable influence over.

This research aims to study the portrayal of Afro descendants within the idea of Latino panethnicity championed by Latino media. Thus, this content analysis searched for

elements that associated with either Afro Latino/a identity or the Latino/a panethnicity in the biographical *telenovela Celia*, which follows the life of Afro-Cuban salsa singer Celia Cruz. African heritage may be represented as something other than panethnic.

The main research question is how Afro-Latinos and Latinas are represented in Latino media. While this study aims to describe what is found in the content, inferences about the possible effects of exposure are framed by Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2001). Content analysis studying ethnic stereotypes have used Social Cognitive Theory to assess the portrayal of minorities in advertising (Bailey, 2006; Mastro & Stern, 2003). Mere exposure to content is inadequate to explain effects. Accordingly, Social Cognitive Theory considers the individual's cognitive processes (attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation) when attending information that is repeated (Fujioka, 1999), such as an ad or a *telenovela*. Though the effects of this representation will not be immediately clear, knowing how Afro descendants are characterized in Latino media can predict the kinds of stereotypes the audience is being exposed when presented through a panethnic lens. Another study measuring the cognitive processes such as attention, retention and motivation can further contribute to the scholarship of Social Cognitive Theory.

3. Research Questions

Based on existing literature, a protocol was elaborated to assess the representation of Afro Latinos and Latinas in Hispanic media, specifically in *Telemundo's* biographical series *Celia* (see Appendix for Content Analysis Protocol and Coding Sheet). The coders when evaluating the series content considered the following conceptual definitions: (1) representation of individual characters and their behavioural characteristics, (2) Afro-Latin heritage and (3) Latino panethnicity. Following is a detailed explanation of the concepts and the corresponding research questions:

Representation of individual characters. *Celia* features an Afro Latin cast as black Latinos and Latinas take on lead roles. For the purpose of this study main and minor characters will be considered. The **main characters** carry the central conflict of the story. Lead characters experience the most conflict throughout the story and appears on-screen the most. **Minor characters** serve to advance the story, have a personal history, background and objectives that support or contrast the main character's (Wright, 2004). **Afro Latin characters** are individuals of African descent visible in skin colour, hair or phenotype. **Other characters** are non-Afro Latin such as people of European or of mixed European, African and/or Indigenous descent that are visibly white. Therefore, the following research question

is posed:

RQ1: How are Afro-Latino/as portrayed in ethnic media program *Celia*?

Behavioural characteristics.

Characters may exhibit **behavioural characteristics** that portray them in a negative manner. These include characters behaving lazily, volatile or aggressive temperament, or being untrustworthy, unintelligent and overly sexual (Behnken & Smithers, 2015; Hatton & Trautner, 2011; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). On the other hand, characters may be faced with disrespectful remarks and treatment, which include name-calling, scolding and insulting on the basis of race. The tone may be negative, neutral or positive and change with time. Thus, the following research question is presented:

RQ2: What are some of the behavioural characteristics about Afro-Latino/a characters in the ethnic media program *Celia*? Afro Latino/a heritage.

Music is considered a vessel through which African slaves disseminated traditions and religious beliefs in the Caribbean and Latin America. Furthermore, Cuban popular music incorporates references to deities, Yoruba language and rituals (Cole, 2012). This study will consider as **heritage** references to practice of *Santería*, an Afro Cuban religion where deities called *orishas* are worshiped, followers enter states of trance and spiritual leaders incur in divination techniques (Rossbach de Olmos, 2007). Followers show their devotion wearing beaded necklaces or having images and altars of *orishas*. For the purpose of this study, Afro-Latin heritage will include references to the Afro-Cuban religious practice of *Santería*. Thus, the resulting research question is:

RQ3: Does ethnic media program *Celia* present African heritage? If so, how?

Latino Panethnicity.

US Latino broadcasters such as Univision and Telemundo have adopted a panethnic identity that evades national-origin specificity (Beck, 2010). The collective identity label includes people immigrating from Latin America and the Hispanic Caribbean, several generations of Latinos and Latinas born in the country, people of distinct socioeconomic status, as well as voluntary immigrants and those who were integrated into the United States as a result of territorial expansion (Itzigsohn, 2004). The element of Latino panethnicity considered in this study is a common language (Dávila, 2012; Padilla, 1985). Afro Latino/a characters assume a neutral Spanish accent and eventual racialization as Hispanics (Astroff, 1989; Dávila, 2012). In addition, Afro Latino and Latinas integration as panethnic Latino/as occurs when references to Afro-Latino/a heritage will shift from negative to neutral or positive over time. These references can come from both Afro Latin and other characters.

