

2014

The Effect of Ethnic Microtargeting on Latino Americans' Political Identity Perception

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THE EFFECT OF ETHNIC MICROTARGETING ON LATINO AMERICANS' POLITICAL
IDENTITY PERCEPTION

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An Independent Study Thesis
Submitted to the Department of Political Science
at The College of Wooster
March, 2014
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of I.S. Thesis

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Angela Bos, for her help and guidance throughout my time at The College of Wooster and particularly for her support during this project. Additionally, I would like to thank all of people who helped distribute my survey, this study would not have been possible without their assistance. I would also like to thank Gillian Lee for her assistance with editing my I.S. She actually made editing my I.S. fun and helped me to catch comma errors that I would have never seen.

I like to thank my family and friends, especially my mom and dad for I would not have gotten this far without them. I have come all long way in my years, as this project proves, and I am grateful for their unwavering support throughout my academic endeavors.

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Introduction

The 2012 Obama campaign devoted approximately \$20 million to Latino outreach, an expense double the combined allocation of Bush and Kerry in 2004 (Abranjo 2010). These figures are a reflection the growing Latino population and its inevitable role in defining the future of American politics. Currently, 16.3 percent of the American population and largely volatile in terms of political preferences, the Latino community presents an opportunity for long-term political gains (Abranjo 2010; Bowler & Segura 2012). Strategically, both Republican and Democratic parties have bolstered Latino outreach. Although diverse, politicians have largely targeted this community as a whole focusing on issues, such as immigration and bilingual education, that simultaneously highlight similarities within the Latino community and distinctions from broader American society. These group-based advertisements are powerful means for candidates to relate to voters (Popkin 1994) but it is important to consider the implications of targeting this demographic as distinct from fellow Americans.

There is evidence that individuals of Spanish descent typically identify with their national origins rather than with the panethnic label, Latino (de la Garza, DeSipio, Garcia & Falcon 1992; Masuoka 2008). Microtargeting is a tool of social categorization that continually reinforces a shared experience among Latinos in the United States. These powerful campaign appeals politically mobilize Latinos as a group and consequentially have the potential to strengthen the Latino community. Considering the size of the Latino population, emphasizing a distinct ethnic culture could create political fragmentation within American society and increased polarization. Public opinion polls suggest that Latinos hold different political values than other Americans, particularly Anglos. Latinos tend to be more

conservative on social issues, such as abortion and the death penalty, and more liberal in terms of the size and role of the federal government (Sanchez 2006a; Segura n.d.).

Consequentially, microtargeting Latinos on social welfare issues could cause these voters to make decisions based on values that are at odds with contemporary American politics. This group's electoral strength has the capacity to shift policy outcomes and shape American political culture.

My study was motivated by previous research in political psychology, and particularly Elizabeth Theiss-Morse's (2009) work on a social identity perspective of national identity. Social identity refers to aspects of an individual's self-concept constructed from social interactions. Although social identity was originally developed as psychological theory, it has important implications for politics. In fact, previous research has discovered that political behavior is significantly influenced by our social identities (Theiss-Morse 2009; Miller 1995; Ispas 2013). In the context of political science, social identity theory explains the dynamics of intergroup relations and why we adhere to a particular groups and values (Ispas 2013). As the United States population continues to diversify, it is important to understand how immigrant populations identify with America and fellow Americans. This study is particularly interested to examine the impact of microtargeting communication strategies on Latinos Americans' political identity perception. These strategies are used to mobilize Latinos by campaigning directly to this demographic on issues that pertain specifically to their interests. Specifically I ask: how do modern microtargeting strategies influence Latino Americans' political identity perceptions?

Drawing on social identity theory, I develop three main hypotheses that explain the impact of microtargeting on Latinos' political identity. I hypothesize that microtargeting

strengthens identification with the targeted group. More specifically, participants exposed to a national appeal advertisement will have a stronger American national identity, where as individuals targeted as Latino will have a greater ethnic identity. Further, I hypothesize that ethnic group appeals obstruct association with fellow Americans. Lastly, I postulate that campaign advertisements will cause adherence to norms associated with the group to which the ad was designed to appeal. To test these hypotheses, I develop a survey experiment that included two treatments, an ethnic appeal advertisement and a national group appeal advertisement, and a control group. I use analysis of variance tests, which reveal significant evidence in one of my three hypotheses. Specifically, there was a significant difference in association between the control group and the ethnic appeal.

I begin, in Chapter 1, with a review of previous literature on social identity theory, American identity, Latino ethnic identity, and microtargeting to develop my theory for the influence of microtargeting on Latino Americans' identity perception. In Chapter 2, I outline my methodology. I examine strengths and weaknesses of my chosen method to inform the creation of my study. Additionally, I will discuss the specifics of my research design and key variables. In Chapter 3, I review my expectations and present the results from the study. While, there was no evidence to support the theory that group-based campaign appeals impact group identity or adherence to group norms, there is significant evidence to suggest that ethnic microtargeting strengthens association with the Latino community. Lastly, in Chapter 4, I discuss strengths and drawbacks of the study. Further, I advance suggestions for future research and potential implications.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

In the contemporary political arena, Latino and Hispanic ethnic groups are becoming increasingly important. This is a reflection of the unprecedented immigration rates from Spanish-speaking countries, which are expected to continue steadily until the middle of the century. Latino and Hispanic Americans currently make up 16.3 percent of the American population, and the number is expected to increase to 30.2 percent by 2050 (Bowler & Segura 2012). Due to its sheer magnitude, this ethnic group has the potential to be decisive in future political elections, and respectively, political campaigns are progressively expanding their outreach to Latinos. Latinos have been the source of major research, within which there is a debate over the degree to which Latinos are assimilating into American culture. Previous researchers have speculated that Latinos are forming a sub-culture within the United States, based on their commitment to the Spanish language and proximity to their origins. However, there has been little investigation into how Latinos understand themselves in relation to America and their fellow nationals. I am interested in investigating Latino's political identity, and more specifically, the effect microtargeting campaign outreach strategies, such as canvassing, phone calls, and direct mail have on fostering national and ethnic identities.

I hypothesize that group-based appeals will increase identification with such a group. More specifically, the national appeal will foster an American national identity and the ethnic appeal an Latino ethnic identity. I further hypothesize that campaign appeals lead to adherence with the targeted groups norms and that viewing an ethnic appeal reduces association with fellow Americans. Social identity describes the aspects of an individual's identity that originate from social categories. Both national and ethnic identities are considered social identities, in that they are constructed on a socially based understanding of

the relationship between one's self and others who are a part of these groups. The incorporation of social categories into one's identity provides a framework of ingroups and outgroups by which people navigate the social world. People are regarded as ingroup members when they share an identity, while outgroup members are perceived as different from one's self or one's group. This framework is pertinent, because a sense of shared identity leads to a decision-making process based on collective rather than individual interests. When analyzing Latinos' experience in the U.S., it must be taken into consideration that Latinos have widely been treated as an outgroup. Importantly, political elites reach out to Latinos as individuals with unique needs and interests by means of microtargeting campaign strategies that utilize social identity in the interest of gaining the support of Latino Americans, but also potentially detract from Latinos' national identity. Do these strategies that capitalize on group identity in the interest of gaining the support of Latino Americans, result the maintenance of a distinct ethnic identity through which individuals navigate the political world?

Microtargeting strategies are becoming a larger aspect of political campaigns. These strategies that allow politicians to communicate their message to a particular audience present many opportunities to mobilize the voters. If these strategic messages accurately portray interests, microtargeting could have a positive influence on American democracy by educating voters about the avenues that would best represent their concerns. Although increasing representation, priming Latinos to identify with their ethnic group could also have important impacts on political culture over the next fifty years, as Latinos grow in electoral strength. For example, identifying with the Latino group would cause members to uphold norms, or values that are family and religiously oriented, as opposed to traditional American

values of individualism and egalitarianism. The existence of misinformation in group-based outreach could inhibit the extent to which groups are able to participate in the system and could ultimately obstruct representation of minorities in the political system (Jackson 2005). Microtargeting is a growing aspect of modern political campaigns and it is vital to understand the potential consequences of communicating in this way.

Before examining the nuances of this argument, it is important to first set up definitions that shape the rest of the study. Throughout the project, I employ the term Latino to encompass all people of Spanish decent, including Hispanics. National identity refers to the extent to which membership to the American citizenry is incorporated into one's identity. Ethnic identity, on the other hand, refers to the incorporation of membership to America's Latino community into one's self-concept. Ingroup is the term used to describe groups to which one belongs, while outgroup describes groups to which one does not belong. Lastly, group-based appeal means campaign outreach that targets a specific group of the electorate by focusing on the interests and needs of that particular group.

To develop a framework for my theory, I analyze social identity perspective, focusing specifically on two aspects of social identities, commitment to the group and setting boundaries, to examine how individuals relate to and are influenced by group memberships. Importantly from this analysis, I discover that association with group memberships varies. Subsequently, I draw on SIT to develop an understanding of the nuances American national identity, chiefly the characteristics of citizens who strongly identify with the national group and who, within this diverse population, is considered to be an American. From this, I explore Latinos assimilation, or integration into American culture, and group consciousness within the Latino community. Further, I look at the political relevance of group memberships

and how modern political campaigns employ group-based campaigning to reach the Latino population. Finally, I apply social identity theory to examine the influence of microtargeting on the development of Latinos' identity with the national and ethnic communities.

