

Hispanic Voting Behavior Versus Hispanic Beliefs

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Abstract

Hispanics are the fastest growing demographic in the US and they have historically turned out to vote in large numbers for the Democratic Party. Charles Krauthammer says, however, "They should be a natural Republican constituency: striving immigrant community, religious, Catholic, family-oriented and socially conservative." This thesis utilizes the Rhetorical Critical lens Fantasy Themes Analysis to do an investigative study to compare Hispanic beliefs and Hispanic voting behavior. Featured in this study are two interviews with Democratic San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro and Republican Texas State Senator Larry Gonzales.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the historic 2012 Presidential Election, President Barack Obama garnered some 71% of the Hispanic vote nationwide, leaving only 29% of Hispanics who voted for Governor Romney (Margolis). The percentage of Texas Hispanic votes for Romney was around 40%. This is significant since Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in the country, and could soon be the new majority in a couple of decades (Margolis). The Democratic lead with Hispanic voters has not dropped below 25% since 1972 (Political Quarterly). This, however, has not been a problem for Republicans until the last few elections. It is not that Hispanics have begun to vote differently; rather it is that the demographics of the country have rapidly changed and there are quite simply more Hispanics than ever before. According to a Pew Research Center US Census, there are currently some 53 million Hispanics (Passel) in the United States and some 27 million are registered to vote (Jones).

The voting behavior of Hispanics is now more than ever a referendum on Republicans. Every 30 seconds, a Hispanic turns 18 years old (AHAA). Thus they are eligible to vote, and statistics show that they will likely vote for the Democratic Party. Sixty-five percent of U.S. Hispanics are Millennials, ages 22 to 35 (AHAA). Thus they will vote Democratic for a very long time. Of great political importance, we are witnessing the United States shift from a center-right country to a center-left country. If Republicans do not do something to attract Hispanic voters, they will lose again in 2014 and 2016 and quite possibly for the foreseeable future.

There appears, therefore, to be a disconnect between the Hispanic community and the members of the Republican Party. Ironically, the Republican

platform may actually be more in line with Hispanic values than that of the Democratic Party's. As Charles Krauthammer says, "They should be a natural Republican constituency: striving immigrant community, religious, Catholic, family-oriented and socially conservative (on abortion, for example)." However, the problem for Republicans is that Hispanics are predominantly voting for a party that does not appear to espouse those values.

This study will attempt to determine whether or not there is this disconnect between Hispanics' beliefs and Hispanics voting behavior. It will address the general question: Why do Hispanics vote predominantly for the Democratic Party? This study will also investigate current literature on Hispanics to determine what values they currently hold dear, to then determine which political party is most in line with those values.

Rationale

The analytic framework used in this study will provide a lens through which to interpret the data. This study will therefore address the following research questions: 1.) Since 2008, how have Hispanics in America voted? 2.) What do Hispanics consider the most important political issues? 3.) How has the emergence of the Hispanic Republicans of Texas affected the political landscape in Texas and, by implication, the nation? The rationale for addressing these important questions is that this study views voting behavior as communication, and further, that the values Hispanics hold toward public policy is a significant form of predisposition to communicate their beliefs through their votes (Rokeach; , 1968; Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967).

This investigation will proceed according to the following organization. The literature review will present an overview of the 2012 Presidential Election as well as detail the voting behavior of Hispanics. The Methodology chapter will pose the research questions being addressed, and will present a detailed explanation of how the study will be carried out. The Analysis section will report outcome of interviews with elected officials who endorsed by HRT, all through the lens of Fantasy Theme Analysis. The Discussion Section will reveal the findings and how they ought to be understood.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Hispanics and Republicans

California was once a red state. Richard Nixon won California three times, Ronald Reagan won it twice, and George H.W. Bush won it once. However, the Republicans have since not fared so well in the eyes of Hispanic voters in that state. According to an article by Michael Scherer and Elizabeth Dias, the 1994 campaign ad that turned California from a purple to a blue state began with footage of Hispanic migrants sprinting the wrong way down a six-lane freeway near San Diego. "They keep coming," the narrator announced. This ad helped re-elect GOP governor Pete Wilson and pass a ballot measure, which was later tossed out by the courts, but at the time it barred undocumented immigrants from nonemergency public health care, education and social services.

The California GOP, however, has yet to recover from this double win. Jennifer Korn, who led George W. Bush's Hispanic-outreach effort in 2004 says, "It absolutely damaged the Republican brand. Conservatives have not realized how their tone and rhetoric has turned people off." (Scherer and Dias) Over the next six years, the chances that California Hispanics would identify as Republican dropped from 34% to 12%, while the odds they would identify as Democratic rose from 38% to 63%. At the same time, Latino voter registration boomed as unions and community groups mounted citizenship and registration drives. Since Wilson, no Republican other than Arnold Schwarzenegger has won a top statewide office.

In 2010 the Nevada GOP's Senate candidate, Sharron Angle, ran ads that reprised the black-and-white images of Hispanics crossing the border. ("The best

friend an illegal alien ever had" was her tagline for Senate majority leader Harry Reid, who won overwhelming support from Hispanic voters.) Joseph Arpaio, the controversial Republican sheriff in Phoenix, had been disciplined by the Justice Department for unlawfully profiling, detaining and arresting Hispanic residents. Scherer and Dias state,

The 2012 Republican campaign trail has more often than not echoed Wilson's approach. Romney named Wilson as honorary chair of his campaign in California and toured South Carolina with the Kansas secretary of state who helped write the Arizona law that pushed Valenzuela and Team Awesome into action in the first place.

Obviously, the writers here did not prefer the tone that Romney is was setting amongst Hispanic voters.

Within a matter of months, the damage to Republicans among Hispanics was considerable. In a January survey for the Spanish-language network Univision, pollster Matt Barreto found that 27% of Hispanics felt the Republican Party was hostile toward Hispanics, while an additional 45% believed Republicans "don't care much" about them--a total of 72% who don't feel welcomed by the party. (And the numbers are getting worse: back in April 2011, just 20% sensed hostility from the Republicans (Scherer and Dias).

The GOP's nativist drift led Newt Gingrich, who takes slightly more centrist positions on immigration, to call Romney "anti-immigrant." This in turn rallied a group of party elders, including former Florida governor Jeb Bush and strategist Karl Rove, to appeal for a more moderate tone amongst Hispanics. "We know that

this is the fastest-growing segment and that we have to increase our share," warns Ed Gillespie, the former chairman of the Republican Party, who recently spoke to a gathering of conservative Hispanics in Florida. He warns, "In 2020, if the Republican nominee for President gets the same percentage of the white, Hispanic, African American and Asian vote that John McCain got in 2008, a Democrat will be elected to the White House by fourteen percentage points." (Scherer and Dias)

Recent data also suggest that Hispanics perceive Republicans as not caring about them as a group (46%), or being hostile toward Hispanics (27%) (Latino Decisions, 2011). Sophia J. Wallace explains that Republican candidates will have to work hard to demonstrate to Hispanics that they will offer representation for their salient public policy interests (Social Science Quarterly, 1369).

Romney did not do so poorly with Hispanics after all, relative to the past Republican candidates over the last twenty years. Jeb Bush, Karl Rove, and Fox News indicated as though Hispanics have moved against Republicans, but according to Tino Sandandaji this is not the case. He stated,

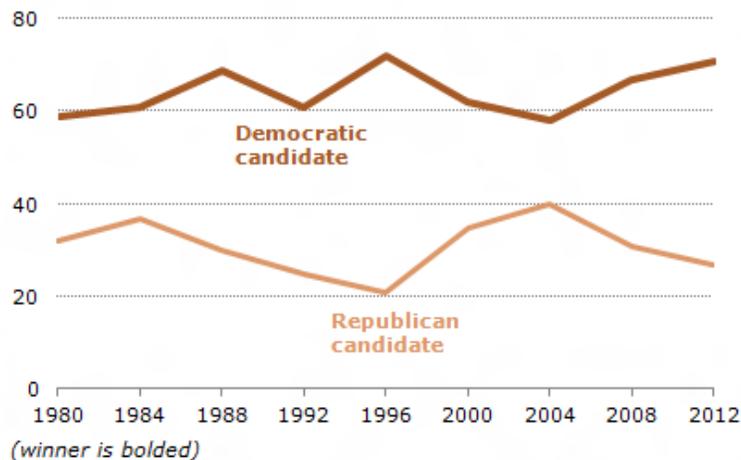
Romney did not lose because he lost the Hispanic vote in some unusual fashion. Rather, he lost because of rising number of Hispanics. In 1992 Hispanics were two percent of voters, in 2012 ten percent of voters. If the Hispanic vote share would have been what it was in 2000, let alone 1992. Romney would have won. Romney, however, would not have won with the vote share Bush got among Hispanics with the current composition of the electorate. The Hispanic vote is now finally large enough to win Democrats elections. Unlike what Karl Rove, Jeb Bush and Fox News might claim, this is

almost entirely due to the growth of the Hispanic population share, not due to Hispanics having moved against Republicans. Hispanics have voted overwhelmingly for Democrats in every election during the last three decades (Super-economy).

Figure 1

The Hispanic Vote in Presidential Elections, 1980-2012

(% of Hispanics who voted for the ...)



(winner is bolded)

Year	Democratic candidate	Republican candidate	Democratic advantage
1980	Jimmy Carter, 56%	Ronald Reagan, 35%	+21
1984	Walter Mondale, 61%	Ronald Reagan, 37%	+24
1988	Michael Dukakis, 69%	George H.W. Bush, 30%	+39
1992	Bill Clinton, 61%	George H.W. Bush, 25%	+36
1996	Bill Clinton, 72%	Bob Dole, 21%	+51
2000	Al Gore, 62%	George W. Bush, 35%	+27
2004	John Kerry, 58%	George W. Bush, 40%	+18
2008	Barack Obama, 67%	John McCain, 31%	+36

Figure 1. The Hispanic Vote in Presidential Elections, Washington D.C. (2013). Note: Paul Taylor, 2013.

According to Figure 1 (Reference), Hispanics have never really been onboard with the Republicans, even when President Reagan granted illegal immigrants amnesty in 1986, however only 30% of Hispanics voted Republicans voted for Bush in 1988. The political problem is not the Republican view on amnesty, rather that the Hispanic population has grown in large proportion.

Still, Republican commentators have since stated that they believe the

solution to the Republican woes with Hispanics is amnesty. Charles Krauthammer, insisting that Hispanics are actually Republicans, states, “For the party in general, however, the problem is hardly structural. It requires but a single policy change: Border fence plus amnesty. Yes, amnesty. Use the word. Shock and awe—full legal normalization (just short of citizenship) in return for full border enforcement.”

In response to how Hispanics work hard and are in line with Republican values, Sanandaji had this to say, “Why do Hispanics vote Democrat? The main reason is that Hispanics on average earn far less than Whites [henceforth “Whites” refers to non-Hispanic Whites]. It is simply not in Hispanic material self-interests to vote for the party of limited.” (Super-economy). He also went on to explain that if Republicans were to change the immigration policy in this country, very likely it would only have minimal effects on those now legal Hispanics voting Republican, as a larger share would vote Democratic.

Republicans Reach Out To Hispanics

An ever-growing Hispanic population has affected Texas politics. Texas had 9,460,921 Hispanic/Latino residents in 2010, which represented 37.6% of the population now, however, this could soon change. Therefore, with rapidly changing Texas demographics and with recent voting trends by Hispanics, the Democratic Party is working to make “red” (Republican) Texas a “purple” (a swing) state in the next 6-8 years, led by their rising star, San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro.

Thus the goal of the Republican Party is more preventative than anything else. As the saying goes, sometimes the best defense is a good offense. Texas Republicans want to go after Texas Hispanics. To do so effectively more and more

Hispanic Republicans are being elected to public office. According to a journal article by Scott Graves and Jongho Lee, ethnicity plays a vital role in how voters vote, because it plays on role on their partisanship, candidate evaluation, and issue position (Social Science Quarterly). Thus more Hispanic conservative elected officials could translate into more Hispanic votes for the Republican Party, and this potentially plays an important role not only in Texas politics, but also national politics.