To be clear, for the purpose of this study Latino panethnicity includes the use of neutral vs. national origin Spanish (Dávila, 2012; Lavriega Monforti, 2014; Sommers, 1991) and references to Afro-Latin heritage will shift from negative to neutral or positive over time. Though, we predict that panethnicity will be negatively related with Afro-Latin heritage. Yet, we assume that Afro-Latinos and Latinas will identify themselves as panethnic. Hence, the subsequent research question is presented:

RQ4: Does ethnic media program *Celia* represents Afro descendants' integration as panethnic Latinos?

4. Method

The content analysis research design is the ideal approach to identify representation of minority groups in television content (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Fujioka, 1999; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000; Tamborini, Mastro, Chory-Assdad, & Huang, 2000). As this is a study that is exploring a new area the representativeness of the results are limited to the biographical series *Celia*. The population of content in this study is 80 episodes. Each broadcast is approximately 45 minutes long. Every episode is a unit of analysis and each character a coding unit.

For the reliability pre-test the authors, who served as coders, examined 2 randomly selected episodes. As the study's measurement level was nominal, a reliability pre-test using Coefficient AC₁ (Lacy, Watson, Riffe, & Lovejoy, 2015) was conducted, and the values exceeded .9 for all variables. Thus, we proceeded with the coding the study content independently.

For the study, the coders examined 24 randomly selected episodes out of 80 (the population of the content), approximately 12 episodes per coder. There were about 30 scenes per episode and 2 or more characters per scene. The coders evaluated 1,388-character representations out of approximately 4,800 (80 x 30 x 2) (SE 1.3%; 95% CI ± 2.6%). The content reliability test was conducted on episode 44 using Coefficient AC₁ (Lacy et al., 2015) exceeding .8 for all variables. Coefficient AC₁ (Lacy et al., 2015) is used in this study as a measure of reliability because it yielded a more stable inter coder agreement for nominal data than other known measures such as Krippendorff's Alpha (Gwet, 2008). Results are seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Intercoder reliability test

	Gwet's AC₁	Krippendorff f's Alpha	Percent Agreement
Role	0.93897	0.90335	0.95348
Afro Latin	0.86513	0.85714	0.93023
Laziness	1	1	1
Temperament	0.94655	0.64583	0.95348
Untrustworthi ness	0.94896	0.48171	0.95349
Unintelligent	1	1	1
Sexualized	1	1	1
Treatment	0.80029	0.70990	0.83721
Music	0.92489	0.87926	0.95349
Rituals	1	1	1
Spiritual	0.95130	0.48795	0.95349
Language	0.88941	0.71064	0.90698

5. Results

Next are the findings pertaining the analysis of Afro Latin and non-Afro Latin characters in the *Celia* series. Even though this is an exploratory study, here relationships among variables of interest are examined and support for the hypothesis is reported.

RQ1 posited how were Afro-Latino/as portrayed in ethnic media program *Celia*. Afro Latin characters were represented less lazy (1.7%), temperamental (16.4%), untrustworthy (7.2%), unintelligent (.2%) and sexualized (5.1%) than non-Afro Latin characters who were depicted as lazier (3.6%), temperamental (31.3%), untrustworthy (30.5%), unintelligent (1.1%), and sexualized (13.3%). In terms of treatment, non-Afro Latin characters (24.9%) were depicted more negatively than Afro Latin (9.7%). Conversely, Afro Latin characters (45.3%) were depicted in a more positive light than non-Afro Latin (27.7%). Yet, in terms of neutral treatments both groups show slight variation on their representation (Afro Latin 29.1% and Non-Afro Latin 31.5%). The results are seen in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Representation of Afro Latin and non Afro Latin Characters

	Afro Latin Characters	Other Characters
Laziness	1.7%	3.6%
	11	27
Temperament	16.4%	31.3%
	103	234

Untrustworthiness	7.2% 45	30.5% 228
Unintelligent	0.2% 1	1.1% 8
Sexualized	5.1% 32	13.3% 99
Percent =	100%	100%
N =	629	747