Social Identity Perspective

To develop a comprehensive understanding of national and ethnic identities, it is important to first look at the psychological social identity perspective. Miller (1995) substantiates the social identity approach suggesting, "nations are not aggregates of people distinguished by their physical or cultural traits, but communities whose very existence depends on mutual recognition" (Theiss-Morse 2009, 5). Given this interpretation, social identity perspectives provide a means to study how individuals relate to and are influenced by their national and ethnic communities. I employ the definition of social identity developed by Theiss-Morse (2009), in which group identity refers to the various aspects of an individual's identity that are constructed by social categorization. Brewer (2001) provides a complementary interpretation explaining, "Social identity provides a link between the psychology of the individual – the representation of self – and the structure and process of social groups within which the self is embedded" (115). Although individuals are associated with many groups, Theiss-Morse defines three components of social identities that not all group memberships fulfill. First, to be incorporated into one's self concept, there must be the existence of an "cognitive" component, meaning an understanding of group membership or self-categorization; second, an "evaluative" aspect, referring to one's positive perception of the group; and third, a sense of attachment to one's membership, or an "emotional" aspect (Theiss-Morse 2009, 8). Meaningful group memberships, those to which we attach emotional significance, are powerful determinants of social interactions.

Social identity perspective has provided the springboard for psychological and political research that aims to understand how people interact with the social and political world around them. The concept of social identity was most famously coined by the work of social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979) to describe the various aspects of an individual's identity that are the construct of social interactions. Tajfel's social identity theory (SIT) is based on assumptions about human nature. Fundamentally, categorization is a natural, cognitive process of differentiation and association necessary to make sense of the world (Kinder & Kam 2009). Further, people are motivated to identify with particular groups to maintain a positive self-concept (Kam & Kinder 2009). As Tajfel and Turner (1979) explain, "they [social classifications] also provide a system of orientation for self-reference: they create and define the individual's place in society" (Brown 2010, 39). Through the process of social categorization individual identity shifts to a more collective, shared identity. In fact, social psychologists argue within a collective sense of self, people take on concerns and goals of the group as their own (Theiss-Morse 2009). Tajfel's widely accepted theories of social identity have provided a foundation for important work in the contemporary field of political psychology.

One of Tajfel's (1970) major contributions, the minimal group paradigm experiment, is pertinent to the present study. The goal within minimal group paradigm was to discover just how significant group membership is to an individual's relationship with the social world. In a series of experiments Tajfel created arbitrary group memberships to then observe the role these memberships played on participants' behavior. In one particularly telling experiment, teenage boys were asked to estimate the number of dots on a sequence of rapid slides. Based on their responses, Tajfel categorized the boys into a group of those who

overestimated the number and a group of those who underestimated the number of dots. After group assignment, each boy was asked to complete a problem-solving activity, and subsequently given the task of allocating rewards to all other participants, who were anonymous apart from their name and group membership. Tajfel's results were telling; there was a pattern among 70 percent of participants of allocating rewards in a way that would benefit the group to which they were assigned (Kinder & Kam 2009). More precisely, boys in the overestimation group were likely to allocate the majority of rewards to others who overestimated dots. Ingroup bias is a term used to describe this natural tendency to favor others who have a similar identity. The terminology "minimal" is a pertinent term to describe Tajfel's artificial groups, which were superficial, anonymous, and had no competing interests between groups and still the effect of ingroup favoritism was strong (Kinder & Kam 2009). Tajfel's minimal group paradigm is cited across literature of social identity, because it illustrates the powerful effect social memberships have on individuals' perspectives and social behavior. If social categorizations invented in a lab environment influence intergroup behavior, how powerful might national and ethnic group memberships be on shaping political perspectives?

Group memberships play a significant role in the social world and Tajfel's theory of social identity has provided the foundation for the study of social phenomena. Modern researchers have used this theory to elaborate their understanding of a wide array of social phenomena including party identification and immigration. For example, immigration debates are commonly interpreted as ingroup versus outgroup competition. Interestingly, African Americans, although dominantly liberal, express highly conservative attitudes toward immigration, which stem from the perception that immigrants take job opportunities

away from native-born Americans (Bowler & Segura 2012). This study examines Tajfel's original theories and contemporary research on social identity theory to answer the questions: what makes a national or ethnic group membership significant to an individual, and how does that membership affect intergroup relations?

Group Identity

People are associated with variety of groups, some of which are more important than others. That is, not all group memberships are incorporated into an individual's sense of self. Citrin, Wong, and Duff (2001) explain, "we each possess multiple potential social identities whose degrees of overlap and whose relative significance for our self-concept may vary" (73). This variance is important to understand, because the degree to which people consider themselves part of a group is a central component of inter and intragroup group behavior. In fact, memberships to which one is greatly attached have a greater impact on political outlook and behavior. Theiss-Morse (2009) examined differences in the way people with strong and weak national identities view their obligations to the country. She found a 35 percent variance between strong and weak identifiers' beliefs that fighting in wars is a national obligation. There are two important aspects of social identities that determine the significance of membership, level of commitment and boundaries.

In terms of level of commitment, social identity theorists have offered several explanations for why people identify with groups including: cultural norms, need for positive self-esteem and distinctiveness, and situational factors, such as context and salience (Jackson 2005). A perspective important to consider is, Turner's (1987) self-categorization theory (SCT). According to this theory, which expands upon SIT focusing particularly on the cognitive process of identification, group identification is a function of salience of and

inclination to accept the category (Jackson 2005). Alyssa Ispas (2013) further theorizes context to be an important part of which group memberships shape one's identity at a given time. It is the way we see ourselves in a particular moment that causes us to identify with one group more strongly than others (Ispas 2013).

Theiss-Morse (2009) highlights the “emotional” component of social identities, or the level of attachment to a particular group membership, as the distinguishing factor in commitment to a group. According to her perspective, context is only influential for those who are not highly committed to a particular group membership. Rather, “the more people feel strongly attached to a group, the more likely they are to identify with it. The combination of these components – cognitive, evaluative, and affective – leads to group identities have an important influence on people's attitudes and behaviors” (Theiss-Morse 2009, 34). Furthermore, it has been theorized that the extent to which an individual is attached to a group membership has important implications on behavior. For example, individuals who are greatly attached to a particular group are most likely to be decidedly devoted to a particular membership and are thus more likely to conform to what a group stands for (Theiss-Morse 2009). Group norms are the collective understanding of how members are supposed to conduct themselves. In fact, this collective understanding of group norms allows groups to act together as a whole in effort to accomplish a common goal (Ispas 2013). Thus, strength of attachment to group memberships is an important aspect to consider in analysis of political behavior.

In addition to group commitment, Theiss-Morse (2009) identifies boundaries as another element that affects the significance of group identities. Group norms establish a prototype, or a description of the typical group member's beliefs and attitudes. Good group

members are expected to uphold group norms, thus making ingroups and outgroups easily distinguishable (Ispas 2013). In accordance with Tajfel's (1978) assumption of human desire to maintain positive self-esteem, committed group members, those whose membership is incorporated in their identity, tend to maintain distance from outgroups by exaggerating differences. Brown (2010) coins this tendency as "maximizing difference" (40). In comparing between ingroups and outgroups, individuals have an inclination to exaggerate differences. For ingroup comparisons, this tendency is the reverse: similarities are emphasized rather than difference (Brown 2010). Marilynn Brewer (2003) theorizes that people are attracted to groups that satisfy the needs for inclusion and differentiation. Exclusive group memberships fulfill both needs by rigidly defining an individual as included in a particular group, while simultaneously distinguishing them from another (Theiss-Morse 2009). For example, Latino Americans' incorporation of their Spanish origins and language into their identity gives them a sense of pride and clearly distinguishes them from Caucasian Americans.

Social identity theory has been broadly explored and defined. In order to navigate the complexity of social identity theory, Brewer (2001) defines four distinctive concepts: person-based social identities, relational social identities, group-based social identities, and collective identities. In short, person-based social identity explains the impact of social identities on an individual. Conversely, relational social identities are groups defined by a network of interpersonal relationships, such as family and friendships.

Most relevant to my study of national and ethnic identities are Brewer's group-based and collective identities. Rather than group membership influencing an individual's concept of him or herself, group-based identities refer to an individual's definition of themselves as

an integral part of a larger group. This dimension of social identity is related to Turner's self-categorization theory. As Turner and his colleagues (1987) explain, "A shift towards the perception of self is an interchangeable exemplar of some social category and away from the perception of self as a unique person" (Brewer 2001, 119). Within group-based identities, an individual's perception of self is intertwined with identification as part of an ingroup, not their outgroup, similar to how United States citizens identify themselves as Americans and not Mexicans. Strict boundaries are set to preserve differentiation between one's ingroup from their outgroups. Collective identities are social-based identities in which common interests and experiences shape how the group defines its mission, what it stands for, and how it wishes to be perceived. The departure from identification and membership to action is of particular importance to politics. Social identities are not inherently political, but are politicized when group identification is combined with a belief in advancing a group's goal through collective action (Citron, Wong & Duff 2001). These distinctions are insightful to the present study. The Latino population combines a multitude of distinct cultures; however, if Latinos were to unify in pursuit of a collective action, this group has the size and potential to be influential in the political arena (Bowler & Segura 2012).