In any case, it is clear that the Republicans have to reach out to Hispanics in the future more than they have in the past. One of the ways that they can do this is through organizations like the Hispanic Republicans of Texas (HRT), a political organization located in Texas' capitol, Austin, which was co-founded by George Atuna Jr., Juan Hernandez, and George P. Bush (son of Governor Jeb Bush and nephew of President George W. Bush). According to the hispanicrepublicansoftx.org, HRT's mission is two-fold:

To recruit, elect, support and defend Hispanic officeholders and candidates at state and local elected offices who share our common values of faith, family, lower taxes, less regulations and less government spending to promote individual prosperity and economic growth in a pro-business Texas.

Secondly, to support non-Hispanic Republican officeholders and candidates for state and local elected offices who share our HRT values and who have districts with large Hispanic communities and culture (Hispanic Republicans of Texas).

Over the last two years, HRT has rapidly grown into a political movement

assisting those Hispanic leaders called to serve the public good. Membership in the Hispanic Republicans of Texas Political Action Committee (PAC) is open to all Texans who are interested in empowering the Hispanic community to leadership in government.

More specifically, they are a group that empowers Hispanics to run for political office. Hispanics who are interested in running for political office but are unknowing of how to go about the process can contact HRT, which helps potential candidates in their first steps towards running for political office. The HRT Chapter Meetings held in Fort Bend County are open to the public. They average around 60 members every month. HRT aims to train Hispanic Republican leaders in conservative ideals (of faith, family, lower taxes, less regulations and less government spending to promote individual prosperity and economic growth in a pro-business Texas) in order to elect more Hispanics to office.

Leadership within the Texas Republican Party, particularly Kay Bailey Hutchinson, has called for a “bigger tent” in an effort to reach out to Texas Hispanics (Politico). In elections across Texas, Hispanic Republicans have begun to be elected in various elections. Recently HRT has supported candidates who have won their races, including Ted Cruz for United States Senate, State Representative J.M. Lozano for Texas House District 43, Jason Villalba for Texas House District 114, Susan Heygood McCoy for 153rd Judicial District, and Michelle Slaughter for 405th Judicial District. This is promising for HRT, as well as the Republican Party, because more Hispanic Republican leaders could also mean more Texas Hispanics will cast their votes for Republican in future elections.

It remains unclear whether a more diverse Texas Republican Party with Hispanic representation will be enough to woo Hispanic voters. However, if Republicans are effectively fighting for the issues that Texas Hispanics care about then it just may. Founder of HRT, George P. Bush, explained that conservative Republicans could compete for Hispanic voters and still remain true to their core values, as they explain, "We don't have to sell out our principles to win the Hispanic vote" (HRT). According to Bush, Hispanic values are in line with Republican values.

The Immigration Debate

In the summer leading up the 2012 election, President Obama made an executive decision that allowed for any younger undocumented immigrant to be able to stay in the US without the fear of being deported. According to a CNN article, President Obama stated, "This is not amnesty. This is not immunity. This is not a path to citizenship. It's not a permanent fix. This is a temporary stopgap measure" (Cohen). In making this executive decision, President Obama bolstered support amongst Hispanics.

All while in contrast, the rhetoric used by some members of the Republican Party, including Republican Presidential hopeful Mitt Romney, only alienated Hispanics. According to an article by the Elise Foley, she explains,

Romney took a hardliner stance on immigration in the GOP primary and was never quite able to shake it as he moved into the general election. His calls for "self-deportation" -- making life difficult for undocumented immigrants until they left -- and for vetoing the Dream Act drew ire from immigration activists and Hispanics groups in general. His party had enacted a string of

anti-undocumented immigrant legislation in Arizona, South Carolina, Georgia, Indiana and Alabama, and had helped in the Senate to defeat the Dream Act in 2010. There are plenty of people on the GOP side who have urged a softer tone on immigration, but it didn't seem to sink in with the Romney campaign until after the primary. In the final months of the campaign, he pitched his desire to find a solution for undocumented young people already in the country and advocated a broad fix for immigration problems. Too little, too late, said Lawrence Benito, CEO of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, which organized Hispanics and other immigrants to vote for the President this year. (Huffington Post.) This proved not to resonate well with the Hispanic community and was certainly a factor in why Romney lost the election.

In the final analysis, Romney eventually moderated his stance on illegal immigration reform leading up to November, but in no way did it help him. In the 2012 Election, President Incumbent Barack Obama garnered 71% of the Hispanic vote (Margolis). Governor Romney earned the least support amongst Hispanics of any Republican Presidential candidate in the last 20 years.

Romney blamed much of his loss on his failure to connect with Hispanic voters. ¹This may well be due in part because he neglected to make Hispanics feel included in his vision for America, having emphasized more than once that he did not support a pathway to citizenship or permanent residency for immigrants who came to the U.S. illegally (Blake). In summary, the 2012 Presidential Election may

¹ According to a Pew Report, 50% of the Christian registered voters stay home.

have indicated that some Republicans were not on the winning side of this issue. Governor Mitt Romney was clearly not in any case.

If true, this does not portend well for future Republican political campaigns. According to a Pew study, voters were asked about what should happen to unauthorized immigrants working in the U.S. According to the national exit poll, and 77% of Hispanic voters said these immigrants should be offered a chance to apply for legal status while 18% said these immigrants should be deported. Among all voters, fewer than two-thirds (65%) said these immigrants should be offered a chance to apply for legal status while 28% say they should be deported (Passel).

Later, Candidate Romney launched "Juntos con Romney" ("Together with Romney") teams in 15 states and placed similar teams to reach out to Hispanics through the media (Simmons), but perhaps it was too little too late for the Romney Campaign. As Republican pollster Whit Ayers stated,

It is simply unarguable that in the future, you're going to have far larger proportions of minority groups of all sorts, but especially Hispanic voters. If Republicans don't figure out how to do better among Hispanic voters, we're not going to be talking about how to get Florida back among the mega-states in a presidential election; we're going to be talking about how not to lose Texas (Wilson).

Republicans obviously need to do something, because what they have been doing is not working.

In the beginning of President Obama's second term, immigration reform came to the forefront of issues driving the conversation on Capitol Hill. President

Obama declared in a State of the Union Address that he wanted to overhaul the immigration policy. Republicans dissented on just how the nation would go about overhauling immigration. Republicans have tended to be stricter on whom they allow into the country than Democrats typically are. The current Republican Platform advocates doing away with amnesty as it encourages illegal immigration, reforming the immigration system to emphasize family, and focusing immigration on needed skills (H-1B visas to draw high-tech, skilled workers into good positions) (Policymic).

This, however, has not stopped many Republicans from becoming more lenient on their immigration policy views. Many in fact have changed their views just over the course of the last year. Now a bipartisan group of senators, four Republican and four Democratic have led the charge. According to an article by Fox News Latino, it explains,

McCain, Graham, and Flake are members of a bipartisan group of eight senators working to craft a comprehensive immigration bill to enhance border security, streamline legal immigration, ensure employers don't hire undocumented immigrants and provide eventual citizenship to undocumented immigrants already here. McCain, Graham, Flake and others argue that Republicans must tackle comprehensive immigration legislation partly to win back support from Hispanic voters crucial to national election outcomes, but that argument is a harder sell to House members who often represent overwhelmingly white districts. If it gets through the Senate, the legislation faces a potentially tough road with House Republicans skeptical of

granting citizenship to undocumented immigrants, and the meeting included at least one lawmaker known for taking a hard line on the issue (“South Carolina Legal Immigrants Worry Law Will Subject Them to Profiling”).

Related to this, on June 27th a bill was agreed upon by the committee and presented to the senate. It passed 68 to 32, picking up all Democratic Seats and 14 Republican. These senators patted praised one another. As the *Huffington Post* described,

It addresses undocumented immigrants, legal immigration, border security, employer hiring and an entry-exit system so the government knows if foreign nationals leave the country when their visa expires. The path to citizenship is long -- likely 13 years or more -- and arduous, but advocates are thrilled that it would exist at all, given opposition from many Republicans and the failure of bills to carve out such a path in the past. Dreamers, young undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children, would be able to earn green cards in five years, as would some agricultural workers. It addresses undocumented immigrants, legal immigration, border security, employer hiring and an entry-exit system so the government knows if foreign nationals leave the country when their visa expires.

For reform advocates, this was a giant step in the right direction. Still, however, 32 Republican Senators stood vehemently against the bill. Senators Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Ted Cruz (R-Texas), were among the 32. The *Huffington Post* article explains, “They argue that the bill is “amnesty” because undocumented immigrants would receive

provisional legal status to stay in the U.S. before border and enforcement measures are met” (Foley).

The House of Representatives has their own bi-partisan committee of 7 working on an immigration bill; however, two Republican Texas Representatives, Sam Johnson and John Carter, dropped out because of their “lack of faith in President Obama to enforce the current law or solve the immigration problem” (Roll Call). Effectively, the immigration bill is now dead. The two released this statement, “After years of hard work and countless meetings, we have reached a tipping point and can no longer continue working on a broad approach to immigration. We want to be clear. The problem is politics. Instead of doing what’s right for America, President Obama time and again has unilaterally disregarded the U.S. Constitution, the letter of the law and bypassed the Congress ... in order to advance his political agenda. We will not tolerate it.”

The newly elected Texas Senator Ted Cruz stated, “I don’t believe President Obama wants an immigration bill to pass, instead I think he wants a political issue. His objective is to push so much on the table that he forces Republicans to walk away from the table because then he wants to use that issue in 2014 and 2016 as a divisive wedge issue” (Blake). In Senator Cruz’s mind, this is more political posturing on the part of President Obama to make Republicans seem as though they are not willing to compromise, when in fact, the President never intended to reach a compromise. It may not be politically expedient for him to do so, in part because there might be more pressing issues in the country, such as gun control, balancing the budget, and protecting America from a nuclear attack, and because he can save

the issue for either the upcoming 2014 midterm elections to gain politically from it.

Implications of an Insecure Border

Due to the President's Sequester, many of the Immigration and Custom Enforcement Units (ICEs) on Texas' and Arizona's border with Mexico were defunded, thus forced to release detainees. This left many Republican lawmakers outraged. Mark Curnette observes,

Many congressional Republicans demanded an explanation for the sudden and uneven release of illegal immigrants. Two top Republicans on the Senate and House Judiciary committees, Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Rep. Bob Goodlatte of Virginia, released a letter Thursday that criticized Napolitano for her decision. 'While the administration is clearly embarking on a campaign to scare the public and Congress about the realities of budget reductions, it is clear that you have not planned adequately for the March 1 sequestration', the Republicans wrote. (USA Today)

While Democrats want some Republicans to reconsider their rigid stance regarding laws that negatively affect illegal immigrants in our country, Republicans want the President to push for tighter security on the nation's border.

The 1,951-mile fence between the U.S. and Mexico has not stopped the influx of illegal immigrants into the US. Some individuals within the Republican Party maintain that a more traditional stance on immigration and hold that illegal immigrants are breaking the law. To them a law is a law, and there is no exception for those who break it. They also point to the increased crime rates in the country, many of which involve Mexican illegal immigrants.

As an example, a report by the Department of Justice on the National Drug Threat Assessment says that there were 267 kidnappings in Phoenix last year and 299 in 2008. The report indicated that the victims usually have a connection to immigrant smuggling groups or drug traffickers. The report also showed that assaults against U.S. law enforcement on the southwestern border are on the rise. The report found that the number of attacks on Border Patrol agents increased 46 % to 1,097 incidents in fiscal 2008 (“Border States Deal With More Illegal Immigrant Crime Than Most, Data Suggest”).

Another 2004 study found that 12.4 % of California prisoners were illegal immigrants, as compared with an estimated 6.9 % of the state population. In Arizona, 11.1 % of the prison population was undocumented, compared with 7% of the overall state population. In Texas, the percentage was also slightly higher in the prisons than it security by sending troops to the Texas-Mexican border, but to no avail (Office of The Governor Rick Perry). President Obama, however, dismissed Rick Perry’s call for help. Arizona Governor Jan Brewer also called for help securing her state’s borders, but again, to no avail. The federal government has effectively left the Border States to fend for themselves.

Other Important Issues

Even though Immigration was at the forefront of conversation in Washington in November of 2012, it is not the most important issues with Hispanics. According to a Gallup Pollster Lydia Saad, she stated,

Although Hispanic voters are less likely to mention immigration as their top concern, those who are immigrants and first-generation Hispanic Americans

are more likely to mention it than those whose family has been in the U.S. longer than that. Specifically, 16% of Hispanic voters who are themselves immigrants to the U.S. name immigration as a priority, similar to the 14% of those who were born here but with at least one parent born abroad. By contrast, 7% of Hispanic voters who, along with their parents, were U.S.-born do the same.

