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¿Dónde está mi gente?

A qualitative analysis of the role of Latinos in the context of the
Hillary for America 2016 presidential campaign

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ABSTRACT

Presidential campaigns in the United States have increasingly attempted to court Latinos because they are widely considered to be keyholders for electoral victory. Literature addressing the group's potential and real impact tends to focus on Latinos' voter behavior or policy preferences, but has failed to account for the human factor of those playing a role on the development and deployment of strategies and tactics used to capture the Latino share of the vote.

Through in-depth interviews, this study explores the political participation of Latinos as campaign operatives in the context of Hillary for America during the 2016 election cycle. Addressing issues of communication, ethnicity, and political incorporation in their interplay with organizational identity, it aims to understand how the participation of members of a minority constituency within the campaign's structure has the potential of impacting the group's political engagement through better representation of their interests and needs within a broader American society.

1. INTRODUCTION

Political elites tend to judge certain aspects of the societies around them based on subjective classifications that are not necessarily encompassing of the full realities they try to capture. These simplifications have become indispensable as a way of 'grasping a large and complex reality' (J. C. Scott: 1998). Campaigns assess the electorate based on factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, geographic location and income to determine who they will attempt to build relationships with in order to win their votes. For example, both in 2008 and 2012, Obama's campaigns targeted young voters based on messages of hope and change. The campaign was able to find these young people through public records and tailor direct voter contact and messaging accordingly (Hersh, 2015).

American voters are known to be sensitive to race-focused appeals from campaigns (Valentino, Hutchings, and White, 2002). Hence, racial identifiers can help campaigns communicate with minority voters in a more personal manner. Although personal connections are evidently not possible for a presidential campaign due to the size of the electorate, an adequate deployment of messaging and strategies, led by competent campaign operatives has the potential of improving the campaign's relationship with that constituency.

According to U.S. Census Bureau (2015), Latinos are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in America. Since the 1970s the constituency has grown 92 percent and by 2060, Latinos will be more numerous than any other ethnic minority, representing 28.6 percent (Stepler and Lopez, 2016) of the total U.S. population. This has led presidential campaigns to pay special attention to their efforts to court this constituency to earn their support.

Subervi-Veles (2007b: 51-82) makes the case for two key aspects on the study of the intersection of political communication strategies and Latino politics. The first one is the function and utility of Latino-oriented strategies for campaigns. The second one, is the functions of these strategies for Latinos and the community. They are interdependent, yet distinct. One of the most oft cited examples of a campaign's relationship with Latino constituents is the 'Viva Kennedy' clubs in the early 1960s. But in more recent presidential election history, campaigns have made advances to appeal to Latino voters with targeted Latino outreach efforts such as 'Juntos con Romney', 'Latinos for Obama', 'Hispanics for McCain', 'Unidos con Kerry', and 'Viva Bush' (Ramirez, 2013).

In 2016, the 'Hillary for America' campaign was aware of the careful work that should go into courting Latinos, both because of the sizable sector of the electorate they represent, and because of the political division generated by Trump's rhetoric that openly antagonized

specific Latino subgroups as well as the community as a whole. While some scholars (Powell and Brewer, 2018) focus on the sophisticated tactics of micro-targeting and digital campaigning as key factors in the campaign's efforts to win over Latinos, there is one aspect that has been widely overlooked: the building of organizational identity and how it translates into identification and increased political incorporation from the electorate (Connaughton, 2005). This take suggests the human factor within campaign structure is key to ensuring the majority of the Latino vote.

1.1 Objectives and Potential Contributions to Academia

When it comes to the study of presidential campaigns, researchers have focused on public opinion and campaign effects on the electorate. However, a handful of studies have addressed campaigns' perceptions of the electorate and how these perceptions translate into relationship-building with voters (Hersh, 2015; Hillygus and Shields, 2008; Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1988). If the objective is to understand campaign decisions, one should not study campaigns through the voters' point-of-view but from that of campaigns' informational roots. Yet, these studies still lack in the human-experience component as they focus mostly on information campaigns obtain through public records and big data. They fail to address the societal nuances that need to be considered when addressing specific subsets of the electorate beyond just demographic data-points.

Other studies (De la Garza, 1992; Jackson, 2003) address the experiences of Latinos as elected officials in the frame of specific locations or national origins, but there is a gap in the literature on how they can vouch for the broader community's needs from the structure of a presidential campaign. Similarly the question of policy benefits for one group as a result of their members having electoral success has been addressed by Geron (2005), but there is still room to explore how having Latinos be active within a presidential campaign structure could carry enough weight to increase the community's political engagement. In addition, studies like Subervi-Velez's (2007a: 1-18) deal with the subject of Latinos and mass media to understand how the community is portrayed in the political context.

In this study, I attempt to add one more element to this area of study: the importance of organizational identity and representation in the potential effectiveness of Latino-oriented presidential campaigning. It builds on Connaughton's (2005) research on organizational identity and identification built by political parties to appeal to Latinos, with the difference that participants are in their totality Latino staffers who worked in a Presidential campaign, as opposed to Connaught's external consultants who talked about party structures. Both studies, though, are part of the understudied intersection of political communication, organization management, and identity and identification (in the form of potential responses to campaign

messaging). The study is relevant in that it is sensitive to the elements intrinsic to sources, messages, and receivers.

With a focus on elite perceptions of the inner-workings of a presidential campaign, this study attempts to broaden the understanding of how one subset of the American population is represented within campaign organizations and how that, in turn, translates in the campaign's ability to properly build relationships with that portion of the electorate. By focusing on the case of Latinos in a very particular political climate I hope to contribute to the understanding of what campaigns might still be missing in order to mobilize an even larger share of that specific constituency.

2. THEORETICAL FRAME

This section examines existing literature on the areas of communication, ethnic identity and representation, organizational management and political engagement.

1.2 Literature Review

These theories intersect to explain how campaigns build relationships with minority constituents starting at the organizational level. As the data was gathered from interviews to U.S. presidential campaign operatives and asks about Latinos in America, the theoretical frame focuses on the United States and cites relevant statistics to provide an adequate perspective.

1.2.1 A communicational basis for political campaigns

Symbolic convergence theory

Communication is rooted in symbolic processes through which human beings create, raise, and sustain consciousness. As long as there is public consciousness, culture in the communicative context adds up from the ways of living and organizing of the members of one group. Bormann (1992: 51) posits that a unique, symbolic common ground comes from shared norms, stories and rites. Symbolic convergence theory explains human communication by describing human tendencies within systems of social interaction that propel the evolution of communicative practices. Through symbolic convergence, there is a possibility for a 'meeting of minds'. Convergence comes to being when two or more private symbolic worlds—which have already been ascribed a meaning—lean into each other.

It is through symbolic convergence that the basis of communication comes to being when people develop parts of their symbolic worlds that then overlap with those of others. The creation of mutual understandings and common experiences beyond a shared rational

interpretation of symbols, symbolic convergence also accounts for how people make emotional investments in the identification between them. Bormann talks of shared group fantasies as the basic communicative process through which symbolic convergence happens. This symbolic sharing results in a social reality that is common to the participants. A fantasy theme, as a technical term unlike the common usage of the word, is a shared narrative about an envisioned future.

Within the context of political campaigns, it is intended that messages result in rhetorical communities with shared common visions. Bormann, Koester, and Bennett (1978) analyze how voting behavior can be anticipated (and perhaps even shaped) by signalling voters into participating in a variety of rhetorical communities. Three steps should be taken for the creation of a rhetorical vision: first, creating consciousness; second, raising consciousness; and third, sustaining consciousness. For people to share new fantasies, creation and raising of consciousness should be presented in an alluring way by people with a certain amount of rhetorical skill and understanding of that which appeals to the message recipient (p. 58).