Table 3: Treatment of Afro Latin and non Afro Latin Characters

	Afro Latin Characters	Other Characters
None	15.9% 100	15.9% 119
Negative	9.7% 61	24.9% 186
Neutral	29.1% 285	31.5% 235
Positive	45.3% 285	27.7% 207
Percent =	100%	100%
N =	629	747

RQ2 postulated what were some of the behavioural characteristics about Afro-Latino/a characters in the ethnic media program *Celia*. The analysis showed that the role (main or minor) did not have an effect on the character's depicted behaviour or treatment. Non-Afro Latin characters in the series all play a minor role and they are represented as lazier (3.6%), temperamental (31.3%), untrustworthy (30.5%), unintelligent (1.1%) and sexualized (13.3%) than Afro Latin characters when considered by the role they played. The results are seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Representation of Afro Latin Main and Minor and non Afro Latin Minor Characters

	Afro Latin Main Characters	Afro Latin Minor Characters	Other Minor Characters
Laziness	1.3% 5	2.6% 6	3.6% 27

Temperament	15.8% 62	17.6% 41	31.3% 234
Untrustworthiness	8.4% 33	5.2% 12	30.5% 228
Unintelligent	.25% 1	0% 0	1.1% 8
Sexualized	4.1% 16	6.9% 16	13.3% 99
Percent =	100%	100%	100%
N =	393	233	747

Likewise, non-Afro Latinos (24.9%) were treated more negatively than Afro Latinos Main (10.2%) and Minor (9.0%) characters. On the other hand, Afro Latin Main (51.1%) and Minor (36.0%) characters were treated more positively than Non-Afro Latin (27.7%). Yet, in terms of neutral treatments both groups show minor variation on their representation (Afro Latin Main 26.7%, Afro Latin Minor 33.5% and Non-Afro Latin 31.5%). The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Treatment of Afro Latin Main and Minor and non Afro Latin Minor Characters

	Afro Latin Main Characters	Afro Latin Minor Characters	Other Minor Characters
None	12.0% 47	21.5% 50	15.9% 119
Negative	10.2% 40	9.0% 21	24.9% 186
Neutral	26.7% 105	33.5% 78	31.5% 235
Positive	51.1% 201	36.0% 84	27.7% 207
Percent =	100%	100%	100%
N =	393	233	747

In some instances, Non-Afro Latin characters referred to Afro Latin characters, but they were not in the same scene. Thus, these occurrences could not be coded as a particular

Afro Latin Characters receiving negative treatment. Table 6 shows a sample of the racist remarks made towards Afro Latinos in the *telenovela*.

Table 6: Negative remarks about Afro Latin characters

Character	Race	Remark (Spanish)	Remark (English)
7	0	“Nosotros no vamos a llevar a nadie. No vamos a montar a la n... esa en el carro.”	We’re not taking anybody. We’re not riding with this n... in the car.
2	1	“Me siento mal por lo que le hice a la n... de la apuesta.”	I feel bad for what I did to the <i>nigger</i> of the bet.
15	0	“¿Y qué le hiciste a la n... ?”	And what did you do to the n... ?
15	0	“¿Cómo, la n... se te apareció allá y te dañó la fiesta?”	What? The n... came over and ruined your party?
7	0	“Celia, la n... Celia. Si Lola me llamó tuvo que haber llamado a la n... Celia para decirle donde está. Esta n... me va a vomitar las tripas pero me va a decir dónde está. ¡Ahora!”	Celia, the n.... If Lola called me she should’ve called Celia the <i>nigger</i> to tell her where she is. This n... may make me feel like throwing up, but she is going to tell me where she is. Now!
7	0	“Este es un tesoro que Lola tenía guardao’ y que tu le vas a entregar al n... de Pedro Knight para ablandarle el corazón.”	This is a treasure Lola had saved and you are going to give it to Pedro Knight the n... so he goes soft.
7	0	“Yo quisiera que tu hubieses visto la cara de imbécil que puso el n... de Pedro Knight”.	I would have liked you to see the imbecilic face that Pedro Knight the n... made.
7	0	“Lo único que te voy a decir es que esta vez la n... va a soltar lágrimas de sangre”.	The only thing I’m going to tell you is that this n... is going to cry blood tears.
7	0	“A nadie le viene mal un escándalo. Además a la n... nunca ha tenido ninguno.”	A scandal hurts nobody. Besides, the n... has never had one.
1	1	“En este tipo de concursos no se aceptan mulatas ”.	In these types of contests mulattoes are not welcomed.
15	0	“Yo nunca te he visto tan loco por una mujer tan fea como Celia”.	I had never seen you so head over heels for a woman so ugly as Celia.