According to a Gallup Poll published in June 2012, twenty percent of Hispanics each mention Healthcare, unemployment, and immigration policy as one of the top three issues as mattering most to them, while 17% name economic growth, 11% name the gap between the rich and poor, and 7% name the federal budget deficit. Hispanic registered voters, however, put healthcare and all economic issues before immigration, which 12% name as their most important issue. This Gallup Poll put this in perspective as this is anything but good news for the Republicans.

Figure 2

Issues of Most Importance to U.S. Hispanics

Next, please tell me which of the following issues is most important to you --

	U.S. Hispanics	Hispanic registered voters
	%	%
Healthcare	20	21
Unemployment	20	19
Immigration policies	20	12
Economic growth	17	17
The gap between the rich and poor	11	16
The federal budget deficit	7	11
Other (vol.)	1	1
No opinion	5	4
	101%	101%

(vol.) = Volunteered response

Gallup Daily tracking, April 16-May 31, 2012

Totals add to more than 100% due to rounding.

GALLUP®

Figure 2. Issues Most Important To Hispanics, Washington D.C. (2012). Note: Lydia Saad, 2013.

Although Immigration Reform was a hot topic, to registered Hispanic voters however, it is of secondary importance to the bigger issues. As figure 2 describes, the most important issues to Hispanics in the 2012 Election weren't all that different from the general public's important issues.

For Hispanic voters, according to the national exit poll, 60% identified the economy as the most important issue (of four listed) facing the country today, virtually the same as the share (59%) of the general electorate that identified the economy as the nation's most important issue. On the other three issues asked about, for Hispanic voters, the economy was followed by health care (18%), the federal budget deficit (11%) and foreign policy (6%). Like most Americans, Hispanics were interested in the economy so that they could have the jobs that they need to pay the bills and provide for their families. [

Based on the poll above, only 12% of Hispanics listed immigration while half listed health care, the economy, and jobs — all areas where they have become solidly allied with Democrats. A survey by the Pew Hispanic Center indicates that 75 percent of Latinos favor big-government solutions over limited government by supporting higher taxes and more government benefits (Clarion Ledger). The second issue was whether or not they could afford the costs of quality health care, which was also important because many Hispanic Americans are uninsured. The third and fourth issues are obviously not as important because the budget deficit and foreign policy do not directly affect Hispanics much the same way.

Social Issues

According to 2003 Political Quarterly study by Malcom Coffin, he found that although Hispanics were economic liberals they were socially conservative. At that time 58% of Hispanics believed abortion was wrong, 10% more than whites and blacks. However, he went on the find, significantly, that Hispanics did not vote on family values (Political Quarterly). Although social issues tend not to be the crucial elements of why Hispanics vote the way that they do, Hispanics still had something to say. On abortion, Hispanics hold a more conservative view than the general U.S. public—currently half (51%) of Hispanics say it should be illegal in most or all cases, compared with 41% of the general public (Passel).

Figure 3

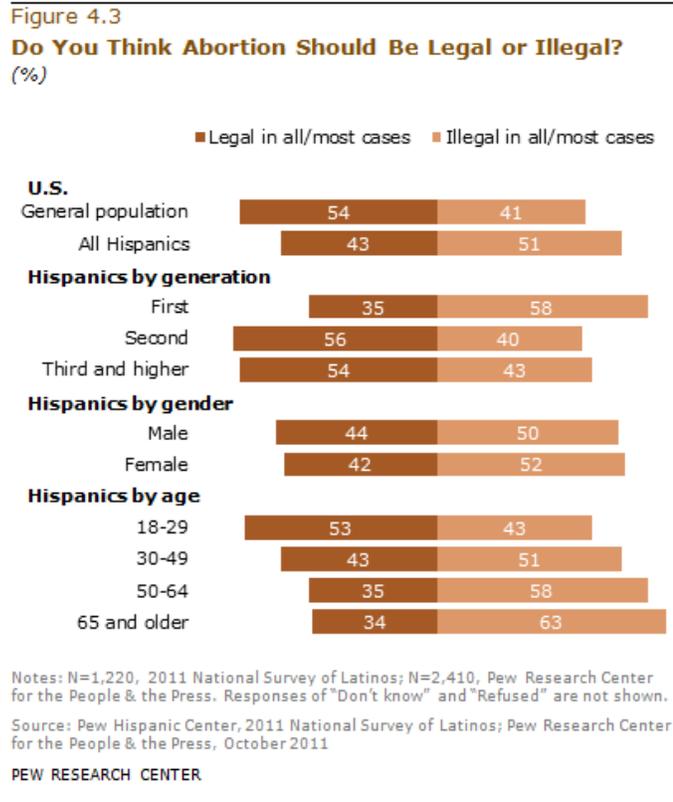
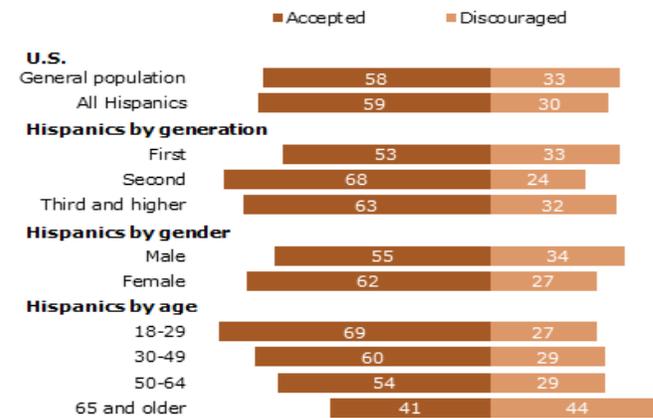


Figure 3. Issues Most Important To Hispanics, Washington D.C. (2013). Note: Jessica Martinez, 2013.

According to a 2011 Pew study, (Figure 4), however, virtually identical shares of Hispanics (59%) and the general public (58%) say homosexuality should be accepted by society.

Figure 4

Figure 4.4
Should Homosexuality Be Accepted or Discouraged by Society?
 (%)



Notes: N=1,220, 2011 National Survey of Latinos; N=3,029, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Responses of "Neither/Both Equally," "Don't know" and "Refused" are not shown.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, 2011 National Survey of Latinos; Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, March 2011

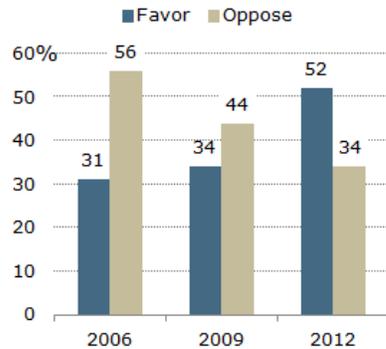
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 4. Issues Most Important To Hispanics, Washington D.C. (2013). Note: Jessica Martinez, 2013.

In figure 5, after the Democrat shift on this issue Pew finds: "More Latinos Now Favor Gay Marriage Than Oppose", by a 52-34 margin.

Figure 5

Half of Hispanics Now in Favor of Legal Marriage for Gays and Lesbians



Source: Pew Hispanic Center, 2012 National Survey of Latinos, QN47b. Pew Hispanic Center 2006 National Survey of Latinos and 2009 National Survey of Latinos.

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From these data, it becomes clear that Hispanics are no longer particularly socially conservative. Hispanics are mostly Catholic, not evangelical Protestants. As Hispanics integrate, they integrate towards socially dominant liberal values. About 53% of Hispanic births in 2011 were out of wedlock, hardly the epitome of family values (cdv.gov). Pew Research Center concludes:

Hispanics have often been characterized as more socially conservative than most Americans. On some issues, such as abortion, that's true. But on others, such as the acceptance of homosexuality, it is not. When it comes to their own assessments of their political views, Hispanics, more so than the general public, say their views are liberal. (Passel)

As economist Tino Sanandaji bluntly puts it: "Remember, just because a group is church-going doesn't mean they are Republican. African-Americans are the most church-going demographic in the United States and tend to vote overwhelmingly Democrat. The long tradition of Catholics-liberalism is well alive in the Hispanic

community” (Super-economy).

Many Americans have socially conservative beliefs because they are brought up in a church-going family. This is especially true for white evangelicals. However, this is not the case amongst predominately Catholic church-going Hispanics.

According to another Pew study, 54% of Hispanics say that they attend religious services at least once or twice a month (Pew Forum). Among this group, only half (29% of Hispanics overall) say that clergy in their church or place of worship speak out about abortion (54%) and only (38%) on homosexuality. However, these percentages were slightly higher amongst Evangelical Hispanics.

Hispanics and Religion

Amongst Hispanics, church attendance does not translate into voting Republican. According to another Pew study, three-quarters of Hispanic Catholics and eight-in-ten religiously unaffiliated Hispanics support President Barack Obama’s re-election. This while Hispanic Evangelical Protestants, who account for 16% of registered Hispanic voters, supported President Obama by a 50% margin compared to Gov. Romney’s 39% (Pew). The Report had this to say about Catholics:

Hispanic Catholics who are registered to vote look very much like the Hispanic population overall, with nearly three-quarters supporting Obama (73%) and about one-in-five supporting Romney (19%). White, non-Hispanic Catholics are much more evenly divided, with 47% in favor of Obama and 46% in favor of Romney (as of mid-September). Hispanics who are not affiliated with a religion also are strongly in favor of Obama (82% Obama vs. 7% Romney). Among the religiously unaffiliated in the U.S. general public,

roughly two-thirds favor Obama.

Figure 6

Latino Catholic Registered Voters Strongly Favor Obama; Evangelical Protestants Are More Divided

	Obama/ lean Obama	Romney/ lean Romney	N
	%	%	
All Latino RVs	69	21	903
Catholic	73	19	401
Protestant	55	33	291
Evangelical	50	39	204
Unaffiliated	82	7	150
<i>Attend worship services...</i>			
Weekly or more	61	28	361
Monthly/Yearly	73	19	313
Seldom/Never	76	13	221
U.S. general public RVs	51	42	2,424
Catholic	54	39	541
White Catholic	47	46	435
Protestant	43	50	1,262
White evangelical	19	74	524
Unaffiliated	65	27	381

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, 2012 National Survey of Latinos. QN13, QN14. Based on registered voters. General public figures from survey conducted Sept. 12-16, 2012, by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

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Figure 6. The Catholic "Swing" Vote, Washington D.C. (2013). Note: Pew, 2013.

We see from figure 6 that party affiliation does not look all that different than do percentages supporting President Obama. Hispanic registered voters also share a strong affinity with the Democratic Party in their political identification. The numbers indicate that 70% of Hispanics identify with or lean towards the Democratic Party while only 22% said that they identify with or lean towards the

Republican Party. Pew indicates that Hispanic affinity has since grown from 2004 when the percentage used to be 55% in support of the Democratic Party. Obviously Hispanics' voting behavior is directly affected by how they identify, regardless of whether the party they vote for espouses their beliefs.

Figure 7

Party Affiliation

Among registered voters

	Dem/ lean Dem	Rep/ lean Rep	N
	%	%	
All Latino RVs	70	22	903
Catholic	71	21	401
Protestant	56	31	291
Evangelical	52	36	204
Unaffiliated	81	10	150
<i>Attend worship services...</i>			
Weekly or more	63	26	361
Monthly/Yearly	75	22	313
Seldom/Never	73	14	221
U.S. general public RVs	51	42	2,424
Catholic	52	41	541
White Catholic	47	46	435
Protestant	45	50	1,262
White evangelical	23	72	524
Unaffiliated	64	29	381

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, 2012 National Survey of Latinos. QN61, QN62. Based on registered voters. General public figures from survey conducted Sept. 12-16, 2012, by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

The survey of Hispanics asked, "In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?" Those not identifying as Democrats or Republicans were then asked "Do you consider yourself closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?"

The survey of the general public asked, "In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?" Those not identifying as Democrats or Republicans were then asked, "As of today, do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?"

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By comparison, figure 7 shows that Hispanic Catholics are much less divided in their partisanship than are white Catholics. White Hispanics identified with the Democratic Party by 47% while with the Republican Party 46%. White Evangelicals

lean toward the Republican Party by a 72% margin compared to 36% of Hispanic evangelicals. The Hispanics affinity with the Democratic Party has more to do with culture than religion.