1.2.2 Identity and representation

Pan-ethnicity

Considering that Latinos' ancestries can be traced to twenty-two national origins, the concept of pan-ethnicity as offered by Espino (1992): 'a sociopolitical collectivity made up of people of several different national origins', can be used to talk about a 'Latino community' in the United States. The U.S. government includes people of 'Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race' (Stokes-Brown, 2012) in its ethnic definition of Latino.

Although ethnicity implies a certain level of outgroup designation, it also includes an aspect of self-concept and identification. Once members of an ethnic group start self-identifying they are able to create their own meaning around it through shared histories and experiences within the group and in relation to outsiders. In the case of Latinos, a shared pan-ethnic identity means transcending the imposition of a categorization by the U.S. government as prescribed the category of Hispanic/Latino in the census.

Pan-ethnicity, as defined by Diaz McConnell and Delgado-Romero (2004) refers to the 'consolidation of groups who have had previously distinct ethnic or national identities 'into a single racial or in the case of Latinos, ethnic, category''. There are two approaches to Latino pan-ethnicity in academic literature. First, as a genuine identity that originates in 'shared commonalities and the struggle for power' (Jones-Correa and Leal, 1996). And as a political and statistical construction fostered by governmental institutions (Gimenez, 1989).

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Garcia (2003) suggests that Latinos and their politics show the existence of a community that is increasingly influenced by Latino elites and 'mass level' interactions, not only governmental policies or institutions. Hence, the notion of a pan-ethnic group tied by elements like language, cultural values and public policies is more present in the American collective imaginary and can translate to political utility for Latinos.

Literature that focuses on the importance of Latino ethnic identification (Jones-Correa and Leal, 1996; Keefe and Padilla, 1987; Lee and Bean, 2004) also delves into identification and aspects like issue positions and intergroup relationships (Kaufmann, 2003; Lopez and Pantoja, 2004). According to Miller (1956), by talking of cohesive minorities, the political disorganization of these groups tends to be overlooked, but Huckfeldt and Sprague (1988: 481) argue that minorities can be simultaneously 'cohesive and in disarray'.

Representation

When it comes to relationships between different social groups, Foucault (1970) suggested that representation, difference, and power are interconnected. In this case, power should be understood beyond economic exploitation or physical coercion, and include cultural and symbolic terms of representation of something or someone under a certain regime.

Race and ethnicity have played key roles in American presidential campaigns (Mendelberg, 2001). Some have argued that these aspects are tapped by elites and campaign leadership to gain strategic advantages (Valentino *et al.*, 2002). At the same time, Latino communities are subject to internal dynamics that impact the extent of their political activity. These distinctions reflect the limits not only of electoral politics, but of biracial and multiracial politics, too (Geron, 2005).

The subject of Latino representation in politics is most often addressed in the context of elected office, but there are different ways in which Latinos can represent and be represented. Pitkin (1972) talks of four levels of representation. The first, formal representation, is where through institutional processes, officials are empowered to act on behalf of others. On the second level, descriptive representation, the characteristics of the represented are reflected on the representative. Within Latinos politics, this level is important because it is where they usually become role models for the community. When the community acknowledges someone in office not just as a symbol of individual achievement, but as representative of their values and aspirations, symbolic representation is achieved. For substantive representation to happen, it is then necessary that the representative is expected to act responsively to the community's interests. All of the former can be achieved from roles within a high-profile campaign even if the candidate is not a Latino.

1.2.3 Campaigns as identity-based organizations

Organizational identity and political public relations

Bernays (1955) holds that public relations' goals are to inform, persuade, and integrate people with people. Based on this, one of political public relations' most prominent branches is that of relationship management (Ledingham and Bruning, 2000). Public relations and management

theories intersect when we consider that communications between an organization and its publics are managed to foster mutually beneficial relationships (Cutlip, Center, and Broom, 2000). According to Stromback and Kiousis (2011), organizations (whether corporate, cultural, or political) and their audiences are interdependent and the boundaries between them are porous. Publics can have major influence in an organization and vice versa, hence neither academics nor practitioners can ignore the systemic contexts and power relationships in which these interactions occur.

Compared to corporate organizations, political entities face a more diverse set of publics. In this scenario, campaigns are 'unusually dependent on their relationships with different publics for their prospects' of winning elections (Strömbäck and Kiousis, 2011). As such, Sweeney (1995) argued that there are primary and secondary audiences in campaigns: the first is the electorate, while the second are campaigns staff and other prominent groups close to the organization. Relationships with both groups should be fostered via a careful strategy, message development, and its dissemination among different target groups. This is most important when considering that good clout with the latter is the key to productive relationships with the former.

American campaign committees are usually conformed by external consultants, candidates and campaign managers. To properly develop a strong organizational identity, internal public relations should also be pursued. Jones and Baumgartner (2005: 50), mention in their theory of disproportionate information that interactions between subgroups within an organization influence the dynamics of decision-making processes. As organizations are built of humans, the relationship between individual and organizational information-processing is causal.

Organizational decision-making, especially on the realm of political campaigns, is affected by biases that stem from these cognitive mechanisms located amongst top-management that sometimes include an unwillingness to stray from comfortable characterizations of an issue and familiarity with a certain solution. In any case, the only ways to break the cycle is with leaders deciding to catch-up after continuous signals of a deteriorating situation or by another

external mechanism that shifts the collective focus to an issue that had been previously disregarded.

Diversity

Workplaces the world over are beholden to the principle of diversity. This push has not come without tensions between how diversity helps in theory and the reality within a team's performance (Mannix and Neale, 2005). Proponents of diversity argue that it leads to a wider array of perspectives and approaches as well as opportunities to share knowledge. However, critics posit that diversity strengthens social division which then fosters negative outcomes on the group's goals. Diversity here is treated as the variation limited to race, gender and cultural categories that forces a focus on 'discrimination and issues of exclusion' (Cross, Katz, Seashore, and Miller, 1994).

Three main approaches to diversity tend to be the norm. The two with usually a more pessimistic understanding, similarity-attraction paradigm and self-categorization/social-identity, suggest that individuals are more attracted to others similar to them, so their social integration tends to happen on homogeneous groups. On the other hand, the information-processing approach states that an atmosphere for enhanced performance is fostered by diversity as people have access to individuals with different backgrounds, information and skills. Regardless of the approach, scholars advice against hiring diversity for the sake of diversity without a full understanding of how people from different backgrounds can make teams more effective (Mannix and Neale, 2005).

Organizational identity is the combined values that distinguish the organization and what sets it apart from other entities. Political institutions, including campaigns, are a form of organization that via communication, seek to inspire identification and 'the perception of oneness or belongingness to some human aggregate' (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). If a constituency is deemed 'critical' for the organization's goals, it should have the power to influence it and/or build urgency upon the group's claims. Scott and Lane's (2000) model of organizational identity construction posits that the process by which managers and stakeholders of an organization specify organizational identity in their minds is not static and it should be reciprocal. This implies that stakeholders, in this case Latino voters, should view the images favorably if they are to identify with the organization or campaign.

1.2.4 Aspects on political engagement of minority constituencies

Perceived Voters

Hersh (2015) developed a model based on the understanding that there are perceptual biases rooted on a limited set of information that affect strategic decisions within campaigns. He

posits that campaigns gather data, form perceptions and develop strategies based on these data. Analyzing campaigns from the standpoint of elite perceptions allows researchers to look at the 'informational roots of decisions' and thus focusing on perceived voters instead of real voters. The concept of perceived voters inherently implies that there is a barrier between those seeking office and the people who would elect them to represent them. For Herschel, 'Perceived voters cannot be surveyed. They are rows in spreadsheets (Valentino *et al.*, 2002: 8) (...). They are also stereotypes and generalizations that politicians carry in their heads'.

The model talks about information 'shortcuts' obtained from public records to explain why campaigns make certain decisions. It does however also acknowledge that these data do not fully represent 'accurate, detailed information' about voter-behavior and preferences, thus opening the possibility to considering the human factor in how to combat these inaccurate shortcuts.