Multiple Group Identities

Brewer (2001) also proposes several strategies used to manage multiple group identities. Her theory is insightful for the study of immigrants, like Latinos, who may have loyalties to both their ethnic group and national group. Brewer distinguishes from groups not in competition from those who are, and presents two management strategies for each. When memberships create conflicting agendas, management of group identities that are in conflict is considerably more problematic. For example, Latino Americans might be torn between

their ethnic and national loyalties over the controversial issue of bilingual education. When both these group identities are strong, individuals may use tactics of compromising to reduce the conflict and increase tolerance, such as Spanish-speaking enrichment programs. The alternative approach is to narrow the boundaries of group identification and enlarge the outgroup, by identifying only with other Latinos who support bilingual education. This form of identity management is likely to both reduce tolerance and increase conflict. The way in which an individual manages multiple group identities, such as being a Latino American, can cause either increased friction or enhanced stability in society (Brewer 2001).

National Identity

National identity is a captivating group identity paramount to political dynamics and decisions. National identity refers to the incorporation of membership in the American citizenry into an individual's self-concept. This strong bond is inherently social, derived from a sense of community with fellow compatriots (Theiss-Morse 2009). Social identity theory postulates that individuals are motivated to maintain a positive self-concept and have a basic need for both inclusion and exclusion. Connection of the membership to the national community is powerful, because it is a source of protection and comradeship (Theiss-Morse 2009). However, due to the size of the national group and involuntary membership, nations foster a wide range of commitment. The strength of association with the national group is significant, because national identities foster collective action. In effort to maintain a positive self-concept, people engage with the national group politically in pursuit of bettering their group (Theiss-Morse 2009). A central theme in the study of national identity seeks to determine the characteristics of people who hold a strong national identity and to discover who, in this large and diverse group, is considered to be an American. Citrin, Reingold, and

Green (1990) explain that while there are numerous political answers to this question, in order to understand the foundations of a shared sense of community, the answer must be psychological. Defining an individual as American or not has significant impact on interactions with the social, and more importantly, political world. It is important to first develop an understanding of how national identity has been historically defined and to then examine national identity in relation to Theiss-Morse's (2009) cognitive, evaluative, and emotional framework of social identity.

American National Identity Defined

National identity is rooted in the sense of collectivity fostered by religion, history, and customs that pertain to a way of life in a particular territory. These factors are the fabric of a unique culture under which people can objectively define who is an ingroup member and who is not (Theiss-Morse 2009). In the case of the United States, a country composed of immigrants, it is the diverse population, rather than common ancestry, that defines society. Consequently, the traditional conception of national identity does not pertain as it does in most European countries, because there is not a singular religious and cultural experience that pertains to all citizens (Theiss-Morse 2009). While America is a distinct territory with some national myths and a shared language, its relatively short history, diverse ethnic makeup, and lack of shared religion make it unique from other countries. To account for the unique nature of the American culture, scholars have widely accepted American national identity as exceptional (Theiss-Morse 2009; Citrin, Reingold, Green 1990).

In exploration of American identity, scholars have proposed that citizens understand and relate to the culture by a set of ideals referred to as the "American Creed" (Theiss-Morse 2009, 18). According to Citrin, Reingold, and Green (1990) these fundamental ideologies

were intrinsic in establishing the United States as a distinct entity. The majority of Americans immigrated to the United States from Britain; thus the populations looked much the same, as the majority of people in both countries were white Protestants. In an effort to distinguish Americans from the British, the founding fathers were motivated to create a new national identity. In construction of this new identity, American ethnicity and language were downplayed, because these were also shared with the British. Instead, the American identity was constructed on values unique to the new country (Citrin, Reingold, & Green 1990). Commitments to the principles of individualism, democracy, liberty, equality, and individual achievement structured the founding documents and ultimately the political foundation of the United States. Throughout history, Americans have been unified by these principles (Theiss-Morse 2009).

In addition to the American Creed, Theiss-Morse (2009) defines three additional ways American identity has been conceptualized, including: American identity as “historically ethnocultural,” “American identity as a community,” and “American identity as patriotism,” all of which are displayed in below (15). In the historically ethnocultural camp, scholars such as Huntington, contend that true Americans hail from the same ancestors, believe in the same religion, speak the same language, and are dedicated to the same principles of citizenship. Acceptance of this form of national identity has been variable, with points of high acceptance and points of rejection (Theiss-Morse 2009). Ethnoculturalism is a reaction developed in opposition to increasing racial diversity and immigration in the United States (Theiss-Morse 2009). Another scholarly view paints American national identity as a commitment to the common good of the country. That is, people put the interests of the Americans above personal interests for the betterment of the country. In the final perspective,

scholars, particularly political psychologists such as Brewer (2004), discuss patriotism as the source of attachment to national identity. However, patriotism and national identity refer to different phenomena, patriotism is love of country and national identity is sense of belonging to the national group, and thus cannot be used synonymously (Theiss-Morse 2009).

Table 1. Definitions of American National Identity

Theory	Definition of American National Identity	Imposed Limits	Social Identity Argument
Set of principles (American Creed)	Basic values and principles: liberty, equality, democracy, constitutionalism, liberalism, limited government, private enterprise	Stronger ethnic and racial identities negatively impact unity within the U.S. resulting in fragmentation	Beliefs define a social group in terms of boundaries and constitute group norms
Ethnocultural	Shared language, religion, customs, and attachment to the same principles.	Emphasis on race and ethnicity, desire to keep strangers out of the country	Ethnocultural understanding can affect boundaries - strong identifiers more likely to set exclusive boundaries
Community	Emphasis on active, participatory citizenry		Sense of community is fostered by strength of social group identity
Patriotism	Attachment to national history, symbols, territory, culture, and governance. Does not include attachment to people in country		Patriotism is a group norm that guides expectations of members' behavior
Social Identity	Social identity theory, national identity is inherently social, fostered by a bond and sense of community		

All four traditional theories of American national identity not only suggest what it means to be an American, but also what it means to not be American. It is important to note

that the ethnocultural and American Creed camps are based on personal characteristics and, as illustrated in Table 1, intrinsic to these definitions are restrictions on who counts as an American. These limitations are specifically concerned with immigrants (Citrin 1990). As Theiss-Morse (2009) explains attitudes towards immigrants are important features of these definitions because “they directly address who is allowed to be considered an American” (18). The ethnocultural definition of American national identity puts emphasis on race and ethnicity and general “desires to keep ‘strangers’ out of the country” (Theiss-Morse 2009, 17). Further, the American Creed definition posits that strong racial and ethnic identities create fragmentation within American society (Theiss-Morse 2009).

Samuel Huntington (2004) is most famous for exclusive definition of American national identity composed of the political creed and aspects of Anglo-Protestant culture. In classifying American identity as dominantly value-based, Huntington controversially argues that immigration threatens traditional American society. This assessment is based primarily on his perception of Hispanic immigrants, which he argues form a distinct outgroup with different values. He argues, Hispanic immigrants in particular threaten the traditional definition of American society due to the growing population and the wide resistance to adopting American customs. In fact, he predicts, “The persistent flow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, two languages” (Huntington 2004, n.p.). From his point of view, Hispanics form an outgroup that poses a dilemma for American society (Holloway 2011). Fraga and Segura (2006) criticize Huntington for his narrow analysis of Latino assimilation. These scholars argue that Huntington’s theory assumes Latinos have more control over their experience in the United States than reality would suggest. In fact, Latinos have been subject to discrimination,

exploitation, and disenfranchisement, and have widely been denied access to opportunities. Fraga and Segura (2006) further argue that Latinos have, in fact, been committed to assimilation. Mexican organizations, such as the LULAC, have long advocated for integration and acceptance of an American way of life, by means of learning English and engaging in political participation. In 2002, there were a total of 4,464 Latino Americans serving at all levels of public office (Fraga & Segura 2006). Huntington's narrow analysis marginalizes Latinos when this debate over the increasing Latino population needs to be diversified due to a range of historical and contemporary evidence that they are pursuing assimilation (Fraga & Segura 2006).

Devos and Banaji (2005) agree that there is a dilemma facing America. However in their perspective, the dilemma does not originate from a diversifying population, but from tension between abstract ideals and cultural practices. More specifically, these scholars argue that Americans, themselves, do not fully adhere to the American Creed (Devos & Banaji 2005). In their study of explicit and implicit adherence to the American Creed, it is discovered that conscious Americans' attitudes are favorable to egalitarian principles. However in terms of implicit beliefs, which are automatic, or less controlled and conscious, Americans are considerably less egalitarian. As they explain, "Instead of promoting unity and solidarity, expressions of patriotism or national identity could go hand in hand with a relative exclusion of ethnic minorities from the national identity" (Devos & Banaji 2005, 464). There is a fundamental tension of conflicting values within American society, a gap between Americans' attitudes and actions. Thus, there may be a fundamental schism in defining American national identity based on the American Creed.

Theiss-Morse (2009) develops an alternative definition of American national identity. As shown in Table 1, this definition incorporates aspects of the traditional definitions of national identity, but is founded in social identity theory. That is, American national identity is inherently social and fostered by a bond and sense of community to fellow group members (Theiss-Morse 2009). Ultimately, this definition rejects the notion that that American national identity is unique from that of other countries. The tendency to propose that America is defined exclusively by a set of core values is limited. In fact, she argues, “many French people believe in freedom and equality; many Brits in liberalism. Does this make the French and Brits American?” (Theiss-Morse 2009, 20). From the limitations of existing definitions, Theiss-Morse proposes that American national identity is not exceptional.