Big Government or Small Government?

In an exit poll in 2008, Hispanics were asked: “Which comes closer to your view, ‘Government should do more to solve problems’ or ‘Government is doing too many things better left to businesses?’” This question strongly predicts voting for Democrats: three quarters of those who wanted bigger government logically voted for Barack Obama.

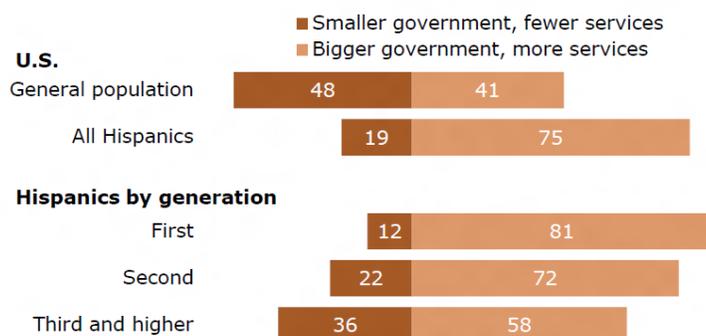
I also looked at the micro-data to compare Hispanics with Whites. Among Whites voters only a minority supported expanding government even in the 2008 environment. That year 45% of White voters believed “Government Should Do More” and 55 % believed “Government is Doing Too Much”. Among Hispanics by contrast it was 71-29 in favor of bigger government. This fundamental outlook on the role of government is unlikely to vanish because of any Republican shifts on immigration policy. Pew-Hispanic surveys Hispanics about their policy preferences using slightly different wording. In 2011 they asked: “Would you rather pay higher taxes to support a larger government or pay lower taxes and have a smaller government?”

Figure 8

Figure 4.2

Would You Rather Have a Smaller Government Providing Fewer Services or a Bigger Government Providing More Services?

(%)



Notes: N=1,220, 2011 National Survey of Latinos; N=2,410, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Responses of "Depends," "Don't know" and "Refused" are not shown.

Figure 8. Issues Most Important To Hispanics, Washington D.C. (2013). Note: Jessica Martinez, 2013.

Of great electoral importance, Figure 8 shows that Hispanics chose bigger government to an alarming 75%-19% margin.

Food Stamps

The United States has faced economic lulls since the President's installment into office, top advisor to the Obama Administration, Rahm Emmanuel has said, "You never want let a serious crisis go to waste. What I mean by that is an opportunity to do things that you think you could not do before" (*Wall Street Journal*). Ever since then, President Obama has made it easier for Americans to receive food stamps. According to Forbes contributor, Charles Kadlec, there have been an increase of 18 million people, to 46 million Americans now receiving food stamps, a 122% increase in food stamp spending to an estimated \$89 billion this year from \$40 billion in 2008 (Forbes).

According to an article by Investors, the United States Drug Administration and the government of Mexico have entered a partnership to help educate eligible Mexican nationals living in the United States about available nutrition assistance," the USDA explained in a paragraph on its "Reaching Low-Income Hispanics With Nutrition Assistance" Web page. It announced that that the "promotion of the food stamp program, now known as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), includes a Spanish-language flier provided to the Mexican Embassy by the USDA." Thus, USDA gives those contemplating illegally crossing the border even more incentive to do so.

Education

The issues of education and immigration are actually inherently intertwined, because as many naturalized citizens who are students with illegal parents will face difficulties in life that are outside the realm of their control. According to a Pew Hispanic Center study, it suggests several reasons why Hispanics do not attend college. Specifically, the findings suggest several factors contributing to this divide between aspirations and reality, including language barriers, parents' abilities to play an active role in education, and students' desires to help support their families (Toppo).

An Introduction of Fantasy Themes Analysis

The next part of the Literature Review will provide a synopsis of Fantasy Themes so that this method, once understood, can serve as the lens to which the research will be applied. The method itself will be explained in the Literature Review, while how it will be applied will be discussed in the Methodology. Finally it

will be applied in the Results section.

Fantasy Theme Analysis

This study will apply the Fantasy Themes Analysis (FTA) to an examination of Hispanic voting conduct, as it provides an excellent lens through which to investigate what the Hispanics Republicans of Texas understand about the political landscape of Texas and the U.S. Furthermore, it will render a clearer perspective as to what can be understood about how Texas Hispanics vote.

Ernest G. Bormann was a Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Minnesota. Bormann's work on Fantasy Theme Analysis and Symbolic Convergence Theory has inspired scholars in the fields of history, philosophy, English, and speech communication. Bormann's interest in small group communication led him to discover a key element in the development of subcultures. This study seeks to apply this rich theoretical foundation for the analysis of the Hispanic vote in American elections over the past 12 years.

Bormann's idea of Fantasy Themes Analysis was spawned during a seminar he and some of his colleagues attended in 1959. Bormann then published their findings in 1969 in the book *Discussion and Group Methods: Theory and Practice*. Bormann later went on to expound upon his research in *the Quarterly Journal of Speech* in 1972, with an article entitled "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality." This article later received the Charles H. Woolbert Research Award in 1983, while launching a series of studies and publications that formed a body of scholarship that built the rhetorical method of fantasy theme analysis and grounded the general communication theory, Symbolic

Convergence Theory (SCT). The SCT bibliography now exceeds 1,000 original studies (Bormann). In 1985, Bormann published his book, *The Force of Fantasy, Restoring the American Dream*.

The method I plan to utilize to understand and analyze my interviews with Hispanic elected officials is Fantasy Theme Analysis (FTA). It is an application of Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT). This theory explains that people create reality through communication and that groups create a unified reality through communication. Although the theory has Freudian roots, it is primarily based on small group research performed by two scholars, Robert Bales at Harvard and Ernest G. Bormann at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities (Bormann). This research dealt initially with how small groups create group realities.

More specifically, SCT is a “humanistic approach to the rhetorical criticism of human communication” (Force 3) and forms the vertebrae of FTA. The primary difference necessary to understand SCT outlined by Bormann is the distinction between general and specific theories, in which special theories are “artistic formulations that [. . .] relate only to the communication practices” within a restricted culture to which it can be applied. A general theory, contrarily, is universally applicable to “the entire process of communication, practice, criticism, and special theory as the object of analysis.” SCT is a general theory, one that is commonly adaptable (Force 4).

How FTA and SCT change over time from the field of small group research to application on a large scale to an entire national rhetorical movement and several party-wide (e.g. GOP, Democrat) political campaigns is explained by Bormann in his

essay, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision:" Initially Bormann pointed to Bales' research on small groups at Harvard as the prime example to understanding his own small group research he was performing at the University of Minnesota. Later, however, Bormann distances himself from Bales and acknowledges that their individual research went down different paths (Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: Ten Years Later" 290-291).

The discovery Bales made, published in 1970, was "the dynamic process of group fantasizing" (Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision). These happenings of group fantasizing occur not only in small group situations, Bormann argue, but "also in larger groups hearing a public speech" (398). The primary purpose of performing a FTA, according to Bormann, is to find evidence that symbolic convergence has taken place. The following clues ought to be looked for to verify the presence that symbolic convergence has occurred.

First, "similar dramatizing material" (i.e., wordplay, narratives, figures, and analogies) could provide evidence that symbolic convergence has taken place. Cryptic allusions to symbolic common ground could also serve as clue; this is commonly identified as the "inside-joke phenomenon." The allusion does not need to be an inside joke, but could be a word, phrase, or non-verbal clue that "may arouse tears or evoke anger, hatred, love, and affection, as well as laughter and humor" (Bormann, Force 6). Presence of such triggers inside the discourse, that is, the text to be examined are clear evidence that fantasy theme sharing has occurred. In *A Fantasy Theme Analysis Of The Television Coverage Of The Hostage Release And The Reagan Inaugural*, Bormann notes that,

Conservative rhetors can usually rely on established heroes. Their task is to blow on the old coals and start the fires anew. The conservative persuasive speech can succeed by telling the people what they already know and believe. The conservative need only make a judicious selection of old heroes and remind the audience of their virtues and good actions (Boreman, 141)

Thus the scholar who wants to reconstruct the consciousness embodied in the sharing of rhetorical fantasies will need to depend heavily on the messages created in the fantasies. And thus it is that this study becomes a classic communication study, as it closely examines message content. On Bormann's official website (<http://www.vayne.com//bormann.us>), he provides a brief explanation of Fantasy Themes Analysis:

It takes the shared fantasies of a group of people, perhaps the audience for a business presentation or a public speech, and examines them for inside jokes and other cues to a shared consciousness. The criticism can then describe and evaluate the consciousness of the group to determine its heroes and villains, its hopes and fears, how the group members deal with things such as violence or acts of kindness, and such other events within and outside the community.

In a Fantasy Theme Analysis of Political Cartoons of The Clinton-Lewinski-Starr Affair, Benoit asserts that in a negative vision, there are no real heroes, only villains (or fools) (Benoit 384).

Bormann expounds on this concept further in "Symbolic Convergence Theory: A Communication Formation" (1985) and *The Force of Fantasy: Restoring*

the American Dream (1985). It is not, however, necessary to go in greater detail of Symbolic Convergence Theory, because it would only overlap with Fantasy Themes Analysis. In this article, he explains that there are different psychological processes of being caught in a fantasy. Bormann states,

The narrative form includes good and bad characters in a sequence of interrelated incidents. If one or more of the leading characters is found attractive, the result is the arousal of at least sympathy or, if more strongly pulled, empathy. This emotional investment in a leading character leads to involvement in the story line. Those who thwart the protagonist's efforts to achieve laudable goals evoke in the sympathetic participant unpleasant emotional responses and dislike." (Bormann 130)

In layman's terms, Bormann explains that the circumstances the character is involved in may lead one to have either positive or negative feelings toward that character. It more or less depends on how one interprets the character in the particular context.

In *The Force of Fantasy*, Bormann has more to say on the Fantasy Themes: Rhetorical fantasies may include fanciful and fictitious scripts of imaginary characters, but they often deal with things that have actually happened to members of the community or that are reported in authenticated works of history, in the news media, or in the oral history and folklore of the group. The content of the dramatizing message that sparks the fantasy chain is called a fantasy theme (Bormann 5).

Thus it has been established that fantasy types emerge from fantasy sharing, and fantasy types lead to the emergence of rhetorical visions. “Rhetorical visions are often integrated by the sharing of a dramatizing message that contains a master analogy,” writes Bormann. Generally the master analogy is pulled together through a slogan or key word. Some of the recent rhetorical visions in American history include the New Deal, Black Power, and The Moral Majority (8). A rhetorical community emerges from such rhetorical visions and membership is often quite formalized. Formalization would take place for members of the rhetorical vision of Born Again Christians through baptism and for members of China’s Communist Party through carrying a card.

In still another article, Bormann built upon the work of Robert Bales, as he classified the dramas that caught up large groups in symbolic reality as “rhetorical visions” (398). Thus a rhetorical vision is “constructed from fantasy themes that chain out in face-to-face interacting groups, in speaker-audience transactions, in viewers of television broadcasts, in listeners to radio program, and in all the diverse settings from public and intimate communication in a given society” (398). Bormann further proposes that this type of vision surfaces in that typical plot lines can be alluded to in all communication contexts and spark a response reminiscent of the original emotion chaining, known as the *dramatis personae* (398).

Bormann explains that for this to happen, subsystems are developed. He outlines these steps as following:

1. Small groups of people similar individual psychodynamics meet to discuss a common preoccupation or problem.

2. A member dramatizes a theme that catches the group and causes it to chain out because it hits a common psychodynamic chord or a hidden agenda item or their common difficulties vis-à-vis the natural environment, to social-political systems, or the economic structures.
3. The group grows excited, involved, more dramas chain out to create a common symbolic reality filled with heroes and villains.
4. If the group's fantasy themes contain motives to "go public" and gain converts to their position they often begin artistically to create messages for the mass media for public speeches and so forth.
5. When they need to develop a message for a specific context they often find themselves shaping the drama that excited them in their original discussions into a suitable form for a different public.
6. Some of the dramas of their public rhetoric now catch members of the audience in the situation, which Bales called, "individual responses to works of art, when one is 'transported' to a world which seems somehow even more real than the everyday world."
7. Those so transported take up the dramas in small groups of acquaintances, and some of these derivative dramas again chain out as fantasy themes in the new groups; thus the rhetorical vision is propagated to a larger public until a rhetorical movement emerges (399).