Targeting

Due to a finite amount of resources, campaigns need to decide who they approach for persuasion and mobilization. Strategists and consultants conduct the classification and prioritization of these voters in order to decide which messages they are giving whom. The main issue here is that a campaign's perceptions of voters, out of which strategy arises, might be different from the voters' perceptions of themselves.

The fact that a campaign knows what policy might attract a group of voters does not necessarily entail they know how to address that group in a way effective enough to turn them out. Campaign officials need to understand who their targets are if they are to try to get their vote.

Political incorporation theory

Campaigns are fertile ground to engage more people to the political process, especially minority constituencies that are traditionally regarded as alien to participation. The power presidential campaigns have in this regard lies on the scope of their reach and access to resources. Hence, efforts would be more beneficial if thought in terms of long-term engagement and relationship-building with the groups they are trying to reach (Simon, 2002) as opposed to just through Election Day.

Browning, Marshall, and Taub's (1984) political incorporation theory is relevant in these scenarios, as it deals with the mobilization of minorities, coalitions, incorporation into institutions of power, and responsiveness to racial/ethnic group issues at the policy level.

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These are all affected by the amount of financial resources and political support directed at them from within the power structures in which they happen (Geron, 2005).

Through this lens, it could be argued that Latinos are well under way to full political incorporation with increasing numbers of Latino candidates, elected officials, grassroots leaders and a larger proportion of the electorate with each passing election. But, when it comes to the fight for the highest office, in presidential elections, Latinos are still very much confined to a symbolic politics approach (Geron, 2005) where prominent members serve more as a link to society than they are at the forefront themselves.

The saliency of co-ethnic mobilization is key, as Latinos have reported to not have been more likely to vote if they were encouraged by a non-Latino, while those approached by Latino candidates, organizations or campaign staff show more likelihood to participate in elections (Stokes-Brown, 2012: 84).

Cultural competence

Although originating within the field of healthcare, the concept of cultural competence applies to professionals in any field who possess the ability to understand how culture influences the way a group thinks, acts, and the things they value. Having culturally competent members allows public-facing organizations to provide for audiences with diverse beliefs and behaviors by having better informed approaches to 'tailoring delivery to meet social, cultural and linguistic needs' (Betancourt, Green, and Carrillo, 2002).

As a concept, cultural competence is made up of two separate but individually complex terms. 'Culture' is remarkably difficult to reduce to a single definition. Chamberlain (2005) defines culture as the 'values, norms, and traditions that affect how individuals of a particular group perceive, think, interact, behave, and make judgments about their world.' Culture is not homogenous in that it represents how people make sense of experiences, so it is ever-changing and cannot be a definitive list of traits shared by a social group. It can also be understood as 'an interpretation of one's world, through one's cognitive processes, or through a person's understanding of their world, which is linked to their symbolic interactions (Stier and Olsson, 2004). Competence is most usually understood in the sense of a level of performance that proves an adequate use of knowledge, attitudes and judgements.

Scholars (Allen-Meares, 2007; Fisher-Borne, Cain, and Martin, 2015) argue that having people who share worldviews and experiences with the audiences is even an ethical imperative for an organization to build mutually beneficial relationships with its intended audiences. Cultural competence, if understood as a dynamic construct that changes with contextual

realities, is a capitalizable asset for campaigns. It serves both, to improve the quality of the policies it offers and how it offers them to voters of specific constituencies, as well as a strategy to appeal to more people and increase vote share and social impact.

Tokenism

Promoting internal diversity is increasingly considered a need for organizations to achieve their outward goals. Diversity within an organization embodies a 'philosophy of inclusion based upon respect for cultures, beliefs, values, and individual differences of all kinds' (Betancourt *et al.*, 2002). The downside for these effort lies on inclusion for the sake of inclusion in what many scholars consider a performativity of diversity by hiring people of minority constituencies just to check a box.

Tokenism, as defined by Mindiola, Flores Niemann, and Rodriguez (2002) 'handicaps members of racial/ethnic minority groups who find themselves working alone or nearly alone among members of another social category'. As considered to be representatives of their communities, they are asked for expert opinions and treated according to their social categories' stereotypes, hence being handicapped by their environment. Linkov (2014), on the other hand, argues that someone who is tokenized can use it to their advantage to further the interests and needs of their community from their privileged level of access to organizational structures.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

The main aspects of constituency-focused campaign communication studies that provide a basis for this study are the conclusions that presidential campaigns tend to rely on assumptions and simplifications about Latinos that don't necessarily reflect the complex dynamics of the community in regards to nuances and policy interests.

There are limited studies on how the human component of a campaign's information sources, in the form of campaign staff, can foster an adequate environment for improved representations between campaigns and the community. This study aims to explain the interplay between political communication, organizational identity, representation and political engagement of the Latino community.

For the purpose of this research I use the term Latino as defined by Garcia Bedolla (2009), 'meant to describe all individuals, foreign and US-born, who have ancestry in any of the Spanish-speaking nations if Latin America'. I opted for this denomination because it is considered more inclusive and because it is now more common in discussions regarding

politics than is 'Hispanic'. Therefore, I will only resort to the term Hispanic where used by the interviewees.

1.4 Research Question

The study explores aspects on presidential campaign organizational structure and identity and how they translate into relationship-building with Latinos in an attempt to earn their support as a bloc by asking: (1) Do Latino operatives in presidential campaigns act as symbolic representatives or are they substantive representatives of the constituency's interests within the campaign structure? and (2) How did Hillary for America represent itself to Latino voters in the political climate of the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election?

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research aims to shed light on how presidential campaigns in the United States attempt to build relationships with minority constituencies. In particular it looks at how Hillary Clinton's campaign for president in 2016 capitalized on Latinos within the campaign's operation in an effort to mobilize the Latino community to support the candidate.

1.5 Rationale for Chosen Methodology

Qualitative elite interviewing of subjects within the campaign was the most suitable research method. This allowed room for exploring personal experiences of campaign operatives (Dexter, 1970; Marshall and Rossman, 1995). Likewise, Lilleker (Lilleker, 2003) suggests this type of interview offers the possibility of obtaining insights into events that transpire away from the public eye and scrutiny.

A combined methodological approach was considered due to the nature of the research as involving a subset of the American electorate. Surveys about how Latino voters receive targeted messages and tactics would have allowed to determine whether there is a correlation between a campaign's output and turnout. However, this method would have taken from the focus on the organization and the experiences of minorities within the campaign apparatus. In addition, there is already a vast corpus of literature that deals with specific constituencies reactions to campaign appeals throughout U.S. Presidential campaign history.

The main motivation to conduct elite interviews for this endeavour is rooted on the fact that interviewees in this type of qualitative research are individuals who have a certain level of expertise in a given field, allowing researchers into the minds of those who play a role in the inner-workings of society-shaping events (Richards, 1996). Political campaigns are

increasingly giving room for minorities to shape their messaging and strategies aimed at said minorities. Thus, campaign insiders can provide a body of information on the impact they perceive their involvement has on campaigns' final outputs to appeal to subsets of the population. Semi-structured interviews permit conversations in which subjects open up about their 'experiences and self-understanding (...) as well as their perspective on their lived world' (Kvale, 1996).

1.6 Ethical Considerations and Potential Limitations

Researchers must be able to balance objectivity with encouraging participants to trust them with their true perceptions of a phenomenon. To obtain trust and respect from the interviewee, the researcher must be willing to adapt questions throughout the conversation resulting from each participant's willingness (or ability) to share certain information. Active participation from both parties is necessary to ensure a certain level of quality of the research (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995), but it is the role of the researcher to determine parameters to constrain and prompt responses relevant to the project's interest.

By definition, access to elite interviewees is more difficult (Kvale, 1996), but this is only one potential practical limitations to this method. The topic presented the possibility that, because subjects in key positions within a political organization or campaign may be restricted on what they can share (Hillygus and Shields, 2008), the data obtained could be limited. Hence, it was required that the interviewer had 'a good grasp of the interview topic in order to entertain an informed conversation' (Kvale, 1996) and knew how to address certain topics in a way that participants would feel at ease to open up.