Race: Afro Latinos = 1; Non Afro Latinos = 0

RQ3 assumed ethnic media program *Celia* would present African heritage. Yet

allusions to African heritage are scarce. The bulk of the plot did not make references to Afro music, religious practices or the spiritual world. Negative connotations vary from .4% to 1.7%, while positive inferences vary from 1.3% to 5%. Results are seen on Table 7. Table 8 showcases Afro Latino/a and non-Afro Latino/a characters' remarks, or incidences related to African heritage.

Table 7: Afro Latin Heritage

	Music	Religious Practices	Spiritual References
None	92.9% 1310	96.8% 1365	93.1% 1313
Negative	.5% 7	.4% 5	1.7% 24
Positive	5.0% 71	1.3% 18	3.6% 51
Percent =	100%	100%	100%
N =	1410	1410	1410

Table 8: Remarks or incidents related to Afro Latin heritage

Character	Race	Remark or incident (Spanish)	Remark (English)
17	0	"Los santos nunca te van a fallar."	"The saints will never fail you."
6	0	"Te digo una cosa que con la ayuda de los santos nada es imposible".	"I'll tell you something, with the saint's help nothing is impossible."
6	0	"Esto no es un sueño. Estamos protegidos por los santos. ¿Cuándo tú estás protegido por los santos qué pasa?"	"This is not a dream. We're protected by the saints. What happens when you're protected by the saints?"
17	0	"Me están hablando los santos. Me están diciendo que hay una presencia que nos asecha. Una presencia maligna que no quiere que tú brilles."	"The saints are speaking to me. They are telling me that there is an evil presence that wants to set us up. An evil presence that does not want you to shine."
35	1	"Por mi padre <i>Changó</i> , que nunca me va a mentir, te digo que si nosotros lo hacemos bien mañana tu rostro va a	"For my father <i>Changó</i> , that would never lie to me, that if we do this right tomorrow your face would be in the front page of the

		estar en la primera plana de los mejores periódicos de Estados Unidos."	best newspapers in the United States."
1	1	Celia tiene un sueño con un niño y un babalao.	Celia dreams with a boy and a Santeria priest.
Character	Race	Remark or incident (Spanish)	Remark (English)
41	1	El niño confirma que él habría de traerle felicidad a Celia porque también lo había soñado.	The boy confirms he is to bring joy to Celia's life because he too had dreamt it.
6	0	Lola recuerda haber sido iniciada en la santería por Billy. Aparecen frente a un altar con velas mientras Billy eleva cánticos.	Lola remembers being initiated in Santeria by Billy. They appear in front of an altar with candles while Billy chants.
1	1	Celia percibe la muerte de un familiar.	Celia perceives a relative's death.
1	1	"Mandé a Prado a que me compara un muñeco. La Tía Ana decía que no era bueno que viajaran tres."	"I sent Prado to buy a doll. Aunt Ana always said it was not good that three people traveled."
1	1	Luego de la muerte de Celia, su espíritu y el de Ollita, su madre, aparecen, vestidos de blanco con un aura de luz a su alrededor.	After Celia's death, her spirit and Ollita's, her mother, appear dressed in white with an aura of light around them.
49	1	La santera predice que el bebé regresará de los muertos.	A spiritual lady predicts that the baby will come back from the dead.
6	0	"Vamos a hablar con los Santos, van a ver como terminan."	"Let's talk with the saints to see how they end up."

Race: Afro Latinos = 1; Non Afro Latinos = 0

Finally, RQ4 suggested that ethnic media program *Celia* represented Afro descendants' integration as panethnic Latinos. Afro Latin Main (91.3%) and Minor (90.6%) characters spoke in their national origin Spanish accent more than Non-Afro Latin characters (72.8%). Thus, Afro Latinos and Latinas remain as something other than panethnic, a group that is seen as different from the general Latino population. The results are presented in Table

Table 9: Integration as Panethnic Latinos

	Afro Latin Main Characters	Afro Latin Minor Characters	Other Minor Characters
Does not speak	8.1% 32	8.1% 19	11.8% 88
Neutral Spanish	.5% 2	1.3% 3	15.4% 115
National Origin Spanish	91.3% 359	90.6% 211	72.8% 543
Percent =	100%	100%	100%
N =	393	233	746