In 1982 Bormann had an open debate with J.P. Mohrmann in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. Mohrmann advocated that the FTA should be abolished.

However, he was displeased with the dialogue because the response to his essay

nearly glorified FTA, but did not respond to many of his grievances. His primary complaints dealt with the historical premise of SCT. Bales' thought was Freudian, but he rejected this on the basis of small thought as the basis of his work on studying fantasy chaining in small groups. Mohrmann made this complaint:

It is one thing to acknowledge fantasy chains and their functions in the histories of groups, but it is quite another matter to argue that the fantasy chain is a quintessential symptom of symbolic processes obtaining in all forms of communication, still another to argue concomitantly that to understand the phenomenon in the small group is to establish a purchase throughout the realm of symbolic transactions. Wanting to an acceptable rationale, those claims border on the magniloquent. (308)

Mohrmann obviously did not agree with the work of Robert Bales.

Bormann dismissed Mohrmann's critiques in a 1982 essay. Bormann himself summarily dismisses,

The most important criticism of FTA during the 1978 SCA Seminar was not provided by Mohrmann's long attack on Bales and Freud nor by his quest for more evidence connecting small group processes with other communicative contexts nor his charge that sharing fantasies does not motivate action.

Rather, it was Hart, who was in overall sympathy with the approach, who raised the most cogent questions. ("Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: Ten Years Later 293)

Bormann's response to Mohrmann critiques his diction and clarity and offers a measured response to each of Mohrmann's claims (302-305).

The fight between Mohrmann and Bormann is summarized by Charles E. Williams. He makes it fairly clear that the 1982 QJS debate had turned mostly into two persons arguing their own perspectives. His literature review quotes Farrell, saying that: FTA has made “real and significant contribution to the critical literature” by succeeding in “its stated aim of grouping together aspects of discourse and social reality that might otherwise have been overlooked.” (4)

However, Williams’ main goal is to outline how one performs a FTA. This article will be crucial and very helpful in performing a FTA on the Castro and Gonzales interviews. This article, in conjunction with Bormann’s seminal book-length application of FTA, will serve as apt guides to utilize this method of rhetorical criticism. William’s article will be discussed further in the methodology chapter. This author will use this theory based on his own perceptions of its ability to explain how *why Hispanics typically vote Democratic*.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Texas' and America's electoral demographics are rapidly changing. Thus there is no better time than now to study the views this diverse electorate holds. Their race, religion, and socio-economic background all affect how they understand politics. These variables are indicative of ultimately how they will vote and how the government is thus affected by the way in which they choose to vote. A political scientist would seek to poll the citizenry to gauge how they would vote. As a communication scholar, the purpose of this study will be to apply Eric Bormann's Fantasy Theme Analysis, seeking to answer three research questions. 1.) Since 2008, how do Hispanics vote? 2.) What do Hispanics consider the most important political issues? 3.) How has the emergence of the Hispanic Republicans of Texas affected the political landscape in Texas and national politics?

Sources and Method

The qualitative study will utilize a narrative strategy of inquiry. According to John A. Creswell's *Research Design*, first the researcher gathers data primarily through documents, which for the purpose of this study will be online journals or hard news sources, as well as interviews with Republican Texas State Representative Larry Gonzalez and Democratic Mayor Julian Castro. One Republican and one Democrat were purposely chosen to get fair and balanced answers. The analysis and interpretation of the data will involve making sense out of the data. Next will be to advance how the description and themes will be represented in qualitative narrative. The last step involves making an interpretation of the meaning (Creswell, pg. 188).

The purpose of the interviews, as Michael Quinn Patton states, “is to allow us to enter in the other person’s perspective (Qualitative Research & Evaluations Methods, p.341). Furthermore, as he explains, “the quality of the information obtained during the interview is largely dependent on the interviewer.” (341). The format of the interview will be the Standardized Open-Ended. The questions can be found in the Appendix A portion of this paper. As Patton details, each question will be carefully worded, and thought through before the interview with Representative Gonzales. However, the interview with Castro was done by Philip Rucker and Dan Balz of the Washington Post. The reason for selecting an interview already published is that due to the nature of my work with Republican Gubernatorial candidate Greg Abbott, it was difficult to find a Democratic elected official to speak with me. Rucker and Balz posed questions quite similar and are thus perfect for this thesis, however it should be duly noted that the interview has been edited and I do not have the raw transcript of this interview. Both interviews together provide a fair and balanced approach, one Republican and one Democrat, to gain a more thorough perspective of Hispanic voting behavior.

The method used to understand the data in my research on Hispanic beliefs and Hispanic voting behavior in this thesis is Fantasy Theme Analysis, developed by Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota, Ernest G. Bormann. This method is useful for explaining the origins and nature of social movements. In the first book to use the rhetorical critical method of fantasy theme analysis, *The Force of Fantasy: Restoring the American Dream*, the method is explained and then applied to religious

persuasive communication from the Puritans of the late 16th century through the time of President Reagan. In this thesis the same method will be applied to the data.

The steps necessary to perform a FTA are laid out by Bormann, in brief, in his essay "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision," and his book *The Force of Fantasy*. Bormann's essay lays out a five-step process. First, the critic must collect evidence that points to the existence of a rhetorical vision. Once evidence has been collected the scholar's job begins, step two's task is to discover and describe the narrative that chained out. When the narrative has been discovered the scholar-critic is then able to examine the narrative for patterns of characterizations and settings. With the narrative and patterns have been established the rhetorical vision must be creatively reconstructed. Finally, specific questions must be asked in relation to the elements of the dramas found in the texts studied. The results will be discussed by answering these questions. These five steps are outlined more fully below.

1.) Collect Evidence

This crucial step involves discovering and selecting the text or texts to be used as evidence of the rhetorical vision and subsequent analysis. For any FTA this evidence can be video, audio, manuscripts, recollection of participants, or the researcher's direct observations.

The researcher will extract the data from two interviews. Texas State Representatives Larry Gonzalez and San Antonio Major Julian Castro will provide valuable insight. Doing this will provide valuable information about the direction of HRT, as well as direct insights on their beliefs, and which will better guide my research. Questions will be constructed based on the questionnaire found in the

Appendix section in order to gain thorough and fair and balanced perspective from members of both the Democratic and Republican Party.

The data collected will tell a story which I will analyze through narrative inquiry. The main concept that will be used is Rhetorical Vision, which will reveal a primary narrative of key interest to this study. Throughout the data collection and analysis process, the researcher will look for fantasy themes common throughout the data to find fantasy themes HRT members hold about Texas Hispanics. This is important because when the Fantasy Theme Analysis lens is applied to the data, it will shed light on truths about Texas Hispanics voting mechanisms.

Access to the representatives that will be studied will be vitally important to the integrity of the story or narrative revealed by the data. This researcher possesses the additional advantage of college experience studying political science, which results in an Advocacy/ Participatory approach to research, meaning a goal is to bring about positive. It is not a neutral stance.

Since the elected officials are careful to whom they give out information, the researcher will be quite careful to assure them that the information that is extracted from the interviews is designed to raise awareness on the interests of Hispanics, an important and valuable voting block in the upcoming election. They will also be made to understand that no person will ever be named or identified. The interview will be conducted over the phone and with Gonzales' permission, recorded so that there is a transcript to analyze. The results of the interviews will not be reported unless I have permission of the HRT personnel.

Once all the data are collected, organized, and prepared for analysis through

narrative inquiry, the next step will be to sift through the data by applying the Fantasy Theme Analysis so the data can be interpreted in accordance with that method of analysis.

2.) Discover and Describe the Narrative that Chained Out

Narratives in the speeches chosen showed themselves to be easily identifiable. The villains, generally Republicans, and heroes, generally the Democrats, are clearly recognizable, as explained in Chapter 4, Analysis. Although Hispanic beliefs are more in tune with Republicans, Hispanics vote in large numbers for Democrats.

3.) Look for Patterns of Characterizations and of Setting

The characterizations and settings are generally at sites of Republican or Democratic construction, with characterizations portraying all of Republicans as the proverbial bad guys.

4.) Creatively Reconstruct the Rhetorical Vision

Two visions are created in this thesis, the vision of “US Hispanic voting behavior and beliefs” and “Texas Hispanic voting behavior and beliefs.”

5.) Ask Specific Questions Relating to the Elements of the Dramas

Questions adapted from Bormann’s work included in this thesis are: Who are the dramatis personae? How does the fantasy theme work to attract the unconverted? Who are the heroes and the villains? And, How are the members of the rhetorical community characterized?

There are several more questions, but Bormann writes, “A critic need not, of course, raise all of such questions for a given piece of criticism but for some in-depth

critiques of a single message the critic might ask more questions and search for more details" (402).

Chapter 4: Analysis

Gonzales' Biography

Republican Texas State Representative Larry Gonzales, of Mexican descent, was interviewed on matters pertinent to this thesis. Larry Gonzales has dedicated his entire professional career to making Texas a better place to live, work and raise a family. A strong conservative, his extensive legislative experience and knowledge of the issues facing Texas has made him an effective leader for the citizens of Williamson County. Gonzales is a 16-year resident of Texas House District 52 and a seasoned veteran of the Texas Legislature. Prior to being elected to serve, Larry worked nine regular legislative sessions as senior staff for members of the Texas House, the Lt. Governor and Attorney General. He also served as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations for the Texas State University System (TSUS).

In addition to all this, Rep. Gonzales is the owner of a graphic design and communications company. He is a 1993 graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a B.A. in Government and has completed 30 hours towards his Master's in Public Administration (MPA) at Texas State University. He is active in the Round Rock Chamber of Commerce (member of the Government Affairs Committee) and is a certified mediator. Rep. Gonzales was raised in Alvin, Texas, where his parents have served as pastors for over 25 years and as Chaplains for the Alvin Police Department for 6 years. He and his wife of 17 years, Marie, herself a 1990 graduate of Round Rock High School, have resided together in Round Rock since 1996, where she is employed by the Round Rock ISD (RRISD) serving as Department Chair of

Special Education at McNeil High School. Their two young children, ages 12 and 10, are enrolled in the RRISD.

Gonzales explained the key to understanding the stakes of the demographic changes taking place in Texas. “The demographics in Texas are changing to a predominately Hispanic state. Even now if all Hispanics were registered to vote then Texas would already be a blue state.” The ramifications of this in effect are drastic for the rest of the country. If Texas were to turn blue and the 38 Electoral College votes were lost to the Democratic Presidential Candidate, then it is safe to say that the Republican Party would never win a presidential election again. The Republican Party needs Texas.

Gonzales was asked a series of questions so that his perspective could be heard. Initially the hypothesis of this thesis presumed that Hispanics were Republicans, but the only issue holding them back was immigration. If only the Republicans could change their stance on fixing the illegal immigration problem by giving illegal Hispanics a pathway to citizenship then they could win the hearts of Hispanic voters. In any line of research, the researcher has to be open to findings that dissuade him or her from the initial hypothesis. That is exactly what happened with this proposal. Although Immigration Reform is still a necessary and prominent topic in Washington, the research in the Literature Review has indicated that Immigration Reform is not as important to Hispanics as the economy, healthcare, and jobs. For the Analysis section, the research will delve into why this is the case in order to answer the Research Questions.

As covered in the methodology section this chapter will follow a four-step process of analyzing Hispanic beliefs. The first step of analysis is to discover and describe the narrative that chained out. Second, look for patterns of characterization and of setting. Third, reconstruct the rhetorical vision, and finally, ask and answer specific questions relating to the elements of the dramas.

The questions that will be answered in the final and fourth step of this chapter are the following, adapted from Bormann's essay "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality": Who are the *dramatis personae*? How does the fantasy theme work to attract the unconverted? Who are the heroes and the villains? How are the members of the rhetorical community characterized? (402). However, before this methodology can begin a historical summary will be provided to set the context for the speech analyzed in this chapter.

Interview with Gonzales

1) Discover and Describe the Narrative that Chained Out

First, the narrative that constitutes the substance of the fantasy theme must be established. "The scholar's main task," writes Bormann, "in making a fantasy theme analysis is to find evidence that symbolic convergence has taken place" (Force 6). The evidence of fantasy theme analysis may be wordplay, narratives, figures, and analogies, which occur repetitively. These evidences are "similar dramatizing material." This step sets the groundwork for the remainder of the application of fantasy theme analysis.