A particular limitation of this study is that it is focused mostly on the subjects' experiences during a U.S. 2016 presidential campaign. By its nature as a case study, results may not be generalizable for two reasons: (1) a campaign's organizational identity varies depending on the candidate and teams, and (2) the unconventional nature of the 2016 election cycle with Donald Trump's unusual rhetoric represents a shift in presidential campaigning paradigms.

The researcher's own involvement with the Clinton campaign as a field operative meant all interviewees were part of the researcher's professional network. Additionally, her self-identification as Latina, may have influenced the conversations conducted. While both were certainly beneficial to building trust, they may have also encouraged some bias. Acknowledging its unavailability, constant reflexivity was practiced during each conversation.

Perhaps the most important ethical consideration is the subjects' anonymity. Due to their salience in their professional circles it cannot always be fully guaranteed. Details in quotes

about personal lives have the potential identifying the subject even after anonymization (Richards, 1996). Participants were informed prior to the conversation of their right to request anonymity as stipulated by the principle of informed consent (Warren, 2002). All respondents requested anonymity, hence, their names and job titles were anonymized. An Informed Consent Form (Appendix A) was provided prior to the conversation informing them that conversations would be recorded. Verbal and/or written consent was given by all participants, acknowledging that the recordings would be used for the purpose of the study.

1.7 Sampling and Access

To explore how Hillary for America constructed its Latino-facing identity I talked to Latino campaign operatives who were active in the crafting and dissemination of messaging. Subjects were chosen because of their expertise in Latino outreach for political campaigns and government, and for their advantageous positions in diverse levels and areas of the Hillary for America structure. They are relevant data sources as they explained how the campaign managed relationships with the Latino electorate via their operatives and how assumptions and perceptions about Latinos played an important role in the strategies and tactics that were ultimately used to appeal to the constituency.

Due to the specific demographic characteristics of the intended sample (Latinos who worked in the 2016 Hillary for America campaign), the potential pool of individuals was limited by nature. A list of 30 staffers was selected to reflect a variety of national-origins, departments within the organization and level of seniority. To secure interviews, I made phone calls or sent emails to my personal network, some of whom were included in the sample. I asked them to contact those who I didn't have direct access to on my behalf. Eight people were available to partake in the study between June-July 2018. All interviews were conducted via Skype or phone (Appendix B).

Participants range from senior leadership to field operatives and include people tasked mostly with Latino outreach as well as general-electorate-oriented roles. The distribution of national-origin is similar to that of the Latino population in the country: 62.5 percent (five participants) of the interviewees were of Mexican origin; one was Cuban, one Central American, and one South American. There was no representation of Dominicans or Puerto Ricans as the two other major national-origins of Latinos in the U.S. Although the geographical distribution of participants in 2016 was mostly limited to national headquarters in Brooklyn and ground-ops in Florida, their combined experiences—both on a personal level, as well professionally in local races as grassroots organizers and outreach staffers—can be traced to most states with a

high density of Latinos. Their knowledge of the Latino community and their political engagement includes California, Texas, New Mexico, Florida, New York, and Illinois.

1.8 Research Tool and Design Pilot

Literature on qualitative research methods was consulted to determine the best approach to the research question. After establishing elite interviewing as the right method, emphasis was given to understanding best practices (Kvale, 1996; Warren, 2002). This study borrows heavily from methodology applied by Kreiss, Lawrence and McGregor (2018) and Connaughton (2005) to study practitioner accounts of social media use and Latino outreach strategies on presidential campaigns respectively.

All participants declared their statements not for attribution (directly quoted but anonymously sourced). Interviews were 45-60 minutes and participants were given the option to have the conversation in English, Spanish, or a combination of both. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to delve into specific themes, allowing for changes of sequence to press on aspects emphasized by participants on different features of their roles and perceptions about the campaign's internal and external dynamics. An interview guide was composed of a series of thematically-grouped open-ended questions (Appendix C) based on grand-themes determined by a literature review. Subjects were asked about their career paths and involvement with politics, campaigns, and Latino outreach to encourage them to reflect on their roles and motivations. Then, a series of 'category questions' (McCracken, 1988) intended to obtain information about the roles and impact Latinos had in the campaign's decisions about relationship-building with and targeting of the Latino electorate. Respondents were prompted to provide anecdotes that could paint a picture beyond the description of responsibilities, strategy and tactics.

1.9 Coding and Analysis

Instead of following traditional grounded theory or extended case methods, literature was reviewed simultaneously with data analysis to foster what Luker (2008: 125) calls a 'dialogue between evidence and existing theory', essential to guide researchers' sensitivities through the analysis. She argues against grounded theory's post-data literature review as well as the extended method's theory-proving approach in favor of a 'logic of discovery' that generates new insights within the frame of existing literature.

After transcription, categories were identified allowing new themes to emerge from the data. Participants brought up new themes without prompts, hence the need to use open and selective coding analysis that allow the researcher to group similar answers together under prominent themes. Through NVIVO, quotes were selected and placed under grand-themes

(Appendix E) of Latino identity and pan-ethnicity, access and representation within campaign structure, and issues pertaining the community as well as messaging and strategies used to address them. Further readings allowed to find more specific topics under each category. Similarities and contentions were found in multiple areas and are addressed in detail in the following section.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

1.10 Sample Demographics and Overview

Most accounts about Latino participation and engagement with the Clinton campaign come from pundits, consultants, or academics focusing on voter behavior and media effects, instead of going to the source and talking to Latinos directly involved in the campaign's day-to-day operation. As organizations, presidential campaigns are a disperse network that includes staff at national and state headquarters, and regional and local seats with personnel doing political outreach, communications, and field operations. These are the people crafting and disseminating the campaign's communications with Latinos and thus, to some extent, determining the level of political engagement of the constituency during an election cycle.

1.11 The Sleeping Giant

The 1980s were regarded as 'the decade of the Hispanics' resulting from the population's growth. Political entities and the media more actively started seeking Latinos' input and participation (DeSipio, 1996: 28). Due to their expected demographic growth, Latinos are regarded as a minority 'primed to have cultural, economic, social, and political power in the United States' (Stokes-Brown, 2018).

Usual depictions of Latinos paint them as 'politically passive or apolitical' (Fraga, 2012), but in reality, many keep informed about U.S. politics and engage politically in some level or another. Surges in Latino voter turnout during the 1990s, and a relevant 45% of the constituency's vote going for George W. Bush in 2004, helped establish the narrative of an increased political capital. But the discourse of the 'sleeping giant' has been played over and over by the media in every election since with pundits claiming each cycle that it will be 'the year Latinos finally define an election' (Preston, 2008; Schechter, 2012; Schodolski, 2000; Times, 2004; Valdes, 2016).

Still, Subervi-Velez (2007a) notes that Latino 's political participation is lower than that of non-Latino Americans. From ineligibility to lack of interest because of deficiency of resources, a significant proportion of the Latino population is not yet actively involved in political life,

whether as voters or as campaign volunteers or within community organizations (Verba et. al, 1995). But one of the most overlooked reasons for non-participation is the absence of communication and contact with others who might ask them to get involved in a particular situation or activity. One participant explains that formulaic campaigns are in part to be held responsible:

We're talking about a 'sleeping giant' and they're going to continue to sleep in part because we keep doing the same thing and expecting different results. (Participant 4)

1.12 Mi Gente. ¿Nuestra Gente?—Nuances and Pan-ethnic Identity

Imagery about a fast-growing population and projections of its impact are often touted when talking about Latinos in America. With the media portraying their life stories and experiences in the frame of what Fraga (2012: 1) calls 'sketchily drawn caricatures of working-class, immigrant-based communities trying to find a foothold to achieve the American dream', it is no wonder that the broader American society and its institutions still respond 'imperfectly at best' to Latinos' presence in every aspect of American life.