To more fully understand the captivating nature of national identities it is vital to look to social identity theory. Theiss-Morse (2009) proposes that national identity is inherently social, constructed by people’s understanding of what it means to be an American and the extent to which they are attached to the ideologies that form that definition. Her theory is based on the assumptions proposed by SIT as a means to explain the pervasive influence of national identity on American beliefs and interactions with fellow compatriots. Underlying social identity theory is the assumption that individuals have a need for both inclusion and exclusion. That is, people define who they are based the principles and characteristics that define members of both ingroups in addition to outgroups, which illustrate who you are not. Consequently, adherence to the American Creed defines who is an American and simultaneously establishes individuals who are not considered ingroup members. Theiss-Morse (2009) uses the term prototypical to describe individuals who fit the model of what it means to be an American. Marginalized members, on the other hand, are not

considered to be fully American. While American national identity is not exceptional, it is a powerful force within society that is vital to understanding intra and intergroup relations (Theiss-Morse 2009).

American Nationality as a Social Identity

Theiss-Morse (2009) employs the cognitive, evaluative, and emotional framework to analyze national identity. Drawing from social identity theory, the strength of a member's ingroup commitment, or emotional attachment, is an essential aspect to include in consideration and measurement of national identity. This connection impacts how much that group is incorporated into one's self-concept and, ultimately, how they conduct their lives. To be sure, members who strongly associate with the American people are more likely to define themselves in terms of American ideals and to take actions to uphold group norms, or to conform to group standards (Theiss-Morse 2009). Consequently, Theiss-Morse (2009) argues that the degree to which one incorporates membership into one's sense of self has important implications on perspectives and behaviors. National groups, in particular, generate a wide variety of attachment due to their sheer size and involuntary membership. However, nationality has been found to be a pervasive form of social identity, given that some members' national identities are so strong that citizens are willing to risk their lives fighting in the military for the benefit of the group (Theiss-Morse 2009). Interestingly, scholars Devos and Banaji (2005) conclude in their study of implicit associations, that the notion of 'American' evokes both ingroup connotation and positive affective reactions for all people, including white Americans and ethnic minorities. Although the characteristics suggest otherwise, national groups are a significant social identity. To understand fully who counts as an American, a social identity approach is essential.

A fundamental assumption of social identity theory is the inherent need for inclusion and exclusion. To satisfy this need the social world is organized by means of ingroups and outgroups (Theiss-Morse 2009). Boundaries are constructed to draw a picture of what a prototypical member looks like, thereby providing a means for individuals to categorize others into ingroups and outgroups (Theiss-Morse 2009). Group norms, or group ideals and values, define who is a member of social groups. Individuals use this structure to determine who they are, by what groups they are a part of, and who they are not by what groups they do not associate with.

Determining who associates with the American people is strongly related to assessing who counts as an American. Throughout her research, Theiss-Morse (2009) discovers that individuals who are considered to be the prototypical American are most likely to be committed to their identity as an American. Specifically, both religion and race are important factors in identification with American national identity; Christians and white Americans are more likely to possess a strong national identity. Additionally, party identification and political knowledge are factors, in that extreme liberals and the more politically knowledgeable are less likely to identify strongly as an American. Furthermore, less prototypical members, such as African Americans and other minorities, hold weaker national identities. Values of patriotism and individualism are also related to the strength of an individual's American national identity (Theiss-Morse 2009). National groups are important social identities, because commitment to the group has important political consequences.

Membership to the American citizenry is non-voluntary, thus there is a wide degree to which people define themselves in terms of American ideals and norms. As there is a tendency for people who are strong national identifiers to be considered typical Americans,

there is a tendency for those who are not regarded as typical to have a weak national identity. Boundaries are set on the national group to satisfy the need for exclusion. Group members that diverge from the prototypical definition of 'American,' threaten exclusivity and differentiation from other groups. As Theiss-Morse (2009) explains, "Some members who are objectively in the group might be marginalized because they are not imagined fully in the group" (66). Marginalized members are typically non-white and non-Christian, and therefore are not completely accepted as a part of the group. Further, prototypical members typically are also stronger national identifiers and also set more exclusive boundaries, whereas marginalized members have a tendency to hold less strict definitions of an American (Theiss-Morse 2009). This marginalized status has implications for the individual as well as for intergroup relations.

Devos and Banaji's (2005) research is also motivated to answer the question "who is an American?" These scholars employ implicit association tests to examine American attitudes and beliefs. The scholars find that although most Americans explicitly possess an inclusive definition of American national identity, implicitly white individuals are viewed as more American than ethnic and racial minorities. More specifically, it was easier for participants to pair American symbols with pictures of white faces (Devos and Banaji 2005).

Not all Americans connect to the American national group in the same way. Some citizens are not fully imaged as part of the national group, and some, often the same group, are not connected to the American people as strongly as others. What is the significance of these variations? Citrin, Reingold and Green (1990) postulate that national identity impacts intragroup relations, because it shapes attitudes towards immigration and racial diversity. In development of their theory, the scholars discuss realistic group conflict theory as one way

previous research has approached this question of how national identity impacts intragroup relations (Citrin, Reingold & Green 1990).

The variation in national identity has motivated political psychological research, because it is an important element of mass social interactions. Part of Theiss-Morse's (2009) objective is to discover which characteristics are imagined as part of the American national group and their positive and negative consequences. She develops a measure of national identity that examines people's sense of obligation to help fellow nationals and loyalty to the national group as indicators of identity. Through analysis of previous surveys of national identity and her own survey research, Theiss-Morse (2009) finds evidence to support the social identity perspective. She discovers that individuals who strongly identify as American are more likely to give back to the community through donations, volunteering, and enlisting in the army. Additionally national identity increases self-esteem, creates obligations to the community, and unites people across the country. Strong identifiers utilize many strategies to maintain self-esteem. Individuals who do not fit the mold of a typical American threatening exclusivity of the group are regarded as a different status and thus treated with hostility. Further, strong identifiers are less likely to accept criticism from outsiders and considerably more likely support limiting the constitutional rights of those who do not uphold American standards (Theiss-Morse 2009). National identity has important consequences for how individuals view their role as citizens and is pertinent the study of politics in the United States.

By and large, national identity is found to be an important determinant of social interaction and political behavior. An increasing portion of the United States population does not fit the traditional definition of what it means to be an American. In a world organized by

ingroups and outgroups this shift in the electorate has potential consequences for the political culture in the United States. Theoretically, Latinos hold a weak national identity, however the Latino experience in the United States is complex and in need of further investigation. As the Latino population grows in political strength it is important to examine how this community views itself in relation to the rest of the country.

Latino Ethnic Identity

Given the United States' history, race and ethnicity have long been used by the state as tools of categorization to distinguish citizens of the United States. In fact, some scholars have discovered that race is a component of national identity. Particularly, African Americans tend to have a weaker national identity than white Americans. Many Latinos in the United States are members of an ethnic group in addition to being a part of the American national group. As this group becomes a larger part of American politics it is important to examine how Latinos manage these competing group memberships.

Classification based on race and ethnicity in the United States is useful because it distinguishes diverse populations who have experienced differential treatment and because race and ethnicity are deemed to be fundamental aspects of identity (Idler 2007). The term Latino is used to encompass all peoples of Spanish descent, including Hispanics. The federal government's official definition of Hispanic or Latino is, "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture of origin regardless of race" (Idler 2007, 125). This classification is often regarded as an artificial category that is not the best representation of the culture of this demographic. That is, the official definition classifies Latino and Hispanic as one culturally diverse ethnicity, and does not account for each country's distinct history and traditions (Idler 2007). Shared culture is a fundamental to

aspect of group-based identities. Despite the official classification, Latinos themselves typically do not identify with this panethnic label, but rather their country of origin, for example as Puerto Rican or Cuban (Masuoka 2008). The identity of Latino Americans is complex and important to study, because this group is quickly becoming a larger part of the United State's population.

The disparities within group classification are important to take into consideration; however, this study employs a panethnic definition. The primary focus of this study is to examine how the government addresses individuals of Spanish origins. Moreover, Bowler and Segura (2012) theorize that subcategories of countries are not large enough to exert power. Thus, in order for Latinos to be influential at the national level, they must come to see themselves as a unified ethnicity. Panethnic identity is the focus of this study, because development of such an identity will have important consequences on the political system.

The increasing size of the population, with the potential to gain in political power, is a direct challenge to American national politics and thus has made Latino immigration controversial in contemporary politics (Bowler & Segura 2012). The Latino population is now the largest ethnic group in the United States and of increasing importance politically and culturally. Large scale Latin American immigration began in the 1960s and accelerated rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s (Bowler & Segura 2012). In 2010, Latinos made up 16.3 percent of the U.S. population, a number expected to increase steadily to 19.4 percent in 2020 and 23 percent in 2030. By 2050, it is predicted that the Latino population will grow to 30.2 percent of the United States. Significantly, the non-Hispanic white population is expected to simultaneously decrease. By 2050 the non-Hispanic white percentage is estimated to be as low as 46.3 percent, thus no longer sizable enough to constitute a majority

of the United States population (Bowler & Segura 2012, 13). Undeniably, this growing population will have a significant impact on United States culture and politics. However, there is widespread disagreement among scholars over what the effects will be. Two themes emerge across the study of Latino politics: assimilation into American culture and group consciousness among Latinos.

Assimilation

In light of my research interest to examine how Latinos identify in America, it is important to examine assimilation or the process of orientating to a new culture. Specifically, I outline several acculturation strategies, which provide a basis to then assess how Latinos have adopted within American culture. Additionally, it is also important to compare Latinos experience to that of older immigrant population and to examine how Latinos have been received by broader American society.