Bormann writes that in order for dramatizing messages to be considered part of a fantasy theme analysis and constitute symbolic convergence the event

must have happened in the past or be occurring in the future. The present cannot account for symbolic convergence. The narratives, or dramatizing material, in fantasy theme analysis represent, “creative and imaginative interpretation of events that [fulfill] a psychological or rhetorical need (Force 5).

Gonzales was interviewed over the phone. He was in his office, and I was in mine. Representative Gonzales was asked, “Are most Hispanics predominately liberal, moderate or conservative these days?” He stated, “I believe that most Hispanics tend to be conservative. Clearly the Hispanic populations continue to vote more on the liberal side on the elections, but overall the overreaching thread is that they tend to be conservative.” In spite of the way the elections have turned out in the past, Gonzales echoes the sentiment of many Republicans and members of HRT by affirming that Hispanics are conservative in spite of the Hispanic turnout in past elections.

Regardless of whether Hispanics are truly conservative, the fact remains that many prominent Republicans, members of HRT, as well as Representative Gonzales believe that they are (telephone interview). Thus symbolic convergence is evident in his response.

Gonzales was next asked, “What political issues are most important issues to Hispanics today? He responded,

The single most important issue is education. That’s true of a lot of people. That’s not necessarily Hispanics specific. I think that is the correct answer for the Hispanic community. Access to education, affordable education, public ed., higher ed.—all of those things lead to what the real concern is,

opportunity for success. And I don't think that's different from any other demographic. That's the beauty of this topic. I don't think that it's specific to a race, an ethnicity, or a group of people. But Hispanics like so many others simply want their kids to have an opportunity, their kids to be more successful than they were, and this is particularly true of the minority communities when maybe they don't have one, two, three or four generations of college degrees; or four generations of family success. In large part, they (Hispanic students) would be first generation to graduate high school or attend college. All of it, whether it's job training, career development, any way you would wish to define success, I believe it all starts with educational opportunities that we as a state put in place.

The notion that education was the single most important issues is another example of symbolic convergence, because many Republicans, including HRT President George P. Bush hold to the notion that education is of primary importance. Although the Pew Reports in the Literature Review cited the economy, jobs, and health care as the most important issues, perhaps the Hispanics in these studies were never asked about education.

If Gonzales and Republicans believe education is the single most important issue to Hispanics, then this may be rooted in a conservative belief of self-help versus the liberal belief of receiving help from the government. Education will inherently help Hispanics long-term, as it would any demographic, but the Pew Reports indicated that Education is not as urgent to Hispanics as health care, jobs, and the economy. This may explain why the Pew Reports had little to say about the

matter. In any case, Gonzales and the Republicans still believe that education is of primary importance in the long run.

The issue of universal health care was also raised. Gonzales was asked, “Do Hispanics favor or oppose Obamacare?” He stated,

Overwhelmingly, from what I see, from what I read, and from I know to be anecdotally true, they favor. This was tough for me because I believe Obamacare, the way it’s set up, is going to be absolutely a colossal failure for our country. It doesn’t mean, however, that I don’t realize that a lot of people support it. The Hispanics understand that this is an opportunity for health care that they may not have access to, even if they’re working in some lower wage jobs.

This is the biggest of all government handouts. It will trump every other entitlement program. This is the grand daddy of them all. Let’s face it. The electorate likes when they are given things. A lot of Hispanics are going to end up favoring the opportunity to have health care. It will, in my opinion, be devastating to our economy, devastating to our health care system, to the delivery of the health care system, to those that provide the health care, and I think that it has tremendous downside to everyone in America. But if it’s free or affordable, to a vast majority of people, they will want it. And therein lies the problem we have as conservatives, especially with a population that we are trying to talk to. It’s hard to overcome their favor of free healthcare. This will be an obstacle going forward.

As plainly stated, Gonzales does not dismiss the fact that the vast majority of

Hispanics want Obamacare. He recognizes that Obamacare is here to stay, and he also recognizes that many Conservatives are on the wrong side of this issue if they want to win the Hispanic's vote. This is a reality that Conservatives will have to deal with in moving forward.

2.) Discover and Describe the Narrative that Chained Out

Gonzales was next asked, "Do Hispanics favor big government or limited government?" He stated,

Like many people who are on the receiving end of things, they favor big government. If you are on the side that has to pay for those things, you are not in favor of big government. It's pretty simple. This is human nature 101. If you're getting stuff, you love it; if you're giving stuff, you don't. The question then points to, Are most² Hispanics giving or receiving? More Hispanics are receiving. If you follow that line of reasoning then most Hispanics favor big government.

To the majority of Hispanics, the heroes are the Democrats (proponents of big government) who thus meet their material wants and needs.

3) Look for Patterns of Characterization and Setting

Second, after the narratives of the fantasy theme have been described, patterns of characterization, including those in the categories of "hero" and "villain," must be identified.

Representative Gonzales asked, "Will more Hispanic Candidates translate into more Hispanics checking the box for Republicans?" He responded,

² By most he means more than 50%. He doesn't want to dismiss the people with an Hispanic surname who favor limited government. He explained that there are so many different types of Hispanics from all over the world that it might be hard to pinpoint the accuracy of these statements.

If that Hispanic Republican candidate is the best candidate, I think that Hispanic Democrats vote for the last name. I don't think the Hispanic Republicans are as quick to vote for just the surname. I did very well in the Hispanic Community. I do very well the Democratic Hispanics. What I believe is that I'm the best candidate. I believe who I am transcends my Hispanic surname. I believe they vote for me because I'm me. I believe the 65-year-old white farmer from Rural 52 votes for me because I'm me. There need to be a lot more Hispanic Elected Officials. There should be 20 of me in the House. Not three. We need that. But just running a Hispanic candidate is not good enough. Because when you run a poor candidate, with a Hispanic surname, they can set us back. I've met a few of those, who wanted to run for public office, with a Hispanic surname, but would have been a terrible candidate. We need more Hispanic candidates, but not just any Hispanic with a Hispanic surname is going to work. They still have to be a good candidate. I think Republicans care a lot more whether the candidate is actually a good candidate versus our Democratic friends who vote for a candidate just because they have a Hispanic surname. That's undeniably true for Hispanic's Democratic candidates. If they're there, they vote for them. So the question was, Will more Hispanic Candidates result in more Hispanics checking the box for Republicans? The answer is, Yes. Assuming they are still good candidates.

As such, the way Gonzales answered the questions positions Hispanic Republicans to be the heroes. It is by way of more Hispanic elected officials that the Republican

Party can keep pace with the demographic changes in reaching out to Hispanic voters. If there are more Hispanic Republican voters, as the narrative goes, then there will be more Hispanics checking the boxes for the Republicans.

Gonzales would not go so far as to paint the Democrats as villains, as he referred to them as “friends.” Rest assured, however, that the Democrats are the not friends. The Democrats are on the offensive to turn Texas blue, and the demographic changes they believe will help them do it. They will paint Republicans as the villains, they who oppose amnesty for Hispanics who entered the country illegally, and they who are against big government handouts. Republicans are well aware of this, and they are in the fight of their life to keep the state red.

4.) Reconstruct the Rhetorical Vision

With the narratives described and the patterns of characterization discussed the fourth step, reconstructing the rhetorical vision, can be done.

Representative Gonzales was asked, “What is your vision for the Republican Party to attract more Hispanic voters?” He stated,

The Republican Party needs to get out a calculator and run some numbers. What my party will discover, if you run the numbers, we cannot exist as a Republican red state for the next ten, 15 years, if we don't do more to reach Hispanic voters. We can do lots of things. Number one, here's what we're not going to do. We're not going to pander. The Party cannot compromise the fundamental structure of our party's beliefs just to get votes. We're not going to give away or hand out things. Here's what we are going to do. We're going to focus in on the issues that are important: education and jobs. If I can

keep the party talking about education and jobs, we'll be fine. There's an old communication skill, if you and I are talking, and I know we agree on five out of 10 things, and then I'm going to talk about the things we agree on. We have to develop a relationship, a trust, a partnership, and teamwork on the things that matter. Eventually we have to talk about the things we don't agree on, but that comes after you and I have an understanding of how we're alike and why we're alike. Our party needs to focus more on the five that we agree on instead of constantly hammering on the five we don't. Ronald Reagan said, "My 80% friend isn't my 20% enemy. The wisdom of that is amazing and the party rejects that today. I don't know why. If you want elected officials who agree with you 100% of the time then you better run for office.

In an effort to keep the state red, and keep the country conservative, you may have to not focus to the two or three things that force the Hispanic community to run from our party. You do not have to do anything proactive either; you can just stop talking about a few things. Lessen the talk on the five things we don't agree on and concentrate on the five that we do. That's the big picture.

Whereas the Pew Reports in the Literature Review indicate that Hispanics disagree with Republicans on most issues, Representative Gonzales acknowledges the gap, but sums up the problem as a miscommunication. The vision he creates poses that Republicans ought to simply learn to communicate effectively, avoiding the issues they disagree on so that they can first building rapport by talking about the issues they do agree on. In other words, according to Gonzales there is a disconnect

between what Hispanics believe and the way they vote. Hispanics are more conservative than the polls would indicate, but the key is winning them with right communication on the issues they agree with Republicans on.

Gonzales also offered that there are many untapped Republican votes in the Hispanic Evangelical Churches. He stated,

I told the Chairman of the RNC when he came to Texas. If you want to be successful then you have to tap into the Evangelical Hispanic Churches. My parents have pastored a Pentecostal Church for over 25 years. Those people in the church are overwhelmingly Conservative. Everybody in that church that is eligible, votes Republican. The Evangelical Christian movement, beliefs, and morals align with us. That's where the answer is. If you want to grow this party then you go into the Evangelical church. I have 10 or 12 uncles who all pastor Pentecostal Churches, and I know that there are conservative Hispanics that will keep this state red.³

5.) Ask and Answer Specific Questions Relating to the Elements of the Dramas

Questions concerning the dramas can be asked. The dramatis personae are the Hispanics. The entire portion of the interview with Representative Gonzales was regarded as targeting Hispanics.

As for the question, "How does the fantasy theme work to attract the unconverted?" Representative Gonzales speaks of the Hispanics as voters who just haven't been converted yet, but are on the brink of such.

³ He also stated that his grandfather, Elo Martinez, was the President of Latin American Bible Institute for the 38 years, and he graduated thousands of bilingual Hispanic Pentecostal preachers who are all over the country. If you just go to the one colleges alumni book, there are thousands of votes there.

Who are the heroes and the villains? The heroes are the Republicans and the Villains are the Democrats. And, How are the members of the rhetorical community characterized? The rhetorical community is the freedom loving conservatives who understand the great importance of keeping Texas red.

Castro's biography

A 39-year-old San Antonio native, Democratic Mayor Julián Castro, of Mexican descent, is the youngest mayor of a Top 50 American city. First elected on May 9, 2009, Mayor Castro was handily re-elected to a third term in 2013.

According to Castro's website, he has focused on attracting well-paying jobs in 21st century industries, positioning San Antonio to be a leader in the New Energy Economy and raising educational attainment across the spectrum. He also stated that under his leadership, the city established Café College, a one-stop center offering high-quality guidance on college admissions, financial aid and standardized test preparation to any student in the San Antonio area. Since opening in 2010, Café College has served more than 25,000 area students. During his tenure, San Antonio ranked No. 1 on the Milken Institute's Best-Performing Cities list, graded A+ for doing business by Forbes and ranked as the nation's No. 3 new tech hotspot by Forbes.

In March 2010, Mayor Castro joined executives from Google and Twitter in being named to the World Economic Forum's list of Young Global Leaders. Later that year, Time magazine placed him on its "40 under 40" list of rising stars in American politics. Mayor Castro also is a member of the Inter-American Dialogue, an Aspen Institute-Rodel Fellow and serves on the board of the LBJ Foundation.

Mayor Castro earned his undergraduate degree from Stanford University with honors and distinction in 1996 and a Juris Doctorate from Harvard Law School in 2000. In 2001, at the age of 26, Castro became the youngest elected city councilman at that time in San Antonio history.