The Latino population is complex by nature. Cultural practices and traditions can bridge some of this diversity; but when it comes to the political life of the community as a bloc, it has mostly been determined by non-Hispanics addressing them as a single group.

1.12.1 Nuances

Important experiential identifiers make Latinos a very nuanced community (Garcia Bedolla, 2014). From national origin, to family immigration status, class, age, and language preference, and a wide array of possible combinations of these, it is naïve to assume that it is easy to address them all the same way.

Viejos y Millennials – Latino's age and political engagement

Contrary to popular belief, the rapid growth in the population of Latinos is not due to immigration, but to an increase of those who are U.S.-born. According to Fraga (2012), this group now represents 62 percent of all Latinos and are an overwhelming majority of the under-18 cohort. A participant mentioned the importance of focusing resources and attention on these voters:

I don't know how one balances the nuances, but I just think that you have to be focused on young millennials, and Gen-Zers. We already know how to reach older

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Latinos. That's through the Univisions and the Telemundos. We know that strategy. Are we using Vice, are we using BuzzFeed? (Participant 6)

The campaign did try to appeal to Millennials and Gen-Zers via social media and predominantly-English sites, but by several accounts, Latino elected officials and other leaders thought efforts were unfocused (Phillip and O'Keefe, 2016).

De México, Colombia y Venezuela – Latinos' national-origin in the political arena

One of the most common ways to account for the diversity within the Latino community is national-origin (Stokes-Brown, 2012). People of Mexican descent are the largest share of Latinos in the U.S., but there are relevant communities from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic, each with distinct histories and enclaves, and thus, different needs when addressed.

To me it's not about a race thing, maybe culture plays a little bit in it, but I'm Venezuelan, what my culture, my (...) Mexican, it's not the same culture. So that's another thing with the struggle with the concept of the Latino message. What's the Latino message? (Participant 1)

Whether you're going to engage with or speak to a Cuban-American, or a Puerto Rican, or a Colombian, or a Venezolano, or a Mexicano, or whatever it may be, it's going to be a bit different. (Participant 3)

It's so hard to engage our community because it is so nuanced and oftentimes, depending on the country we're coming from we have certain opinions or perceptions of government and politics. (Participant 4)

Interviewees agree that despite the need to respect and understand the reality of different national origins within the broader Latino label, it is in the common identifiers where strength in numbers lies.

It's also making sure that we can create these huge coalition between people from different countries to get out as a Latino collective. (Participant 3)

Se habla español (but also, English) – Language in Latino outreach

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Garcia Bedolla (2003) argues that language is an important part of Latinos' understanding of their identity. Language is a central part of socialization and a linkage to the larger Latino community but is frequently one of the first attributes to be lost in assimilation.

In the early 2000s, 48 percent of Latinos reported that they only or mostly spoke Spanish at home; 26 affirmed speaking mostly or only English, while the other 26 percent said they speak both equally. In any case, there is a clear generational transition in the use of language by Latinos in the U.S. (Geron, 2005). Most second-generation Latinos are either English-dominant or fluent, but given that more than two thirds of Latinos over the age of 18 are foreign-born, Spanish will still be widespread in the foreseeable future.

Academic research has asked how to best reach Latinos during a presidential election (Issenberg, 2016; Stokes-Brown, 2018). Due to the significant number of foreign-born Latinos, mostly Spanish-language ads, flyers, media, and direct contact are relied on by campaigns to spread their messages and help naturalized citizens understand issues and procedures on voting. But as one participant commented,

More and more Latino voters are Millennials and English-speakers. Some of them are only English speakers. So, while it's important to still communicate in Spanish and have presence in the Hispanic media world, as times passes, the vast majority of Latino voters are going to be mostly English-speakers. (Participant 7)

In that sense, the case for an increased use of Spanglish is advocated for by campaign operatives.

Being Latino doesn't just mean that you're communicating in Spanish or communicating in English; there is an entire cross-section in the middle of the spectrum that also exists. (Participant 3)

1.12.2 Juntos—Pan-Latinidad as a political tool

The existence of Latinos as a social group beyond the realms of politics and mainstream media is a matter of contention. While amalgamating people with diverse traditions, histories, and links to the United States can mean the formation of a community that transcends national-origin identities, it can also reflect an 'artificial characterization of a 'community'' whose alleged existence is mostly in how institutions and the media address it than in reality (Fraga, 2012).

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Although the ‘artificiality versus reality’ debate of the constructed notion of Latino is ongoing, the Latino National Survey indicates that the majority of respondents feel a sense of Latinidad regardless of national origin, generational or immigration status, and language use. In addition, the sense of communal identification and affinity has the potential of being transformed into collective expressions of action, like engaging in the political process as voters or influencers. If the notion of Latino as a political mass is pushed by Latino political elites, it has the potential to increase the community’s actual weight in the American political landscape, as it would lay the foundation for bigger political mobilization and increased group awareness.

Some have argued that, when ascribed by outsiders, an all-encompassing Latinidad presents the risk of becoming a gross misrepresentation by homogenizing a very culturally rich population (Moore, 1990). However, there are scholars who claim that a Latino pan-ethnicity can derive from Latinos themselves and by integrating diverse backgrounds through their commonalities, a shared cultural identity, or a cosmic race (Vasconcelos, 1957), can result.

Every member of the Latino community that lives here is either an immigrant themselves or have been pushed by non-Latino America into being an ‘other’, right? So, I think that there is a certain embrace of the ‘other’ of the Latino that once you are able to go through that process within your own campaign and embrace your culture and embrace all of the differences that make Latinos one cohesive thing, then you need to translate that into all of the things that you want to do for the community. (Participant 7)

Coming together in the face of a Trump Administration

One possible explanation of how the Latino identity came about is how other subsets of American society treat Latinos. Fraga (2012) explains that a differential treatment or discrimination based on stereotypes influences the shaping and reinforcing of a sense of group identity. Donald Trump's rhetoric during the 2016 cycle set off a phenomenon in which Latinos look towards each other as a community united by that identity marker. Increased group awareness has the potential of increasing political incorporation, especially under a negative climate where public policies directly affect Latinos (Garcia, 2003).

The feeling that I had with Donald Trump as I heard his speech was he knew what he was doing. He was talking to a specific group of voters in the United States when he targeted Mexicans as rapists and criminals. But I also got the dog whistle. I also got that he’s turning us all into that. (Participant 7)

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I do think that there's like a common U.S. Latino experience and I actually think that what we're seeing right now under Trump is actually unifying us all. (Participant 1)

Interviewees mentioned that going forward, Latinos should be made feel like they are seen and respected, because their expectations and demands as a social group will be higher.

You need to make them feel like: 'We will respect you. We will celebrate your contributions. We understand that you are an integral part of this country and this country belongs to you just like it belongs to everybody else. (Participant 7)

1.13 Nuestra voz – A seat at the table

Institutional friction is inherent to information processing inside campaigns (Jones and Baumgartner, 2005). For a break of preconceptions to happen at the higher echelons of campaign headquarters there must be either strong external signals, internal debate, or both.

Participants constantly mentioned that during the 2016 cycle, due to the political climate, assumptions were made about the Latino community that did not match their experiences or those of Latino voters they were coming across on the ground. When they attempted to flag issues to superiors, they often faced roadblocks that impeded them to address the constituency in ways they knew could have benefited the campaign's relationship with that constituency.

With field organizing you essentially are the campaign's eyes and ears in the community. People can be in campaign headquarters in Brooklyn and they can think of these great soundbites and talking points and they could be good in theory, but the Organizing Department are the ones who put it in practice. We are the first people to contact a voter, so, we can see first-hand what worked and what didn't with particular Hispanic or Latino voters. (Participant 2)

In Florida I can say, I think at the organizing level, so that's a very ground level, there were a lot of folks were Latino, but if you started going up in management roles in the state of Florida for example, there were very limited people who are Latino. (Participant 3)

1.13.1 Latinos in campaign leadership

The machinery of this modern age, these social structures that seek to represent our feelings, our points of view, are directed by real people—and they are the connections with our community. (Garcia, 2003)

When trying to understand the possibilities of persuasive strategies within a campaign organization, one should look at its nature, structure, values, practices, and categories to see the interrelationships between identity, the organization, and its rhetoric (Connaughton, 2005).