Social psychologist Rupert Brown (2010) provides an analysis of traditional psychological theories of intergroup contact. This process of adoption, termed acculturation, results from two cultures coming together (Rudmin 2003). According to Brown's (2010) breakdown there are a number of acculturation orientation strategies, or ways in which members of a group manage tangency with a diverse culture, resulting in varying degrees of assimilation. The strategy employed by a minority group derives from two factors: the desired amount of contact with other groups and the extent to which the group wishes to maintain their cultural heritage. Berry (1997) suggested four commonly accepted acculturation orientation strategies based on these two major facets of intergroup relations, including: integration, assimilation, marginalization, and separation. Groups that have extensive contact with other groups while maintaining aspects of a distinct ethnic culture are

considered integrated. Assimilation results from extensive contact and less commitment to maintaining a distinct culture. This is the process by which immigrants abandon cultural ties and backgrounds as they advance socioeconomically in American society (Abranjan 2010). People who have little interaction with other groups and do not have a desire for cultural maintenance are considered marginalized. Separation is the term used to describe the division of distinct minority and majority cultures (Brown 2010). Intuitively, assimilation is an indicator of identity. That is, immigrants who choose to immerse themselves in American culture and take on an American way of life are more likely to hold a strong American identity than those who desire to remain separate from broader society. In analysis of Latinos assimilation into American culture it is important to first examine the scholarly debate on Latino's acculturation strategy and then to examine how this experience might be influenced by broader American society.

The acculturation processes are particularly insightful for studying the relationship between Latinos and broader American society. Latinos' continued use of Spanish and low levels of education, leads scholars, like Huntington (2004), to argue that this group has the desire to maintain their own culture. Acculturation is encouraged through interactions with the dominant society, particularly in school, while the family and interactions with the smaller Latino community maintain ethnic traditions. However, others point to Latinos increasing political participation, both in terms of voting and serving in public office, as evidence of incorporation into American culture (Fraga & Segura 2006). Social psychological research indicates that minority groups typically prefer integration strategies and concurrently only a small number of minority groups choose to assimilate. Majority groups tend to advocate for immigrant assimilation as opposed to integration (Brown 2010).

In short, the way in which groups interact with one another has significant social and political implications (Quintanna & Scull 2009).

Scholars Quintanna and Scull (2009) found that, in general, Latinos believe that socialization within their ethnic community is “somewhat” important (93). Due to Latinos’ stigmatized status, identification within the ethnic group is complicated. Quintana and Scull (2009) theorize that individuals who identify with a stigmatized group adopt certain attitudes to maintain self-esteem, and this is reflected in both sense of self and intergroup relations. There is little discussion of the specific attitudes adopted by the Latino community to manage their stigmatized identity, or the effects on relations with other groups. However, the scholars do find that Latinos who strongly identify with their ethnic group tend to immerse themselves in their ethnic community more than Latinos less attached to their ethnic ties. Additionally, Latinos who have experienced discrimination tend to respond by becoming more immersed in their ethnic culture. Therefore, Latinos’ interactions with broader society influence the degree to which they adopt American culture (Quintanna & Scull 2009).

Historically Americans have responded to immigrants and immigration with anxiety and resistance. For much of history, migrants to the U.S. were chiefly Canadian and European; in fact, naturalization was long restricted to white individuals. However in the 1960s, immigration patterns shifted and individuals of Mexican and Latin American descent constituted the majority of immigrant flow into the United States. In comparing the immigrant experience between populations with Spanish origins to Europeans, many scholars conclude that Latino immigrants have not shared the same experience as Europeans, and more specifically Latinos are less committed to assimilation than previous immigrant groups (Smith 2003). This analysis reflects the discrimination Latinos have faced, continued

adherence to the Spanish language, and frequent trips home to immigrant country of origin. Further, the persisting gaps in education, assumed to be a key method for learning American culture, leads to pessimism about generational assimilation (Smith 2003). Although there was considerable hostility towards Irish and other Catholic immigrants in the nineteenth century, factors unique to Spanish-speaking immigrants, including racial diversification and simply the unprecedented number of immigrants present new challenges to Americans society (Smith 2003). More specifically, Latino immigration activates cultural threat, as did immigrants from Europe, in addition to racial threat (Bowler & Segura 2012).

Samuel Huntington (2004) famously argues that the patterns of Mexican immigration are leading the United States to a bifracted, “Anglo-Hispanic society with two national languages” (Huntington 2004, 221). His argument is derived from several characteristics of Latino, especially Mexican, immigration that in his view are distinct from other older generations of immigrants. He argues that Hispanic immigration is economically driven, considering the gap in wealth between Mexico and the United States is larger than any two countries that share a border around the world. Further, large communities traveling between Mexico and the U.S blur the border and the number of individuals emigrating from Mexico exceeds immigrant flow from any other country. He also argues that dispersion is essential to assimilation. However, once in the United States, Mexicans are clustering regionally in Southern California, Miami, and New York City, rather than spreading out. Regional concentration suggests that most are living dominantly amongst other Latino Americans, thereby limiting in exposure to American culture. The lack of assimilation is reflected in Spanish language dominance, gaps in education and income, low rates of citizenship, and rare intercultural marriage. By and large, Huntington’s (2004) core argument is that Latino

immigration threatens American values and broader society.

In Theiss-Morse's (2009) project focused on American nationality she does small-scale analysis of racial groups, in which Hispanics are often included. She finds evidence to reject Huntington's (2004) claims that Latinos are fundamentally different from Americans. Her hypothesis predicts that marginalized group members, those not imagined to be fully American, such as Latinos, are just as likely to identify with American culture. Counter intuitively, her research seems to suggest that there are no major differences in how Hispanics identify as Americans compared to whites. As she states, "Hispanics, and other people of color...do not significantly differ from whites in their national identity" (Theiss-Morse 2009, 49). Additionally, Hispanics are no less likely to consider themselves to be the typical American than any other subgroup in American society (Theiss-Morse 2009). This is direct evidence to prove Huntington's (2004) claim that Latinos are less committed to an American lifestyle inaccurate.

Huntington's (2004) pessimism has been extensively criticized. Alba (2006) responds directly to Huntington's (2004) claim that Mexican Americans are forging a separate nation within the United States. He notes that Huntington (2004) makes the assumption of a singular outcome for all Mexican Americans, and denies the possibility of diversity within the group. Huntington (2004) claims that Mexican Americans are not following the traditional pattern of increasing lingual assimilation across immigrant generations. Alba (2006) counter argues that Mexicans are assimilating, citing the prevalence of English language dominance among the third generation of Mexican Americans as evidence. He even observes signs of English monolingualism, evidence that the separate institutions necessary from a sub-society do not exist (Alba 2006). Additionally in analysis of educational attainment, Smith (2003) argues

that the gap between Hispanics and whites has closed among successive generations. Bean et al. (2006) argue against Huntington's claim that Mexican immigrants have not naturalized at the rates of older generations. Rather, there was a pattern of low naturalization reflective of circular immigration flows (seasonally emigrating between Mexico and the United States). However, intentions have changed and Mexicans are now increasingly becoming American citizens. More than a fifth of Mexican-born persons living in the United States in 1992 were naturalized by 2002. This increase is significant because naturalized status improves acquisition of human capital (Bean et al. 2006). The narrowing of this divide has led to greater economic stability and to further close gaps between Hispanics and broader American society.

Acculturation, by definition, is contact between two cultures resulting in change to both groups. Rudmin (2003) explains, "acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (3). Huntington's (2004) argument is based on assimilation, in which Latinos fully take on an American way of life. Other scholars provide evidence for integration, or Latinos' desire for extensive contact with American culture in addition to maintenance of their own ethnic culture (Segura & Fraga 2006). Focusing only on Latinos leads to a one-sided argument. It is vital to consider how the broader American society has interacted with the Latino community.

Racial discrimination and issues resulting from legal status have been defining factors of the Mexican American experience. Individuals that are not naturalized are pushed into a social and economic underground, which more often than not results in exploitation in terms

of wages and benefits, employment security, and working conditions. These societal restraints prevent social mobility and hinder Mexican Americans' efforts to enter the mainstream (Alba 2006). These scholars provide an insightful analysis that suggests the Latino experience in the U.S. is not the result of resisting acculturation. Rather the treatment of this diverse population has limited access to the resources needed for assimilation.

Americans have traditionally responded to immigration with apprehension (Theiss-Morse 2009). Some scholars make the claim that the tension between American values and immigration is at the core of Latino American experience. Theiss-Morse (2009) argues that the traditional nativist perspective assumes that minorities are less committed to the American value structure, and thus diversity erodes the national unit. Xenophobia, the fear of people from other cultures, is intrinsic in the American Constitution and dates back to as early as 1751 when Benjamin Franklin discussed the threat Germans posed to American society (Fraga & Segura 2006). The scholars analyze some of Franklin's writing and conclude, "Franklin has reaffirmed the English nature of his society, denounced immigration and ethno-linguistic enclaves, expressed the classic fear of demographic change, and even attempted...to conceptualize...Germans as, what today we could term as, a 'racial other'" (Fraga & Segura 2006, 280). The concerns expressed by Americans today are nearly identical to Franklin's reaction in the eighteenth century.

Similar to social identity theory, Smith (1997) concludes that there is an inherent contradiction within American national identity that has historically been contingent on both inclusion and exclusion. More specifically, Smith (1997) theorizes there are three civic ideologies that configure American national identity – individual rights and limited government, collective fate produced by democratic republicanism, and inegalitarian legal

definitions of who is included in the polity – that contradict each other and ultimately result in a restriction of who is defined as an American. Political leaders have utilized these inconsistencies strategically to gain the support needed for election. Historically, Americans have widely accepted notions of equality (Fraga & Segura 2006). Further, Theiss-Morse (2009) established in her social identity theory of national groups, those who strongly identify with their national group are highly motivated to help prototypical Americans, but are considerably less inclined to help those who do not fit the traditional definition of an American. The potential for Latino assimilation into American culture depends on both the willingness of the immigrant community to adopt new customs and the Anglo-Protestant community's acceptance of this diverse group.