He is married to Erica Lira Castro, an elementary school teacher, and they are the proud parents of Carina, born in 2009. Interestingly, mayor Castro's brother, Joaquin, serves in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Interview With Castro

1) Discover and Describe the Narrative the Chained Out

First, the narrative that constitutes the substance of the fantasy theme must be established. "The scholar's main task," writes Bormann, "in making a fantasy theme analysis is to find evidence that symbolic convergence has taken place" (Force, 6). The evidence of fantasy theme analysis may be wordplay, narratives, figures, and analogies, which occur repetitively. These evidences are "similar dramatizing material." This step sets the groundwork for the remainder of the application of fantasy theme analysis.

Bormann writes that in order for dramatizing messages to be considered part of a fantasy theme analysis and constitute symbolic convergence the event must have happened in the past or be occurring in the future. The present cannot account for symbolic convergence. The narratives, or dramatizing material, in fantasy theme analysis represent, "creative and imaginative interpretation of events that [fulfill] a psychological or rhetorical need (Bormann, Force 5).

Major Castro was then asked, “What do you see happening in Texas politics right now? There’s a governor’s race coming up and state Sen. Wendy Davis (D) could run. Even beyond that, how do you see your state changing and when do you think it goes from being a reliably red state to being more in play for the Democrats?” Castro stated,

I believe that if Wendy runs, she’ll be a very strong candidate and make it a very competitive race. [GOP candidate] Greg Abbott is making significant mistakes already. There’s a hubris that has developed in the Texas Republican Party because they’ve won over 100 straight statewide elections since the mid-1990s. And you can tell already, in social media, in the comments that [Abbott’s] campaign has embraced, other people, third parties, that the Republican Party is probably overconfident at this point. And Wendy is a very strong, down-to-earth candidate who can connect with Texas voters whether they’re Republican or Democrat.

Castro is speaking to the notion that the Republicans are the overconfident establishment. This is a common tactic of those in the Democratic Party to paint Republicans this way. Thus symbolic convergence has taken place. He also craftily positions state senator Wendy Davis as the underdog yet someone who is more representative of Texans.

Rucker and Balz, when interview Castro, asked, “Is the evolution of Texas, that it’s likely to become a more competitive state, a function of simple demographics? Is it a function of a Republican Party that’s moved too far to the right? Or is there something more Democrats have to do to become more

competitive?” Castro stated,

I would say that it’s three things: it’s demographics that everyone talks about, it’s the movement of people from more moderate states into Texas because Texas has done well economically compared to other states during this downturn, and third that Republicans are losing the business and moderate community because they’re moving so far to the right. Of course, it’s going to take more than just standing in place for Democrats to win. I do think that they could win in 15 years by just standing in place, but to accelerate that, they need a very compelling message, they need strong candidates. It’s when the message, the candidate and those three factors come together – especially the demography – that we’ll hit the end zone.

While Castro also echoed the sentiment that Texas is changing to a more predominately Hispanics demographic, he also painted a narrative of an opportunity for Democrats to turn the state blue. It is simply a matter of the right candidates coming in at the right time to seize the opportunity of doing so. Castro’s case is presented so compellingly, that it is almost not a matter of if this will happen but when.

2.) Discover and Describe the Narrative that Chained Out

Castro was also asked about Hispanics and the social issues that might attract them to the Republican Party. The question was, “How successful do you think the Republican Party can be and what would they have to do to do a better job winning Hispanic votes?” He responded,

“Hispanics are generally Democratic voters, even though it is true that it’s a

community of strong faith and one might think that on some issues they would gravitate toward Republicans. The rhetoric around immigration reform and most importantly the policies that Republicans have adopted – whether it’s voter ID or, in Texas, underfunding education, opposing the expansion of healthcare – these policy decisions send out a strong message to many Hispanics that’s unwelcoming, on top of their rhetoric on immigration reform. So they have impressive office holders like [Sen. Marco] Rubio, [Nevada Gov.] Brian Sandoval, [New Mexico Gov.] Susanna Martinez. But it’s not about personalities; it’s about the policies. What the Republican Party needs if it wants more Hispanic votes is to change its policies. It’s going to take more than knocking on doors or candidates speaking a few lines in Spanish. It’ll take a moderation of their policies.

Castro highlights a couple of issues that make for a telling story. First, he notes that the Republicans poorly communicate when it comes to the topic of immigration. What some say actually turns Hispanics away. Secondly, he acknowledged that the Republicans have some new faces that make for impressive Hispanics candidates, but he does not believe this will positively effect Hispanic turnout for Republicans in the polls, as it is not so much a matter of “personalities but of policies.” He does not believe Hispanic policies help the Republican Party.

Ultimately Castro paints a very bleak picture for the Republican Party: They can either compromise their party beliefs or they can become obsolete in Texas politics.

3.) Look for Patterns of Characterization and Setting

Second, after the narratives of the fantasy theme have been described, patterns of characterization, including those in the categories of “hero” and “villain,” must be identified. Castro attempts to demonize the Republican Party and he specifically paints Republican Gubernatorial candidate Greg Abbott as the villain. He states that Greg Abbott is “overconfident.” He states that Democratic Gubernatorial Candidate Wendy Davis is a “down-to-earth” candidate that can relate to both Republicans and Democrats. In stating this, he is advertently stating that Greg Abbott is not ‘down-to-earth’ and out of touch.

4.) Reconstruct the Rhetorical Vision

With the narratives described and the patterns of characterization discussed the third step, reconstructing the rhetorical vision, can be done. Castro was asked, “What do you think Republicans don’t understand about the Latino community?” Because, as you say, they have for years talked about faith and there’s a lot of their message that should have appeal in the Hispanic community.

It’s hard to put myself in the mind of the Republican Party, but they seem to see the Hispanic community too much as the other. ... After the Census of 2010 and the spike in Hispanics, there was this reaction in places like Arizona, Georgia, Alabama, nationally of Republicans that seemed to fear the growth of the Hispanic community and to embrace policies that seemed aimed to short-circuit their democratic participation. So the challenge, I believe, is they seem to see the Hispanic community instead of seeing them as a community that does have the same values, work ethic, patriotism that made the country great. Perhaps they’re too self-conscious at this point.”

Castro explains that the Republican Party is somewhat insensitive to the needs of Hispanics because they are so “self-conscious.” In other words, they are concerned primarily with winning yet not with actually helping Hispanics. A question thus must be raised about how much of what he says actually has merit, and how much needs to be evaluated in conjunction with the fact that he is purposefully demonizing the Republican Party.

Castro also pointedly states that the Republican Party sees Hispanics as the “other.” This is a common practice by many members of the Democratic Party to paint Republicans as white supremacists. Although he does not outright say it, he alludes to it. He states that Republicans “fear” the growth of the Hispanic community and they are attempting to “short-circuit their democratic participation” (or in other words, they are hindering Hispanics from voting). Castro is in essence saying that the Republican Party is racist without actually having to be on record as actually saying that. Castro’s comments about the Republican Party are obviously much harsher than Gonzales’ comments about the Democratic Party.

5.) Ask and Answer Specific Questions Relating to the Elements of the Dramas

Questions concerning the dramas can be asked. The dramatis personae are the Hispanics. The entire portion of the interview with Mayor Castro regarded the implications of a growing Hispanic Community on the Republican Party.

As for the question, “How does the fantasy theme work to attract the unconverted?” Mayor Castro speaks of Hispanics being short-changed by Republicans. Castro goes as far to say that it is because of the Republican Party that more Hispanic voters are not voting.

Who are the heroes and the villains? The heroes are the Democrats and the Villains are the Republicans. And, How are the members of the rhetorical community characterized? The rhetorical community is the Hispanics who already feel marginalized and may identify with what Castro is saying.

Chapter V: Discussion

Based upon the Literature Review that since 2008, the answer to the first research question is that Hispanics have voted increasingly Democratic. Based on the second interview question, there actually did not seem to be much of a disconnect in what Hispanics believe and the way they vote. The Hispanics that do vote tend to do so because they believe that doing so best helps them meet their material and financial needs. The Hispanic Republicans of Texas are making a difference in Texas politics and thus will make a difference in the nation as a whole. What was gained from the interviews, however, was more than what was initially planned.

Notice how the rhetorical visions of the two elected officials, State Representative Gonzales and Mayor Castro are on opposite ends of the spectrum in regard to the implications the changing demographic will have on Texas, and in their description of the other side. The Gonzales perspective brings hope that Republicans can reach Hispanics, but Castro's brings fear that Hispanics will eventually overrun Texas to turn it blue. Gonzales speaks positively enough about the Democratic Party as though they are just adversaries, and Castro speaks strikingly negative about the Republican Party as though they are his people's oppressors. Yet, their messages did share similarities in regards to take-aways about understanding the Hispanic Community, as well as how the Republican Party is doing a poor job with reaching Hispanics. The final portion of this thesis will flesh out just how the messages can be contrasted and also how they are comparable.

Firstly, the messages of Gonzales and Castro are different in regard to their

ideology of whether or not a Republican Hispanic candidate will ultimately factor in to Hispanics checking the box in larger numbers for Republicans in the voting booth. The fact of the matter is that they have not chosen to do so, and now that there are more Hispanic Republican candidates, it remains to be seen if this will influence the Hispanics vote.

Gonzales plainly stated that if the Republican Hispanic candidate is “good,” then this should positively affect whether or not Hispanics begin checking the box for the Republicans. Castro, however, explained that for Hispanics it is not a matter of “personalities” as it is a matter of “policies.” He fundamentally believes that if Republicans moderate their right of center views then Hispanics will begin to vote for Republicans. In other words, his answer is that the Republican Party begins to look more like the Democratic Party. This, however, goes against what Gonzales stressed when he stated that the Republicans cannot “pander” to win votes. They must stay true to their conservative principles. Of course Castro did acknowledge that the Republicans have impressive Hispanic candidates, so only time will tell as to more Republican Hispanic candidates will positively affect whether Hispanics turn out for the Republicans.

Secondly, Gonzales and Castro both make a compelling case that the Republicans need to begin communicating differently with Hispanics. Gonzales started by stating that the Republicans simply need to avoid talking about certain issues. He did not expound upon which issues those were, but he alluded to it. He explained that the Republicans must avoid talking about the issues that run Hispanics away from the party. Instead he argued that they should hone in on the

issues that Hispanics and Republicans can agree upon, education and jobs. Doing so, he believes, will pay dividends for the Republicans.

Castro explained that the “rhetoric around immigration reform” played a huge factor in how Hispanics view the Republicans. He also stressed that the voter ID law, or underfunding education, and opposing the expansion of healthcare also turned Hispanics away. There is an expression that goes, “eat the meat, and leave the bones.” Republicans can take part of what Castro says with a grain of salt, especially the issue of voter ID simply because the Democrats will do work to paint a picture about the Republicans on this issue that simply is not true. Also, Gonzales understands, just as Castro expressed, that the majority of Hispanics want an expansion of healthcare. However, the consistencies in what Gonzales and Castro say are that Republicans ought to be careful with how they talk about immigration reform. Specifically in the language they use that might offend Hispanics. In regards to policy too, Hispanics view education as a very big deal. Republicans and Democrats alike must work together to improve the education systems and see that children have every opportunity they need.

It stands to note again that Gonzales did not demonize the Democrats to the degree that Castro demonized Republicans. Castro actually went as far to say that the Republicans are “short-circuiting their democratic participation,” they “fear” the growing Hispanic community, and they view Hispanics as the “others.” In sum the Republicans cannot allow these assertions to go unattested. In large part, Castro’s comments epitomize what many Hispanics believe about the Republican Party.

Castro believes that it is a foregone conclusion that Texas will turn blue

because the demographic is becoming predominately Hispanic. The future is bleak for the Republicans. Gonzales believes that the changing demographic presents an opportunity for the Republicans to win over new voters to the party. It is simply a matter of looking for the votes in the right places and the filtering what the rhetoric.

Conclusion

This thesis has outlined the Fantasy Themes in two interviews with prominent Hispanic elected Texas officials, one Democrat and one Republican. One interview with Representative Gonzales gives a perspective that the majority of Hispanics are socially conservative but yet fiscally liberal. He articulates that jobs and education are the issues most important to Hispanics. As one endorsed by HRT, Gonzales also echoes the sentiment that more Republican Hispanics candidates will mean more Hispanics checking the box for the Republicans in the voting booth. He tells a story that the Republicans in many ways are attractive to the Hispanic voter, but it is simply a matter of the correct tactics in the ways that they must communicate in order to win Hispanics.