Latinos within campaign structure seem to agree that one of the most important things required for them to assert leadership is that their voices are listened to and respected. This echoes Maria Berriozabal's—the first Latina to be elected to City Council in San Antonio—approach of 'bringing people she represented to the council chambers to speak for themselves, which was her definition of providing leadership' (Geron, 2005).

In campaigns it makes a difference when you have a Latino in the room. Where decisions are made, where messaging is made. I feel that during this campaign, even though they were really good at having key Latinos in senior positions, many times I felt: 'I'm the only one raising this point', or 'I'm in this senior meeting, but I'm not in the smaller meeting where most of the decisions are made'. (Participant 7)

Considering how hard it has been for Latinos to reach the highest echelon, some members of the community have joined candidates' campaigns instead. In 2008 and 2012, Obama's operation made one of the most visible efforts to that date to hire Latinos. In 2016, expectations were higher for the Clinton campaign as the 'sleeping giant' was, according to the mass media, still waiting to be woken.

Regardless of the structural responsiveness to Latino communities 'political institutions through their practices and/or benign neglect clearly indicate the power basis that Latinos must develop effective strategies to contend with' (Garcia, 2003).

For Garcia, 'leadership is studied in terms of the goal articulation conveyed to Latinos and its coherency, which can influence specific political activities' (2003). Based on this, the enhancement of Latino political empowerment, in campaign leadership, policymaking, and the voting booth, could be reaffirmed by the presence of Latino leaders who can obtain

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followings in a variety of Latino sub-communities. This is demonstrated by the fact that during the 2016 cycle, mass media answered to Latinos' need to see more of their own in the election arena by publishing articles about campaigns (mainly Democratic) staffing up with Latinos in key roles and not just those for Latino outreach (Carrasquillo, 2015, 2016; Krueger, 2016).

The biggest contribution to our community that the campaign could have done is just creating, I don't want to say a pipeline, but beginning to create this long-term pipeline because it empowered someone like Lorella (Praelli, National Latino Vote Director and former DREAMer) nationally. (Participant 4)

I think one powerful thing about Hillary Clinton was bringing Amanda Renteria into a senior role. We didn't see that for Obama really. We didn't see that for Clinton, Mr. Clinton, before that. (Participant 5)

Activists and political elites interpret necessities and realities and frame meanings for the Latino community to advance their agenda and empower themselves (Garcia, 2003). From their positions of influence, Latino leaders can inform and encourage members of the community to tie their opportunities and hurdles to political institutions, hence increasing Latinos' involvement in American political life.

Actively enabling Latinos in campaign structure to perform in their roles, whether in national headquarters or the state and local levels, comes with a set of benefits for both the campaign and the Latino community itself. Definition and clarification of group issues, planning of strategies and provision of incentives for Latinos by Latinos (Garcia, 2003) have the potential of translating into higher levels of identification and hence turnout.

When Latinos are given a seat at the table because their expertise is acknowledged and not just to have one, better outcomes occur. Similarly, staffers expressed that they felt more at ease being vocal about issues that needed to be flagged when there were other Latinos higher up in the ladder.

Alida Garcia, a strategist and Latino vote Deputy Director for Obama's reelection campaign, said hiring and promoting people of color really matters when running a culturally nuanced campaign. 'Hiring Latino Field Organizers is one thing. Hiring managers experienced with Latino campaign operations to guide those organizers is another' (Lind, 2015).

1.13.2 The impact of representation in political incorporation

Literature tends to look at either the electorate and political engagement of citizens at the grassroots level or to candidates and politicians. The people in the middle, campaign staff are overlooked within research circles, but they are a key component that might be the missing link in understanding why Democratic campaigns in the United States are falling short on the Latino turnout they expect (Kraushaar, 2018; Miller, 2018).

Latinos place a great deal of attention to heritage and group membership when seeking and interpreting political matters (Subervi-Vélez, 2007a). There is also a possibility that, while consuming news, campaign materials, and political opinions that cover needs and interests of their class, age cohort, status or national-origin, they may also look for communications with a 'Latino angle'.

Moves from campaigns to purposefully staff up with Latinos in every area, not just in Latino-outreach positions, are intended to make the way Latinos are addressed more personal. As Connaughton (2005) explains, 'In political campaigns this understanding is important because from a purely strategic point of view, audience members' responses to message appeals and the extent to which they identify with the party organization may influence their voting choice.'

Although motives for Latinos to join presidential campaigns are not generalizable due to intricacies of specific historic and economic contexts, in the case of Hillary for America, it would seem that the campaign as an organization sent identity cues that allowed Latinos from a variety of backgrounds to join and work towards addressing Latinos as a crucial component of the social fabric of the United States.

I contend here that although campaigns have deemed the Latino electorate as critical in terms of numbers and potential to sway elections, Latinos have not been able to influence the urgency with which they could and should be addressed, as various interviewees pointed out, by leaving the bulk of Latino outreach until the last stretch of campaigns. When stakeholders feel like they are an afterthought they might be more reluctant to show up for the organization.

I think we did not invest enough in voter turnout in the Latino community. We started six months out to build all those teams up and we should have done it since the beginning of the campaign. (Participant 5)

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The community has certain stigmas and opinions about politics and the political process that we need to start conversations earlier. And not just to mobilize and get out the vote, but to educate. And that's where the disconnect is, and the missed opportunity every cycle. (Participant 4)

Establishing relationships between an individual's values and those of the organization through a 'conversation of shared interests' (Connaughton, 2005) can foster identification between both. One such way of starting that conversation and ensuring the interests of the Latino electorate are properly considered by the campaign is by having members of the community within its ranks. At the same time, because they are versed on the campaign's goals and messages, Latinos within the organization are the most likely to have effective conversations about the candidate's platform and convey their message to Latino voters, whether it be from an earned media, a political outreach, or a field organizing perspective.

Garcia (2003) posits that the notion of Latino politics should not assume that these occur solely as a result of some sense of community between Latinos. For Latinos' role in American politics to be significant enough, there needs to be a higher level of mobilization and a collective will to act as one. Implications for mobilization can be more relevant if Latinos perceive relevancy with the campaign. The best way for a campaign to ensure that, is by having experts within their structure, not only in a professional or skills level, but on a cultural level as well.

For Subervi-Velez(2007b), 'even highly acculturated Latinos would not be immune to the candidacy and messages (...), nor to the appeals that non-Latino candidates make to them as Latinos, or much less to messages from Latino operatives on behalf of their respective candidates'. As much as Latinos are seen as pursuing the 'American Dream', they still look towards their own as sources of information about political life in America. Hence, the importance of the salience of Latino staff on high-profile campaigns when the candidate is not Latino.

Beyond the ethical arguments for diversity in presidential campaigns, there are conversations about the 'value of diversity' in that, similar to for-profits, 'diversity is good for business' (Mannix and Neale, 2005). Organizations realized that similarity and representation of constituent groups can create an 'attractive climate for underserved consumers'. This could be translated to 'profitable' campaigns that render an increase in voter turnout when the people doing the bidding for them look like them.

I argue that although more Latino candidates at the local and state level make sense where there is a majority-minority, at the presidential level, Latinos still face major hurdles and barriers. Hence, while it should be encouraged that more Latinos run for office, Latinos can

achieve both descriptive and substantive representation within a single presidential campaign in the form of a candidate that will advocate for issues that concern the majority of the Latino electorate, and through qualified operatives in leadership positions that will keep the candidate's policy platform and messaging in check, ensuring that these issues are addressed in a manner beneficial for the community at large.