There is a wide argument over the acculturation strategy Latinos have pursued in the United States. While some scholars, like Huntington (2004) make the argument that Latinos are becoming a separate group in society, there is considerable evidence that Latinos are integrating into American culture. This trend of integration is significant to the study of Latinos' political identity, because it is an indication that Latinos hold meaningful memberships to both the American national group and Latino ethnic group.

Group Consciousness

Whereas assimilation signifies the extent to which immigrants connect and identify with the American national group, group consciousness refers to how immigrants connect and identify with the Latino community. Group consciousness is a perceived common experience among group members. According to Sanchez (2006b), group consciousness is developed when group members recognize their marginalized status within society, "it is a sense of commonality, and shared circumstances that encourages groups to become involved

politically, particularly explaining the relatively high rates of political participation among disadvantaged groups” (438). Often group consciousness is linked to the politicization of a group. An individual’s sense of membership and closeness to other group members often leads to a common outlook and alignment of political orientations (Sanchez 2006b). This phenomenon is considered strongest within the African American community. Theoretically, African Americans are united by a common history of slavery and discrimination; thus in political decision making, blacks make decisions based on what is best for the community as a whole. Moreover, the discrimination faced by the black community as a whole has fostered a sense of shared fate, in which individuals believe their fortune is tied up with that of the larger community. There is also evidence that group consciousness is a political factor for women, businessmen, and the poor (Barreto & Pedraza 2009). The traditional framework indicates three components of group consciousness: identification with a group, recognition of a marginalized status, and a desire to overcome this disadvantaged status by means of collective action (Sanchez 2006b). Although a minority group that has the shared experience of immigration, group consciousness within Latino Americans as a group is complex.

In American politics people of Spanish descent are predominantly encompassed in one panethnic identity, Latino, because of their similar culture, religion, and language (Masuoka 2008). It is argued that these similar characteristics lead to a common experience in the United States. However, there is a scholarly debate among political psychologists as to how people considered by others to be Latino, understand their group identity. Masuoka (2008) argues that there are three primary categories of ethnic identification including: national origin, panethnic, and racial identity. In agreement with theorists of group consciousness, Masuoka (2008) argues that a particular group with which an individual

identities can lead to different perspectives and attitudes. An increasingly common theme among scholarly research on ethnic groups is the idea that Latinos may develop a racial group identity. Quintana and Scull (2009) explain that racialization refers to the stigmatization and oppression that has defined the Latino experience in the U.S. Scholars use statistics of discriminatory treatment of Latinos in educational opportunities, hiring practices, and healthcare institutions as evidence to support this theory. Latinos are not considered white, but rather endure a stigmatized non-white status (Masuoka 2008). In fact, research suggests that success does vary by phenotype, or skin color. Latinos more Caucasian in appearance typically have greater social capital (Quintana & Scull, 2009). There are numerous social identities within the Latino community.

Ethnic group identities are relevant to political behavior (Masuoka 2008). Most research finds that attachment to national-origin is much stronger than attachment to the panethnic identity, Latino. The strength of national origins is typically attributed to geographical distribution. Latinos tend to be clustered regionally by national origin. When people predominately interact with others who share their national origin, panethnic identity is relatively meaningless. It is argued that panethnic identity will become more relevant as identities of national origin are less distinct in local communities. Under the assumption that Latinos have distinct political interests, for this ethnic group to have power in politics at the national level, they must identify with their panethnic identity (Bowler & Segura 2012). Masuoka (2008), argues that Latinos who have developed a racial group consciousness are typically native born and more politically active. This trend leads Masuoka (2008) to suggest that for Latino identity to be a permanent part of American politics, Latinos must be open to a politicized racial identity, which she believes will ultimately lessen the extent to which

national origins play a role.

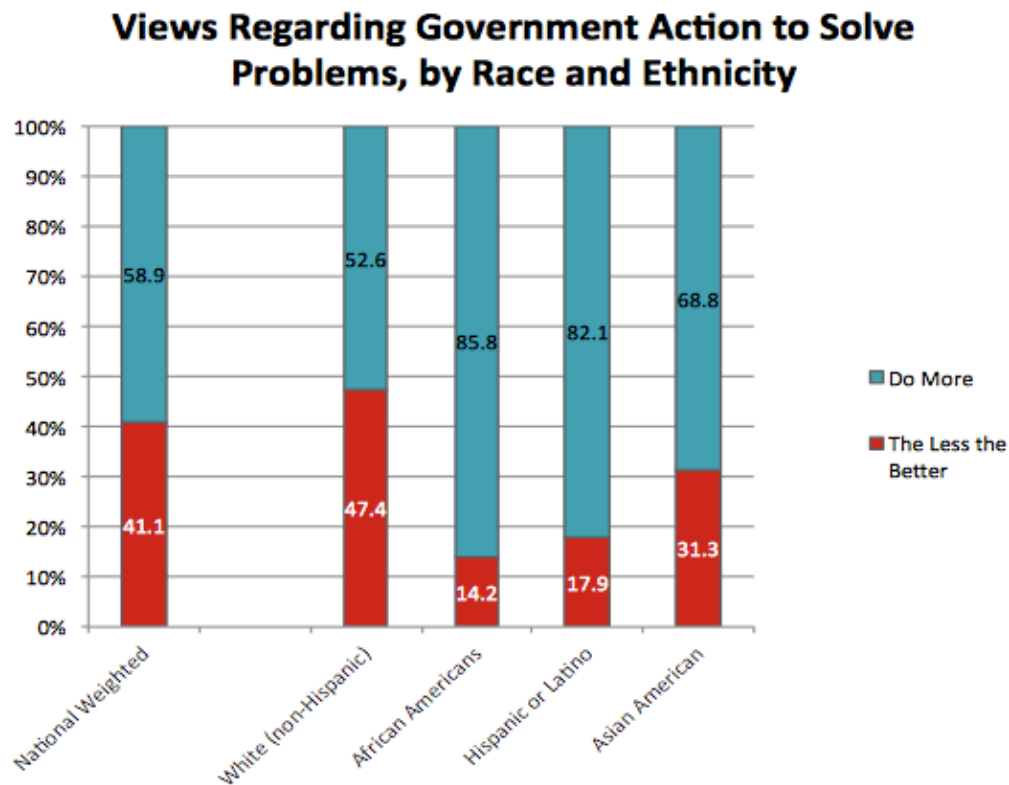
In analysis of Latino public opinion there is evidence of a Latino group consciousness. According to his Sanchez's (2006a) analysis of salient issues within the Latino American community, there is a general, strong desire to protect their traditional culture, especially the Spanish language. Participants of 1989-1990 Latino National Public Survey reported that, 80 percent of Mexican Americans, 87 percent of Puerto Ricans, and 89 percent of Cuban Americans are supportive of bilingual educational programs (Sanchez 2006a, 436).

Additionally, Latinos are generally more supportive of an activist government that protects the rights and promotes opportunities for minorities. Figures 1 and 2, further illustrate that Latinos tend value a larger, more responsive government, where as the American population at large, and Anglo Americans in particular, prefer a smaller government. Specifically, 82.1 percent of Latinos report that government could do more, compared to 53.6% of Anglos. Similarly, the vast majority of Latinos, 73.8 percent, believe that the size of the government has increased because the problems that face American have gotten bigger. While these views are similar to other minority groups, they differ greatly from the national population. Further, Latinos are more supportive of the death penalty than whites and African Americans, and slightly more opposed to abortion than whites are (Sanchez 2006a). In relation to immigration, American-born Latinos tend to favor more restrictive immigration policies than foreign-born individuals. The most compelling explanation for such a trend is that economic concerns are particularly important to many Latinos. Their low socio-economic status puts Latino Americans in competition for jobs with other immigrants (Sanchez 2006a). All Latinos residing in the United States in some way

share the immigration experience. This common history is reflected in Latino's public opinion and support for government assistance programs and is the foundation to building a Latino collective identity.