6. Discussion and Conclusion

To understand the results it is important to highlight that *Celia* is a Colombian television production (Arias-Polo, 2015) with an international cast playing a fictive version of Cruz’s life and the Cuba she left behind. Although Afro-Latino/as may have different valences in the U.S. and the other Latin American countries where the *telenovela* was transmitted, Afro descendants in general are a marginalized group that has little and/or stereotypical exposition on media. The *telenovela* genre invokes stereotypical characters, does not go deep into their idiosyncrasies (Otero, 2005), or . In addition, the series depicts the Cuban Revolution as violent and repressive, a vision that is shared by the exile settled all over the world. The not “strictly biographical” *telenovela* (Arias-Polo, 2015) appealed to mass culture’s fetishes, such as violence, sex, money, and fame, to maintain the audiences’ interest (González Requena, 1999).

In general, the analysis showed a positive representation of Afro Latins in the *Celia telenovela*. In relation to RQ1 Afro Latin characters’ behavioural characteristics used in the study intended to assess the treatment of minority characters in US mainstream media (Behnken & Smithers, 2015; Hatton & Trautner, 2011; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). Although the protagonist, Celia Cruz, represents a minority group in Latin America, she is the main character in the biographical series. Here, the renowned salsa singer is an affirmative media representation of an otherwise underrepresented group within Latinos. Though Celia’s star power counters with the typical notions about the ordinary black Latino/a, positive depictions of Afro-Latino/as in media enhance cultural pride (Marchi, 2009) and may reduce racial stereotypes. Content such as this increase the visibility of Afro

descendants as an integral part of the Latino identity. In addition, the recognition of blackness in Latin America brings down the myth of *mestizaje* and highlights the marginalization that the group has been historically subjected to by elevating the discussion into the public space.

Even though there is evidence that Afro Latino and Latina characters are referred to in an offensive manner, in general Non-Afro Latin characters were depicted in a more negative light than Afro Latino/as (RQ2). Consider the characters of the *telenovela* genre. The recipe for the *telenovela* includes “a likable young hero, the repressed woman trying to break from societal bonds, the young lovers, the search for the protagonist’s true identity, the guilty secret, the villain, tragedies, suspense and the final happy ending” (Straubhar, 2012, p. 163). The villain arouses conflict within the plot, which in *Celia*’s case were Minor, Non-Afro Latin characters that despised the protagonists for their success notwithstanding their race. These villains will naturally be portrayed negatively not because of their race, but because of the very nature of the *telenovela* genre. In addition, these characters were portrayed frequently in order to bring the plot into a climax.

Celia Cruz’s songs containing Afro dialects intertwine into the fabric of salsa music that is heavily influenced by the African diaspora experience in the Hispanic Caribbean (Quintero Rivera, 2005). Yet, contrary to what RQ3 inquired, Afro Latin heritage as operationalized in our study was seldom depicted in the series. Minor instances showing innocent predictions of future fame and glory and premonitions of tragic events mythicized the *Santería* practice.

RQ4 supposed Afro descendants would integrate as panethnic Latinos. The operationalization of Latino panethnicity in our study is narrow, considering only the use of neutral Spanish in media as a measure of the concept. The rationale behind this hypothesis, was that as the Afro Latin characters rose in the social ladder and became internationally known, they would adopt the neutral Spanish as a function of the panethnicity depicted in Latino media (Sommers, 1991). Generally, television networks use a neutral Spanish for “clarity” and to ensure understanding of different Latin American nationalities (Dávila, 2012). Nonetheless, the *telenovela* portrayed Afro Latin characters speaking in their national origin Spanish contrary to similar programs broadcasted in Latino media. Therefore, we infer that Afro Latinos and Latinas are seen as other than panethnic; not an integral part of Latino culture. Contrary to the purpose of “standard” Spanish, the protagonists’ Cuban accent differentiates them from other on-air personalities and fictional characters that embrace that way of speaking and abandon their national-origin accent.