So much of the emphasis about representation in politics is about the candidates, but I think that there is still so much more room to grow there. And as a result, I think the messaging in terms of how effective it is with our community still has ways to improve. (Participant 4)

1.14 ¿Cómo dice? – Issues and messaging

Campaigns choose to address issues in their public discourse to signal to the values they hold and to make salient aspects of the organization's identity (Kreiss, Lawrence and McGregor, 2018: 23). Via a combination of tactics, they try to win over constituencies by developing psychological and emotional connections with these groups. The campaign structure builds its image as a collage of multiple identities that cater to different groups of stakeholders. Appeals are developed by strategists to show images and messages with the intention to get voters to like the candidate and mobilize them on Election Day.

When constructing meaning, campaigns attempt to unite people under rhetorical communities joined by fantasies of shared futures. If fantasies thus far have been shaped mostly by non-Latinos regardless of the input of Latino consultants in past campaigns, it would then be attractive to have Latino campaign operatives shape that consciousness not only amongst the Latino electorate but in terms of the normalization of high-profile Latinos amongst every area of campaigns and by extension the broader American society.

Identification, according to Cheney (1983) can be fostered by three sets of rhetorical tactics. First, by demonstrating common ground through acknowledging an individual's or group's contributions to the organization and espousing shared values. Second, by assuming a 'we' stance in public communications with unifying symbols and logos. Finally, campaigns can encourage identification via the use of an antithesis around which all can rally against.

Based on the interviews, Hillary for America attempted these three forms of identification with the Latino community. First, by acknowledging the cultural contributions of Latinos to America, while at the same time including them in the 'we' that implies they are part of a broader American society, which was so central to the campaign's 'Stronger Together' slogan. Due to the political environment of the 2016 election, the campaign shifted to the third

rhetorical form by trying to unite the Latino community around Donald Trump being a threat to their peaceful existence in the country.

In some ways, this campaign was so reactive, and we never... It was incredibly difficult for her to ever own offense. So, anything we even came up with, ended up —this is all just in retrospect—ended up not sticking largely because... I'm not sure very much stuck. Period. General, or diversity based, right? (Participant 8)

Respondents were unable to pinpoint a significant moment in campaign history, not even in the one they were a part of, in which they felt they were being spoken to in an inspiring way as members of the Latino community. Past campaigns' messaging of inclusion or directed at young people stood out. But regarding a message for which the Latino community was the target, the collective difficulty to come up with an answer shows that, even with the progress achieved by Hillary for America with record number of Latino staffers, there are still barriers to access the decision-making tables in which they have an input in creating messages that resonate with Latinos.

So many of the internal battles are just: 'Listen to me. Acknowledge my community.' And I'm sure we haven't even thought beyond that because that is the perpetual battle. But if we're able to create that space and say: 'Your voice matters', there will be so much more room for actual discussions of policy around issues, and around needs, and around priorities. (Participant 4)

1.14.1 Cultural competence vs. Hispandering

Identification is rooted on the idea that people unite via symbols, so the 'dramatization' of commonalities can push people to identify under one constituency. 'You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his' (Burke, 1969).

If 'ethnic-targeted' advertisements have been proven to enhance a constituency to buy general-market products, then Latino-oriented campaign information, be it T.V, radio ads, digital, or direct contact, can improve the attention the community pays to such efforts. On the other hand, these attempts run the risk of coming off as insensitive for lack of nuance. There are many examples from both corporate and campaign attempts that have failed in communicating with minority constituencies for not being able to create the necessary relevancy.

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This is related to the concept of pandering in political campaigns. Most interviewees mention that one sure-fire way to alienate Latinos is by falling prey to what is known as 'Hispandering', through which candidates or surrogates attempt to reach out in ways that feel forced or inauthentic. Some of these could be having non-Spanish speakers try to relay a message in broken Spanish, or making cultural assumptions that don't land well.

While principals speaking to the community are important, it's ok for these campaigns not to have someone who doesn't speak Spanish trying to speak Spanish on camera to pander to voters. It's ok to have validators who do speak Spanish to come out and endorse a candidate. (Participant 2)

Campaigns try and get their non-Spanish-speaking elected officials to speak Spanish on-stage at a rally, and all you do as a Spanish-speaking person is: 'Oh, my God! What's happening?' Like, they're butchering what they're saying. (Participant 5)

In the case of Hillary Clinton's campaign, one of the clearest examples was an episode in which a listicle published on the campaign blog, entitled '7 Ways in which Hillary Clinton is just like your abuela', didn't land well among Millennial progressive Latinos.

For a digital content person, who's not a Latino, it's just like: 'Oh, I'm gonna Latinize this! I'll make sure that people understand this was written by a Latina. But the meaning of 'abuela', the meaning of the actual word is so much bigger, and it's so much different that the way it happened was a misstep and it was a big problem. (Participant 7)

When information is processed, signals can be misinterpreted or biased. Professional training or experience of non-Latino staff and consultants does not necessarily mean that they possess the same understanding of nuances among Latinos as in-group campaign operatives. While it can be understood that certain signals are mischaracterized for strategic reasons (Jones and Baumgartner, 2005), interviewees mostly agreed that non-Latinos may have a place shaping and conducting communications with Latinos during campaigns under certain circumstances.

When you're trying to be a part of empowering a community, I think it's important that that starts with listening if you're not of that group. I think

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you can, I don't want to say you can't, but I think you have to do it with a pretty healthy sense of humility when doing it. (Participant 8)

To enhance problem solving, diverse teams should come together to exchange information under a climate of willingness to engage in constructive conflict (Mannix and Neale, 2005).

You need to have a lot of voices in the room within the community to reflect the community at large, and to have sometimes arguments. And to have sometimes those discussions on some things that happen on the ground you need to have them in your headquarters and you need to have them in the way that you craft the message. (Participant 7)

I think it is from a very top-level approach, it is having more Latino voices in that discussion process. (Participant 3)

Even after the increased efforts to court Latinos in 2016, studies (Miller, 2018) show that campaigns and external consultants are wary of investing too much in messaging for the Latino electorate due to fear of hurting the campaign or doing a poor job. One participant had an answer to that issue.

'Hire more Latino campaign staff and let them do their job.' (Participant 2)

Participants mention the need for intentionality when planning Latino outreach. Campaigns need to be clear on why they want to reach the constituency and include that in their message. If condensed in one single statement, respondents agree that the most important thing that should be communicated is: 'You matter. You are valued and important. We want you here'.

1.14.2 Every issue is a Latino issue

Beyond identarian or emotional appeals, attachments to a candidate can also be inspired by issue-related discourse. Scholars like Iyengar and Kinder (1987) support the claim that voters take issue positions and policy proposals into account when deciding which candidate to support.

Democrats have historically had issue ownership over social welfare and intergroup relationships (Connaughton, Nekrassova, and Lever, 2007), two keys areas for Latinos. But, although the party is noted for owning issues that Latino staffers consider key to be part of the Latino communication and outreach strategies, the conjuncture of the 2016 election led the direction of most messaging towards immigration.

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A common conception is that Latinos are all immigrants, and not just that, but mostly illegal immigrants. Fraga (2012) explains that as a result of the notion, 'civic incorporation, capacity for political participation, views of policy, and so on, are all seen as shaped and constrained by their immigrants status'. The Latino immigrant experience is a very real aspect that should be recognized, but focusing only or mostly on it disregards a wide set of experiences and perspectives of Latinos in America.

Poll, after poll, after poll, come out with the things that are important to Latinos are the same things that are important to everyone in America. The economy. Jobs. Healthcare. Education. And then usually, fifth or sixth is immigration.
(Participant 7)

Do you need Latino messaging?' You know what I'm saying? Latinos are much more besides immigration... (Participant 6)

The priority is really education, and is affordable housing, and can people get healthcare? That's what the average person, Latino, black, Asian is thinking about.
(Participant 1)

While the Latino National Survey results show that immigration still ranks high amongst important issues for Latinos, the ranking of the community's preferred policy interests is indicative of where they fit within the broader American society. Latinos mostly show that 'bread-and-butter' issues are as relevant to them as to any other American. Cruz Bustamante, a California politician, said that 'the Latino agenda is the 'American agenda'', highlighting that Latinos care about everyday political issues the same way as other Americans.