The other interview with Mayor Castro never suggested that Hispanics are socially liberal, but predominately they are fiscally liberal. It does not appear, based on his statements, however, that a conservative stance on social issues is enough to attract Hispanics to a Republican candidate. Castro believes that the most important issues to Hispanics are healthcare, education, and immigration—all issues that Republicans are on mostly on the wrong side on. Ultimately more Hispanic Republican candidates will not attract Hispanic voters to the Republican Party. He instead believes that the Republicans will need to fundamentally overhaul

their policies in order to win with Hispanics.

Ultimately only time will tell which perspective will prove to be correct. With an interview from a Republican and a Democrat this provides a fair and balanced approach to understand the Hispanic voters as to why they vote the way they do and more importantly they believe. If Republicans can gain a grip on this then perhaps they can do a better job of attracting Hispanics. This may also mean that the Republican Party as a whole, the Republican National Convention, and leaders in the Party ought to take a hard look at what HRT is doing so that they can be more affective in their message.

The limitations of the study are that the Castro interview was edited and I could not review the raw transcript. Also, this thesis investigated the thoughts and opinions of second-generation Mexican voters, however there were no interviews of elected officials of other countries of origin, nor were the interviews with first or third-generation Hispanics. For future research, there ought to be differentiation amongst the countries of origin, and also amongst first, second and third-generation Hispanics. Also, if only 27 million Hispanics are registered to vote, the suggestions for further research would be to investigate why it is that many choose not to vote. What sociological factors contribute to many Hispanics choosing not to vote? Could we presume that they are even informed to know how they would vote if they chose to?

Appendix: Interview Questions and Responses

Interview with Rep. Gonzales

1. Are most Hispanics predominately liberal, moderate or conservative these days?

“I believe that most Hispanics tend to be conservative. Clearly the Hispanic populations continues to vote more on the liberal side on the elections, but overall the overarching thread is that they tend to be conservative.”

2. What are political issues are most important issues to Hispanics today?

“The single most important issue is education. That’s true of a lot of people. That’s not necessarily Hispanics specific. I think that is the correct answer for the Hispanic community. Access to education, affordable education, public ed., higher ed.—all of those things lead to what the real concern is, opportunity for success. And I don’t think that’s different from any other demographic. That’s the beauty of this topic. I don’t think that it’s specific to a race, an ethnicity, or a group of people. But Hispanics like so many others simply want their kids to have an opportunity, their kids to be more successful then they were, and this is particularly true of the minority communities when maybe they don’t have one, two, three or four generations of college degrees; or four generations of family success.

In large part, they (Hispanic students) would be first generation to graduate high school or attend college. All of it, whether it’s job training, career development, any way you would wish to define success, I believe it all starts with educational opportunities that we as a state put in place.”

3. Do Hispanics favor or oppose Obamacare?”

“Overwhelmingly, from what I see, from what I read, and from I know to be anecdotally true, they favor. This was tough for me because I believe Obamacare, the way it’s set up, is going to be absolutely a colossal failure for our country. It doesn’t mean, however, that I don’t realize that a lot of people support it. The Hispanics understand that this is an opportunity for health care that they may not have access to, even if they’re working in some lower wage jobs.

This is the biggest of all government handouts. It will trump every other entitlement program. This is the grand daddy of them all. Let’s face it. The electorate likes when they are given things. A lot of Hispanics are going to end up favoring the opportunity to have health care. It will, in my opinion, be devastating to our economy, devastating to our health care system, to the delivery of the health care system, to those that provide the health care, and I think that it has tremendous downside to everyone in America. But if it’s free or affordable, to a vast majority of people, they will want it. And therein lies the problem we have as conservatives, especially with a population that we are trying to talk to. It’s hard to overcome their favor of free healthcare. This will be an obstacle going forward.”

4. Do Hispanics favor big government or limited government?”

“Like many people who are on the receiving end of things, they favor big government. If you are on the side that has to pay for those things, you are not in favor of big government. It’s pretty simple. This is human nature 101. If you’re getting stuff, you love it; if you’re giving stuff, you don’t. The question then

points to, Are most⁴ Hispanics giving or receiving? More Hispanics are receiving. If you follow that line of reasoning then most Hispanics favor big government.”

5. Will more Hispanic Candidates translate into more Hispanics checking the box for Republicans?”

“If that Hispanic Republican candidate is the best candidate, I think that Hispanic Democrats vote for the last name. I don’t think the Hispanic Republicans are as quick to vote for just the surname. I did very well in the Hispanic Community. I do very well the Democratic Hispanics. What I believe is that I’m the best candidate. I believe who I am transcends my Hispanic surname. I believe they vote for me because I’m me. I believe the 65-year-old white farmer from Rural 52 votes for me because I’m me.

There need to be a lot more Hispanic Elected Officials. There should be 20 of me in the House. Not three. We need that. But just running a Hispanic candidate is not good enough. Because when you run a poor candidate, with a Hispanic surname, they can set us back. I’ve met a few of those, who wanted to run for public office, with a Hispanic surname, but would have been a terrible candidate. We need more Hispanic candidates, but not just any Hispanic with a Hispanic surname is going to work. They still have to be a good candidate. I think Republicans care a lot more whether the candidate is actually a good candidate versus our Democratic friends who vote for a candidate just because they have a Hispanic surname. That’s

undeniably true for Hispanic's Democratic candidates. If they're there, they vote for them. So the question was, 'Will more Hispanic Candidates result in more Hispanics checking the box for Republicans?' The answer is, Yes.

Assuming they are still good candidates.

6. What is your vision for the Republican Party can attract more Hispanic voters?

The Republican Party needs to get out a calculator and run some numbers. What my party will discover, If you run the numbers, we cannot exist as a Republican red state for the next ten, 15 years, if we don't do more to reach Hispanic voters.

We can do lots of things. Number one, here's what we're not going to do. We're not going to pander. The Party cannot compromise the fundamental structure of our party's beliefs just to get votes. We're not going to give away or handout things. Here's what we are going to do. We're going to focus in on the issues that are important: education and jobs. If I can keep the party talking about education and jobs, we'll be fine. There's an old communication skill, if you and I are talking, and I know we agree on 5 out of 10 things, and then I'm going to talk about the things we agree on.

We have to develop a relationship, a trust, a partnership, and teamwork on the things that matter. Eventually we have to talk about the things we don't agree on, but that comes after you and I have an understanding of how we're alike and why we're alike. Our party needs to focus more on the five that we agree on instead of constantly hammering on the five we don't. Ronald Reagan said, "My 80% friend

isn't my 20% enemy. The wisdom of that is amazing and the party rejects that today. I don't know why. If you want elected officials who agree with you 100% of the time then you better run for office.

In an effort to keep the state red, and keep the country conservative, you may have to not focus to the two or three things that force the Hispanic community to run from our party. You don't have to do anything proactive either; you can just stop talking about a few things. Lessen the talk on the five things we don't agree on and concentrate on the five that we do. That's the big picture.

7. Are Hispanics pro-choice or pro life?

“Overwhelming the answer is – they are pro life. We know that even among our Democrat voting Hispanics, they are pro life. This is part comes from the Catholic population of Hispanic voters. Now, is that changing? Interestingly enough, the answer might be yes. I don't think the answers are large enough to shake the church in that they are pro life. The comments I hear in my office, that I hear that there are pro-choice Catholics in the district. I would still say that the vast majority are pro life.

Don't be surprised if you see that wedge close in the next 5-10 years where there are more pro-choice Hispanics, and particularly pro-choice Catholics. There's a little disconnect in what the Pope and church says and what Hispanics believe that we wouldn't have seen 20 years ago.

8. Do Hispanics generally oppose or favor gay marriage?

Most Hispanics oppose Gay marriage that I hear and that I'm in contact with, but

those numbers are changing quickly. This is something interesting to watch in the next few years because I think more and more people are becoming accepting of and tolerant of the homosexual lifestyle, and whether that translates into the actual marriage, we'll see. Hispanics are becoming more tolerant of this movement.

Interview with Julian Castro

1. What do you see happening in Texas politics right now? There's a governor's race coming up and state Sen. Wendy Davis (D) could run. Even beyond that, how do you see your state changing and when do you think it goes from being a reliably red state to being more in play for the Democrats?

"I believe that if Wendy runs, she'll be a very strong candidate and make it a very competitive race. [GOP candidate] Greg Abbott is making significant mistakes already. There's a hubris that has developed in the Texas Republican Party because they've won over 100 straight statewide elections since the mid-1990s. And you can tell already, in social media, in the comments that [Abbott's] campaign has embraced, other people, third parties, that the Republican Party is probably overconfident at this point. And Wendy is a very strong, down-to-earth candidate who can connect with Texas voters whether they're Republican or Democrat."

2. What kind of pressure did you get to run for governor?

Castro: "Folks brought it up, but the idea that somebody's on the line all the time saying you need to run – I think there are very, very few instances in politics where that kind of cliché happens, and it didn't happen to me."

3. Is the evolution of Texas, that it's likely to become a more competitive state, a function of simple demographics? Is it a function of a Republican Party that's moved too far to the right? Or is there something more Democrats have to do to become "I would say that it's three things: it's demographics that everyone talks about, it's the movement of people from more moderate states into Texas because Texas has done well economically compared to other states during this downturn, and third that Republicans are losing the business and moderate community because they're moving so far to the right. Of course, it's going to take more than just standing in place for Democrats to win. I do think that they could win in 15 years by just standing in place, but to accelerate that, they need a very compelling message, they need strong candidates. It's when the message, the candidate and those three factors come together – especially the demography – that we'll hit the end zone."

4. How successful do you think the Republican Party can be and what would they have to do to do a better job winning Hispanic votes?

"Hispanics are generally Democratic voters, even though it is true that it's a community of strong faith and one might think that on some issues they would gravitate toward Republicans. The rhetoric around immigration reform and most importantly the policies that Republicans have adopted – whether it's voter ID or, in Texas, underfunding education, opposing the expansion of healthcare – these policy decisions send out a strong message to many Hispanics that's unwelcoming, on top of their rhetoric on immigration reform. So they have impressive office holders like [Sen. Marco] Rubio, [Nevada Gov.] Brian Sandoval, [New Mexico Gov.] Susanna

Martinez. But it's not about personalities; it's about the policies. What the Republican Party needs if it wants more Hispanic votes is to change its policies. It's going to take more than knocking on doors or candidates speaking a few lines in Spanish. It'll take a moderation of their policies."

5. What do you think Republicans don't understand about the Latino community?

Because, as you say, they have for years talked about faith and there's a lot of their message that should have appeal in the Latino community.

"It's hard to put myself in the mind of the Republican Party, but they seem to see the Hispanic community too much as the other. ... After the Census of 2010 and the spike in Hispanics, there was this reaction in places like Arizona, Georgia, Alabama, nationally of Republicans that seemed to fear the growth of the Hispanic community and to embrace policies that seemed aimed to short-circuit their democratic participation. So the challenge, I believe, is they seem to see the Hispanic community instead of seeing them as a community that does have the same values, work ethic, patriotism that made the country great. Perhaps they're too self-conscious at this point."

6. What does the Democratic Party of tomorrow look like? How do you see this party in the post-Obama era? In what ways can the coalition change or be broadened?

"Right now the Democratic Party has a broader coalition than the Republican Party. There is not the same kind of litmus test that exists in the Republican Party and the

allocation of electoral power is more spread out in the Democratic Party than it is in the Republican Party. You think about the hoops that a Republican has to jump through with his or her base in a primary versus on the Democratic side. We are a bigger tent party in the year 2013. And the challenge, as President Obama's tenure comes to a close in 2016, is to maintain that big-tent approach and philosophy. If the Democratic Party can do that, it stands the chance of winning presidential elections well into the future and gaining ground in states like Texas and Arizona and others whose demographics are growing right into that coalition's strength. The worst thing that we can do is return to the days where there were a ton of litmus tests on the Democratic Party side the way that there are today in the Republican Party. I grew up in Texas during the time when former Democrats were saying, 'I didn't leave the Democratic Party; the Democratic Party left me.' That is exactly what is happening in Texas on the Republican side these days, and I believe that if Wendy runs, she's going to find a lot of especially Republican women who will cross over and vote for her."

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