Previous research on the representation of minorities in media found unequivocal

evidence of stereotyping or lack of presence in mainstream programming. Although there is still much more progress to be attained, with time minorities have made their way into the spotlight both in mainstream and ethnic media (Mastro et al., 2007; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000; Mastro & Stern, 2003). Programs such as *Celia* are few and far between in Latino media. It is our opinion that Indigenous and Afro Latinos are seldom portrayed in regular programming. The absence of minorities in prime time and the type of treatment they receive when portrayed speaks volumes about the prejudices in Latino culture, yet economic forces in Latino media may promote the inclusion of programming using minority lead characters. Efforts such as *Celia* certainly celebrate this intrinsic part of Latino identity.

A limitation to this study is that the findings are not generalizable as it only deals with an Afro Latin lead *telenovela*. As this is an analysis that is surveying a new area the representativeness of the results are limited to the biographical series *Celia*. Future studies should look into how *Celia* depicts the Cuban Revolution. Revolution soldiers were villains in the *telenovela*. In addition, the program showcases repression against homosexuality as Revolution soldiers kidnap and beat men with this sexual orientation. Finally, forthcoming research should compare these findings to like programming that feature minorities in a main role.

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8. Appendix

The following operational definitions guided the use of the Content Analysis Coding Sheet:

8.1 Representation of individual characters

This study will evaluate if individual characters play main or minor roles and if they are depicted as lazy, untrustworthy, unintelligent, and sexualized as well as if they exhibit temperament that is volatile or aggressive (Behnken & Smithers, 2015; Hatton & Trautner, 2011b; D. E. Mastro & Greenberg, 2000).

8.1.1 Episode number

Identify the episode according to the number in the series sequence.

8.1.2 Scene number

As the episode progresses identify each scene by number. A scene will take place in different locations, so each time the location changes throughout the plot, identify with a number in ascending order.

8.1.3 Character Code

For each scene, identify the main and minor characters that interact with one another according to the following codes. This is a nominal measurement.

8.1.4 Role Prominence

The role of each character in the plot will be classified as **main character**, e.g. essential for the evolution of the storyline; or as **minor character**, e.g. involved but not essential to the storyline. Background or non-essential characters will not be considered. These are characters that do not contribute to the plot of the story such as individuals passing

on the street, on the dance floor, service or government employees, etc. (Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). This is a nominal scale measurement.

8.1.5 Afro Latin

This study recognizes **Afro Latins** as individuals of African descent visible in their skin colour, hair or phenotype. **Other characters** are non-Afro Latin such as people of European or of mixed European, African and/or Indigenous descent. This is a nominal measurement.

8.1.6 Behavioural Characteristics

This study will assess the characters' behaviour as either present or absent. Such behaviour was described as lazy, temperament that is volatile or aggressive, an individual that is untrustworthy, unintelligent, and sexualized (Behnken & Smithers, 2015; D. E. Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). Sexualized behaviour refers to partially nude interactions and references to the sexual act as well as nude interactions (exposed breasts and buttocks, genital accentuation, open mouths or tongue exposure) and explicit sex acts (Hatton & Trautner, 2011).

On the other hand, characters may be faced with remarks and treatment, which include name-calling, scorning and insulting on the basis of race. The tone of such expressions will be coded as (1 = Negative, 2 = Neutral, 3 = Positive). Negative remarks include words such as *negro*, *negrito*, *negra*, or *negrita* (negro/nigger) as an insult to a person of African descent; making fun of the character's physical characteristics on the basis of their race or in reference to their descent. Negative treatment may include denying entrance to certain places or circles, jobs, housing, education, or mere favours on the basis of the character's race. Positive remarks or treatment will elevate the character's actions, physical characteristics, access to places or circles, jobs, housing, education or favours because of their race. We expect to see Afro-Latinos and Latinas fight against prejudice and gain status with talent or hard work. For example, an Afro Latin character will attribute his or her talent to her descent or heritage. Remarks or treatment will be neutral, as characters will be approached in the same manner independent of their race. For instance, there is a scene with an Afro-Latin and an *Other* character and they are both made fun of, attacked, praised or given access in equal conditions. This is a nominal scale measurement.

8.2 Afro Latin Heritage

This study looked for the reference to Afro-Latin heritage on each scene as it pertained to religion. The tone of such expressions will be coded as (0 = No references, 1 =

Negative, 2 = Positive). This is a nominal scale measurement:

8.2.1 Music

Cuban music as a vessel to disseminate African traditions and religious beliefs. During the 1940 and 1950s Santería heavily influenced Cuban popular music (Cole, 2012). Celia Cruz incorporated references to deities, Yoruba language and rituals into the popular music she interpreted (Cole, 2012). Code as “negative” if a character dismisses this practice and undesirable or dangerous. Code as “positive” if a character embraces this practice as desirable or a beneficial. Code as “no reference” if there is no occurrence.