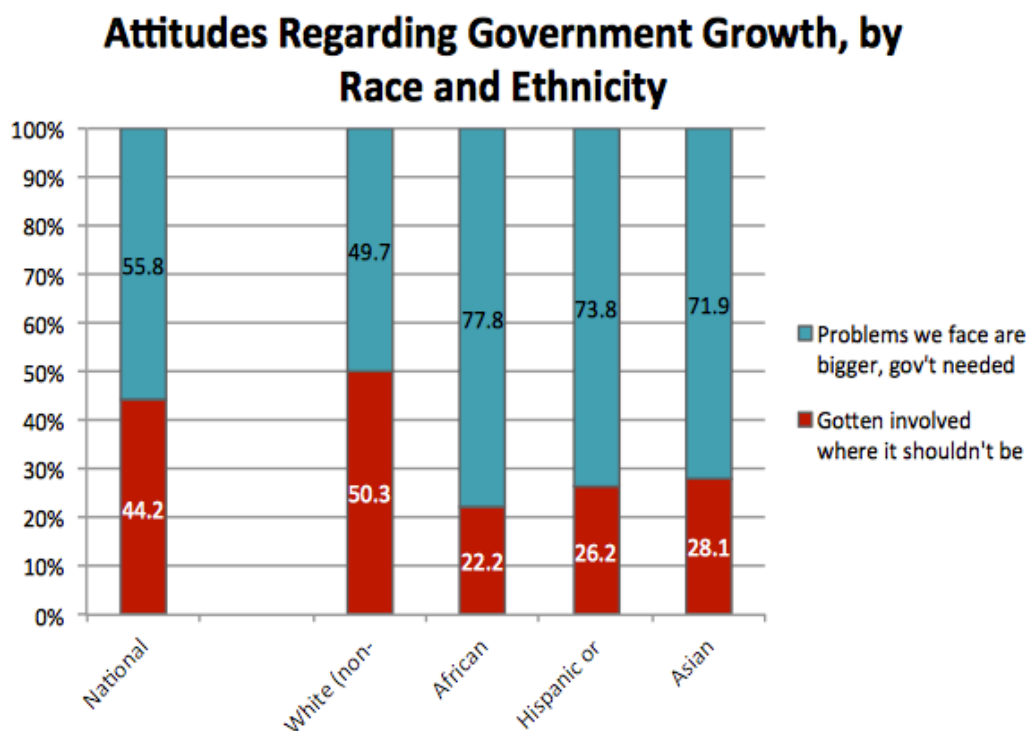
Although previous research concludes that Latinos identify strongly with their country of origin, there is evidence that immigration is a unifying experience on which a collective identity can develop. In order to develop collective identity Latino community must recognize their marginalized status, identify with the Latino group, and desire to overcome (Sanchez 2006b). There is not significant evidence that Latinos consider themselves to be a marginalized group. According to a Pew Hispanic Center Study (2012), 55 percent of Latino individuals report that they have been equally as successful as other minority groups in the United States. Additionally, Latinos overwhelmingly reported that there are more opportunities to get ahead in the United States, better conditions for raising children, and better treatment of the poor in comparison to their country of origin (Taylor et al. 2012).

Figure 1. Views Regarding Government Action to Solve Problems, by Race and Ethnicity *



*Source: American National Election Study 2008: Question Wording: H3c “Which of two statements comes closer to your own opinion: ONE, the less government, the better; OR TWO, there are more things that government should be doing?” Cited in Segura (n.d).

Figure 2. Attitudes Regard Government Growth, by Race and Ethnicity**



** Source: American National Election Study 2008: Question Wording: H3a “Which of two statements comes closer to your own opinions: ONE, The main reason government has become it has gotten involved in things that people should do for themselves; OR Two, government has become bigger because the problems we face have become bigger.” Cited in Segura (n.d.).

In an effort to mobilize the Latino electorate, politicians tap into the immigrant experience and the issue of consensus. Politicians have employed microtargeting as a strategic method to campaign directly to the interests of this electoral powerhouse, without losing support from other groups of citizens. Microtargeting is a form of social categorization and a potential means to foster a sense of cohesion and shared objectives to strengthen group consciousness within the Latino community.

Modern Political Strategies and Micro-Targeting

Scholars Citrin, Wong, and Duff (2001) note in their discussion of social identity theory, as it pertains to political science, that social identities are not fundamentally political. Rather, it is group consciousness and action in pursuit of the group's interests that produce a politicized group. Lewis-Beck and colleagues (2008) in their book *The American Voter Revisited* dedicate a chapter to deciphering the characteristics that deem a group political. They develop a political continuum from highly political groups to in-between groups to those who do not appear to be related to politics at all. They define political parties to be outwardly political; in fact, these partisan groups are considered to be "supergroups," in that they were constructed in direct reaction to politics. The National Rifle Association and the Sierra Club are provided as examples of in-between groups that have political motives but also exist beyond the political realm. The National Tennis Club is a group, at the other end of the spectrum, not related to politics.

The scholars do not place national, racial, and ethnic groups on the spectrum. However, the scholars do classify ethnic groups, specifically African American and Jewish groups, as "secondary groups," groups that fall in the middle of the spectrum related to politics but also have other functions and interests (Lewis-Beck, Jacoby, Norpoth, Weisberg 2008, 314). These secondary groups were not constructed in response to politics. Unlike political parties, however, group consciousness within these groups fosters collective action in pursuit of shared objectives (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008, 317). Lewis-Beck et al. (2008) discuss groups as political guideposts; some individuals may align their group's stance on an issue to inform their own ideas. Similarly individuals may use groups with which they disagree to inform their issue stances. This perspective is similar to the argument of social

identity theory that group identities are navigation tools to the social world, as political groups aid in deciphering the political world (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008). With this understanding national and ethnic groups may be understood to have potential influence on members' political views, but are not exclusively political.

Group memberships are politically important. In examination of national identity, for example, how one views him or herself in relation to fellow Americans, and the strength of association as an American, shapes how he or she forms political values and interests (Thiess-Morse 2009). In national groups, politics is the avenue by which actions that seek the collective good or the interest of the group's welfare are pursued. Brewer (2009) is in agreement with social identity thinkers' rationale that strong group identification motivates the desire to be a positive contributing member to that community. In the context of national identity, the desire to contribute translates into voluntary, participatory roles of citizenship. Furthermore, an individual's sense of self, and of other members, is understood in terms of the citizen role (Brewer 2009).

Under a social identity perspective, political identity is relatively fluid and determined by a multitude of factors. Turner's (1987) self-categorization theory proposes an interpretation of group identification in which situational cues and predispositions are determinants of identity (Jackson 2005). Chiefly, context is an important factor of social identity. In terms of political context long and short-term influences are important to consider. Long-term context refers to structural factors of the political system, such as winner-take-all elections. In relation to the present study, short-term context such as elections campaign cues, is particularly important. According to Jackson (2005), "when these messages include information about the political opinions or preferences of different groups

in society, those group identities are made more salient in the political context” (148). How do modern microtargeting strategies, which make group-based appeals to mobilize voters, influence political identity?

Modern Identity Based Campaigns

Over the past several decades political campaigns have come to use identity politics strategically as a means to reach certain voters. Political scientist, Melinda Jackson (2005) conducted a compelling study on identity based politics, in which she suggests that political identities are more malleable than previously conceived, similar to the conclusions of Tajfel’s (1970) minimal group experiment. For example, a central aspect of President Clinton’s 1996 campaign was designed to reach the women swing voters who became known as “soccer moms” (Jackson 2005, 107). The theme of family related issues was highly successful in appealing to these women. There is a degree of ambiguity about the influence of these identity-based politics. However, campaigns have allotted copious resources to directly influence these undecided swing voters. This can be illustrated by the 2000 election cycle in which Bush and Gore dedicated approximately 4 million dollars to Spanish-language television advertisements (Abrajano 2010). Additionally, social identities are developed to satisfy simultaneous needs of inclusion and exclusion.

Jackson (2005) creates three identity appeals that vary in distinctiveness; “moderate middle,” “Generation Y,” and “college student” (Jackson 2005, 3). She finds evidence that political identities are indeed more malleable than traditionally theorized. Although, more distinctive identities are more influential, all three group identities had a significant impact on political inclinations, namely vote choice. In fact, people are likely to identify with a new group they read about, even after a single media exposure. Ultimately Jackson argues that an

individual's sense of self does have influence over political decisions and identity based appeals are a successful campaign strategy (Generation Y and college students show strong intentions to vote for the Independent Party candidate) (Jackson 2005).

In addition to developing identity based appeals, modern political campaigns reflect the decisive nature of groups in the political process. Campaigns have developed highly advanced strategies, such as microtargeting, to reach out to pivotal groups in ways that appeal to particular collective interests. Hillygus and Shields (2009) are motivated to understand the dynamics and effectiveness of political campaigning. The scholars theorize that campaigns are paramount in reaching "persuadable voters," individuals whose political interests are distinct from the political party they identify with in one way or another. Moreover, campaigns are a strategic method to raise the salience of "wedge issues" for those persuadable, cross-pressured voters. For example, a Republican candidate might campaign about prohibiting abortions to Democrats who consider themselves to be pro-life. Contemporary technology has advanced strategic campaigning (Hillygus & Shields 2008). Politicians are now able to make identity-based appeals by means of, what Schneider (2007) refers to as "marketing strategies." Candidates utilize demographic databases, traditionally developed for marketing companies, that have a wealth of personal information about individuals, from facts about gender and age to where an individual shops and their magazine preferences (Schneider 2007).

Both Hillygus and Shields (2009) and Schneider's (2007) research is focused on how modern political campaigns target particular voters, however the voter of interest varies between the two works. Hillygus and Shields's (2009) project is focused on the cross-pressured individuals, whereas, Schneider is interested to observe how candidates try to

appeal to large, politically divisive groups, such as women. Schneider (2007) quotes a political strategist she interviewed in 2004, “women voters in general are the most targeted group in the country...these are people who are willing to consider both sides of the aisle; they are working to consider different candidates” (7). These two approaches vary slightly in their understanding of which voters are targeted by strategic campaigning. Nonetheless they both argue that microtargeting tactics, such as direct mail, phone calls, and canvassing, provide candidates the chance to appeal directly to a narrow audience, without running the risk of isolating other individuals with opposing views. Thus, candidates are able to send deliberate messages that appeal to the distinct interests of particular groups.