Connaughton (2005) explains that campaign identification is encouraged within political and historical contexts in which other constituencies are addressed too, hence impacting the invitations for identification extended to Latinos. Presidential campaigns' efforts to communicate to Latinos do not happen in a vacuum and are not isolated from the campaigns efforts to communicate to other constituencies and American society as a whole. In this sense, messaging and tactics, as much planning and consideration as can go into them, are subject to environmental factors that can change without notice at any point during the cycle and shift the campaign's focus. This was the case with Hillary Clinton's campaign. Although immigration was a heavy-weight issue on their Latino strategy from the onset, it became pretty much the sole focus of the messaging overtly directed to the Latino community once it became clear that anti-immigration sentiment was increasing due to Trump's rhetoric.

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Having Latinos serve in campaigns' Latino outreach areas is key for an effective communication from the organization to the community. At the same time, it is vital to have Latinos working in areas of campaigns not targeted specifically to Latinos, so that the voices of the community can permeate in those communications aimed at the general American public. This in order to satisfy the community's need to be seen as part of a broader American society and not just as a group singled out as 'other'.

I think missing the minority voice in the room when you're talking about overall messaging of the campaign is not smart. (Participant 5)

This makes the case for pursuing enhanced political development on a continual basis. Political parties need to maintain the relationships they build with the Latino community through each campaign and election cycle on off-cycle years. Keeping identified grassroots leaders active, ensuring constant voter registration efforts and engaging on constant dialogue means that Latino voters don't just feel targeted only for electoral purposes and can translate into more political engagement that will lead to bigger turnout. It is a long-haul game, not a sprint that should be happening in the few months leading to every election.

5. CONCLUSION

During election cycles, Latinos want to be given a place within a greater society, thanks to their demographic changes, especially age, as more Latinos are now US-born and younger. At the same time, they still expect to be addressed in their particularities and spoken to about broader issues in a way that they feel is personal and taking them into account.

A common thread within the participants' answers was that of not having a clear answer on how to foster a tighter pan-ethnic unity amongst Latinos when it comes to their political identity and engagement. The answer might lie within Donald Trump's rhetoric triggering the necessary elements for symbolic convergence between different subgroups of American Latinos. The lack of similarities when it comes to issues that affect them can be countered under the fantasy themes of being forced into 'otherness' by the political climate.

The future of Latino politics is not on a more active electorate alone, but in how campaigns as organizations regard Latinos within their structures. Latino operatives can be the key for presidential campaigns to achieve electoral goals as a result of their better understanding of the community's nuances, its policy interests, and what they expect in terms of political institutions to increase their political engagement.

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Perhaps Hillary Clinton's campaign slogan is more relevant to Latinos now than it was in 2016 —both in the electorate and within campaign organizations. If we consider their potential political weight, as well as their power to stand up to discourse directed at them from certain political circles, they would indeed be 'Stronger Together'.

APPENDICES

Appendix B – Interview Calendar

Participant number	Date	Format
1	19-06-2018	Skype
2	22-06-2018	Skype
3	06-07-2018	Skype
4	12-07-2018	Telephone
5	27-06-2018	Skype
6	10-07-2018	Telephone
7	09-07-2018	Skype
8	13-07-2018	Skype

Appendix C – Interview Guide

Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Demographics

1. Could you give your name, age, and what was your involvement with the campaign?

Personal and Work History

2. How did you get involved with politics/elections? a. How did this path lead you to join HFA in 2016?

3. As we've briefly discussed, I'm interested in why and how presidential campaigns in the U.S. approach the Latino community. As such, and if you're comfortable answering, do you identify yourself as Latino/a?

4. Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which a presidential campaign message tailored for the Latino community had an impact on you?

Working in politics and campaigns

5. Have you seen representation of the Latino community in roles such as yours to a degree that you are comfortable with?

6. As far as you can tell, did the campaign staff up with Latinos in every area or mostly for Latino-outreach specific roles?

7. Could a qualified person work in Latino outreach without a being Latino/a themselves?

Message Development

8. Can you tell me about steps for the campaign to develop a message specifically tailored for the Latino community?

9. Do campaigns feel pressure to follow on the discourse of Latino voters as a 'sleeping giant'?
a. Is there a genuine interest in increasing not only turnout on Election Day but political participation on the long run?

10. Tell me about the use of the term 'Latino' as an umbrella term in political campaigns. a. How should a campaign balance the recognition of the heterogeneity of Latinos with perceptions of a shared future or commonality that leads to a sense of pan ethnicity among the community?

Strategy and tactics

11. What is the most important thing a campaign should communicate to Latinos? a. In what ways did the HRC's campaign succeed and didn't succeed in regards to that?

12. What can you tell me about specific ways in which the campaign tried to reach out to Latinos? a. What was the biggest hit from HRC's campaign in regards to its approach to Latinos?

b. And the biggest miss/ aspect that could be improved?

13. What do you make of the phrase 'Speak culture, not just language'.

14. Is it important is it for a presidential campaign to reach out to Latinos in Spanish? Why? a. Can you run an effective campaign by mostly doing outreach in Spanish?
 b. Do you believe there is room for Spanglish in presidential campaigns? If so, how seriously would that messaging be taken?
15. Lorella Praelli said: ‘We’ve known from day one that the Latino community needs something to look towards’. a. What do you think that was in 2016? What is that now?

Clearing house: Anything Else

16. Is there anything else I haven’t asked about that you think I should know?
 17. Is there anyone else that you would recommend I speak to?
 Please feel free to contact me later by e-mail if you have any other thoughts on the subject.

Appendix E – Thematic analysis coding

Table 1. Classification of keywords from interviews

Categories	Themes	Keywords
(i) Latinidad	(a) Nuances	nuance differences nationality age older Gen-Zers Millennials status U.S born immigrant first-generation second-generation Dreamers
	(b) pan-ethnicity	language English-dominant Spanish-dominant Spanish bilingual Spanglish Mexican Cuban Puerto Rican Venezuelan Colombian Latino communities political identity culture shared history identification useful ‘Other’ collective community constantly changing generalizations fear not welcome here

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(ii)	Mobilization	(a) Sleeping Giant	<p>awake voter education stereotype work help social media American campaign targets conversations</p>	<p>voter contact canvassing persuasion media Incorporation political engagement Obama organizing field disenfranchised</p>
(iii)	Latinos in campaigns	(a) Latinos in staff	<p>leadership senior roles Seat at the table Room where it happens White senior staff silo voice advocacy understanding of nuances stereotypes diversity impact non-Latino decision-making pigeonholed</p>	<p>decisions flag-up listening block intentional hiring Latino-outreach qualified representation assumptions discussion tokenism public service across the board top-level</p>
		(b) representation	<p>pride sense of self reflection interests speak to them empowerment white people you matter</p>	<p>similar background diversity visibility outreach grassroots long-term credibility</p>
(iv)	Issues and messaging	(a) All issues are Latino issues	<p>Over-focus on immigration Bread-and-butter healthcare wages American Republicans</p>	<p>Table-kitchen issues education jobs small businesses taxes conservative</p>

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(b) messaging	not everyone	respect
	economic opportunity	American Dream
	better future	children
	welcome	belonging
	cultural competence	pandering
	code-switching	Hispandering
	culture-bridging	gaffes
	mistake	assumptions
	humility	surrogates
	localizing	J. Lo
	Marc Antony	Telemundo
	Univision	Facebook
	Twitter	Buzzfeed
	State teams	conveying
	delivery	taken-for-granted
	speak culture	Latinization
	nationalizing	Latino message
sensitive	tweaking	

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