8.2.3 Religious practices or rituals

African-derived religious rituals include offerings, sacrifices feeding and devotion to deities. Saints that represent *orishas* such as Saint Barbara are offered water, flowers and candles, while *orishas* are offered the blood of sacrificed animals. Followers may enter states of trance and spiritual leaders incur in divination techniques (Rossbach de Olmos, 2007). In addition, followers may wear beaded necklaces (Cole, 2007) or have altars in their homes with paintings statues, sacred rocks or porcelain recipients to represent their devotion to an *orishas* (Rossbach de Olmos, 2007). Code as “negative” if a character dismisses this practice and undesirable or dangerous. Code as “positive” if a character embraces this practice as desirable or a beneficial. Code as “no reference” if there is no occurrence.

8.2.4 Spiritual references

Followers ask deities for protection, blessing or favour. Flashbacks, visions and dreams the characters might experience related to spirit possession (Institute of Latin American Studies, 2009) or dead relatives (Cole, 2007). Code as “negative” if a character dismisses this practice and undesirable or dangerous. Code as “positive” if a character embraces this practice as desirable or a beneficial. Code as “no reference” if there is no occurrence.

8.3 Latino Panethnicity

Integration as panethnic Latinos measured the type of Spanish characters used:

8.3.1 Language

Spanish language media resort to neutral Spanish, or standard/international Spanish free of regionalisms (Astroff, 1989). Characters may assume either the neutral or national origin Spanish. This is a nominal scale measurement.

Coding Sheet

v1. Episode identification number _____

v2. Scene number _____

v.3 Character code _____

Celia Cruz = 1	Tico = 23	Prado (bodyguard) = 46
Pedro Knight = 2	Armando Pérez = 24	Jerry = 47
Ollita Alfonso = 3	Radio businessman = 25	Servant = 48
Simón Cruz = 4	Revolutionary leader = 26	Spiritual lady = 49
Noris Alfonso = 5	Train Station manager = 27	Teacher = 50
Lola Calvo = 6	Revolution soldier = 29	Simon's mistress = 51
Eliécer Calvo = 7	Estelita = 30	Zoraya = 52
General Calixto = 8	'La Barraca' owner = 31	México's President = 53
Rogelio Martínez = 9	Raquel Moreno = 32	Mexico President's wife = 54
Tía Ana Alfonso = 10	Raquel's Mom = 33	USA Police = 55
Marcos Calvo = 11	Maximiliano = 34	Refugee = 56
Alberto Blanco = 12	Congo = 035	Nurse = 57
Gamaliel Alfonso = 13	Ramón Cabrera = 36	Drug Dealer = 58
Caito = 14	Pedro Knight's daughters = 37	Trafficker = 59
Mario Agüero = 15	Rolando = 38	Simón's partner = 60
Lilo Candela = 16	Rita = 39	Port Manager = 61
Billy Echevarría = 17	Jesús = 40	Girl's Aunt = 62
Mirelys Bocanegra = 18	Jose Arbullá = 41	Girl Aunt's son = 63
Myrta Silva = 19	Ralphy = 42	Associate = 64
René Neira = 20	Gloria Estefan = 43	
Engineer = 21	Emilio Estefan = 44	
Johnny Pacheco = 22	Jorge Enrique Gómez = 45	

v.4 Role Prominence

1 = Main character 2 = Minor character _____

v.5 Afro Latin

1 = Afro Latin 0 = Other _____

Behavioral characteristics

v.6 Lazy 1 = Presence 0 = Absence _____

v.7 Temperament that is volatile or aggressive

1 = Presence 0 = Absence _____

v.8 Untrustworthy 1 = Presence 0 = Absence _____

v.9 Unintelligent 1 = Presence 0 = Absence _____

v.10 Sexualized 1 = Presence 0 = Absence _____

v.11 Disrespectful remarks or treatment

0 = None 1 = Negative 2 = Neutral 3 = Positive _____

Afro Latin Heritage

v.12 Music

0 = None 1 = Negative 2 = Positive _____

v.13 Religious practices

0 = None 1 = Negative 2 = Positive _____