Microtargeting is a categorization tool by which candidates can reach out to a subset of ethnically and socioeconomically diverse voters, with little risk of ostracizing people that hold differing interests and concerns. According to Abrajano (2010), this strategy has made ethnic appeals an increasingly popular method for communicating with minorities. This means of campaigning is highly personal, in which the primary importance is to convey a sense of cultural understanding that makes candidates more relatable in the eyes of ethnic voters (Abrajano 2010). Strategists have often employed the Spanish-language, a powerful and unifying aspect of Latino culture, as a way to foster a sense of connection and understanding. In fact, the Kennedy campaign utilized Jacqueline Kennedy’s proficiency with Spanish to create the first ever televised Spanish-language ad. However, Latino outreach has been complex, because there is no overarching issue, like civil rights for African Americans, that pertains to the majority of Latino and Hispanic Americans. Rather, focus groups and surveys have been used to develop a message that will best resonate with the Latino electorate. Based on the results of these studies most ads targeted at Latino and

Hispanic voters have focused on family values, opportunity, and inclusiveness (Abrajano 2010). Abrajano (2010) theorizes that as the Latino electorate continues to increase, the extent of ethnic appeals will grow and advance.

Ethnic based advertising has played a significant role in recent elections. In reflection of Latinos' increased electoral importance, it is estimated that the Obama campaign spent about \$20 million on Latino outreach in the 2012 election cycle (Abrajano 2010). According to Abrajano's (2010) analysis, this significant allocation of resources had a strong impact. Ultimately these advertisements increase the likelihood that Latinos will cast their votes in favor of the sponsoring candidate. However, there is variation in how these ads influence Latinos. There remains much ambiguity over how different types of advertisement strategies, such as policy based or character based ads, influence Latino voters. However, what is clear from Abrajano's (2010) analysis and significant to the present study is that campaigns do reach out to Latino Americans as a distinct subgroup of the population.

Theory

Although there have been many different definitions of American national identity, this study employs social identity perspective as a framework to examine the research question: how do modern microtargeting strategies affect Latino Americans' political identity perceptions? Under social identity perspective, national identity is a bond between citizens, rather than a set of characteristics. According to Miller (1995) "nations are not aggregates of people distinguished by their physical or cultural traits, but communities whose very existence depends on mutual recognition" (Theiss-Morse 2009, 5). Under this less rigid definition of national identity exists potential for immigrants, and individuals who do not match the traditional definition of an American, to develop a national identity. However, this

potential is obstructed by schemes of political categorization that create distance between Latinos and other Americans.

Group identities are an important aspect of political decision-making, and I hope to find out more about how group-based appeals influence the way Latinos regard themselves politically. As Huddy (2001) explains, intrinsic in Tajfel and Turner's (1979) theory of social identities is the assumption, "that individuals labeled as group members would categorize themselves as such and internalize the group label as a social identity" (133). Fundamentally, microtargeting is a method of categorization used to construct political messages to effectively mobilize particular groups of voters. This strategy of labeling individuals as part of a group and drawing distinctions between that group and others within the population, has important consequences for how individuals regard themselves politically. I develop three hypotheses based on the assumption of social identity theory that people have the fundamental need for both inclusion and exclusion.

This study draws on Theiss-Morse's (2009) framework of social identities. That is, the extent to which an individual is cognitively aware, values, and attaches emotion to their membership to the American citizenry and Latino community will determine if a group membership is incorporated as part of identity. Microtargeting satisfies the need for inclusion in making membership to the American or Latino community significant. The strategy of reaching out to an individual as part of a particular group creates an association with that group and distinguishes similar experiences, to forge intragroup bonds, both important factors to forming group identity. That is to say, an advertisement targeting Latinos by advocating for immigrants' rights emphasizes membership to the Latino community as salient and fosters Latino group consciousness, or sense of community and shared objectives

within the targeted group. Similarly, a national campaign advertisement focused on the need to stimulate job growth, a collective interest for broader America, will foster comradeship nationally. Thus, microtargeting, which defines a distinct group with unique interests, strengthens one's cognitive, evaluative, and emotional bond with the targeted group.

Respectively I hypothesize,

Group Identity Hypothesis: National campaign advertisements lead to a strong group identity with the American national group, whereas ethnic microtargeting appeals lead to a strong group identity with the Latino community.

Further, I theorize that ethnic microtargeting satisfies the need for exclusion. This form of campaign outreach is strategic in that it addresses the interests of a particular group within the population without isolating others that do not share the same needs. I build on Brewer's (2001) psychological theory of multiple, noncompetitive group identities to inform my assumptions about how microtargeting impacts other group memberships. Brewer draws distinctions between noncompetitive and competitive group memberships. I narrow this theory down to focus on noncompetitive group memberships, because microtargeting does not create competing agendas between groups, but rather capitalizes on discrepancies across groups in the population. When group identities do not have conflicting agendas, individuals are likely to manage their identity inclusively or exclusively (Brewer 2001). Reflecting back the analogy of a Venn diagram, in which Latino Americans may identify inclusively with all Americans and Latinos or exclusively will only people who only identify as both American and Latino, microtargeting results in exclusive identity management. Put differently, ethnic microtargeting creates a distinction between Latinos and the rest of the electorate, causing Latinos to be less likely to associate with other Americans. Importantly, this theory does not extend to the national appeal, in that addressing Americans in general does not create

distinctions or does exclude any portion of the electorate from the rest of the population.

Thus, I hypothesize,

Group Association Hypothesis: Viewing the ethnic appeal decreases association with fellow Americans.

Particularly for large, non-voluntary groups, such as national and ethnic groups, the degree to which people view themselves as similar to other members is also an important factor in identification. Members who are prototypical tend to have a stronger identity and in order to maintain a positive self-concept, will uphold group norms. I hypothesize,

Group Norms Hypothesis: Watching a national appeal will result in adherence to American norms of individualism and egalitarianism, while those who watch the ethnic appeal will uphold Latino values of family and religion.

As I show in Table 2, if my hypotheses are correct, I expect that exposure to a national campaign appeal will strengthen national identity and adherence to traditional American norms of individualism and egalitarianism. Similarly, the ethnic ad appeal nurtures an increased sense of identity with the Latino community and adherence to Latino group norms, such as placing value on family and religion. Further, an ethnic appeal will weaken perceived association with other Americans. It is important to understand how Latinos understand and connect to the political world, as they become a larger part of the U.S. population and electorate. The relationship between social identity and political opinions is strengthened when members share a common experience or linked fate, because people take on the group's interests as their own personal interests.

Table 2. Expectations

	National Appeal	Ethnic Appeal
Group Identity	Strong American identity	Strong Latino identity
Group Association		Weakened association with Americans
Group Norms	Adherence to American norms of individualism and egalitarianism	Commitment to Latino norms of family and religion

Chapter 2: Methods

The objective of this study is to examine how the way in which modern campaigns communicate with Latino voters affects their political identity. More specifically, does targeting Latino voters as a separate group, with distinct interests, influence their perceived connection to Americans differently than campaigns that are developed to reach out to broader American society? The chief research question that motivates this study is: how do modern microtargeting strategies affect Latinos' political identity perception? In exploration of the effect of microtargeting strategies on social identity, I build off of social identity theory and previous research of microtargeting, to develop an experimental design that utilizes survey research to explore my research question (Hillygus & Shields 2008). The independent variable is campaign appeal, which refers to the message designed to target a particular audience, American or Latino. There are six dependent variables that fall under the categories: political identity, group similarity, and group norms, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Variables

Independent Variables		Dependent Variables					
Campaign Appeal		Group Identity		Group Association		Group Norms	
National Appeal	Ethnic Appeal	American National Identity	Latino Ethnic Identity	Association with Americans	Association with Latinos	American Values	Latino Values

Group identity refers to the strength of cognitive, evaluative, and affective bond to the American national group and Latino ethnic group. Group association is the degree to which an individual feels a part of their national and ethnic groups and views him or herself like other Americans and Latinos. In this study group norms take the form of values; traditional

American values of individualism and egalitarianism is one dependent variable, and religious and family oriented values associated with Latino culture is the last dependent variable.

I hypothesize that the campaign appeals lead to strong group identity with the targeted group. That is, an advertisement meant to appeal to Americans will strengthen national identity, while an ethnic appeal will reinforce an ethnic identity. My second hypothesis proposes that viewing an ethnic appeal reduces association with the American national group. My third hypothesis postulates that campaign appeals will lead to adherence to the targeted group's norms. In relation to this study, group norms are operationalized as values. I predict the national appeal will strengthen traditional American values of individualism and egalitarianism. On the other hand, the ethnic appeal will produce stronger devotion to family and religious values that are associated with Latino culture. Illustrated in Figures 3 and 4, the arrow diagrams for the relationship between each independent variable and dependent variable are as follows:

Figure 3. National Appeal Arrow Diagram

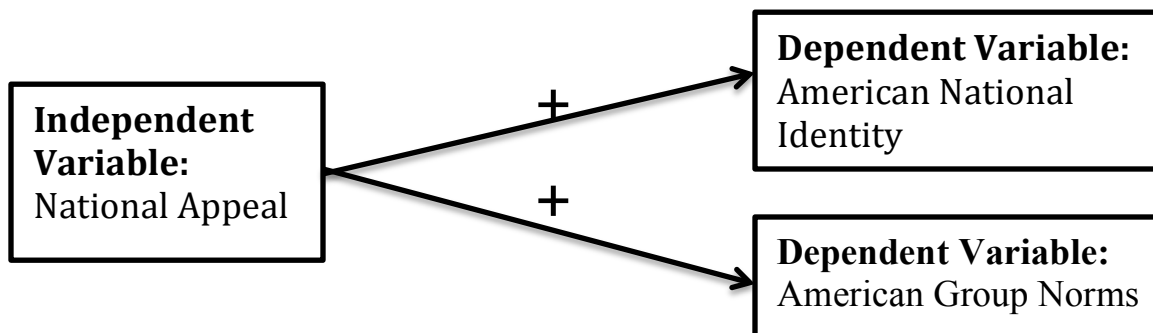
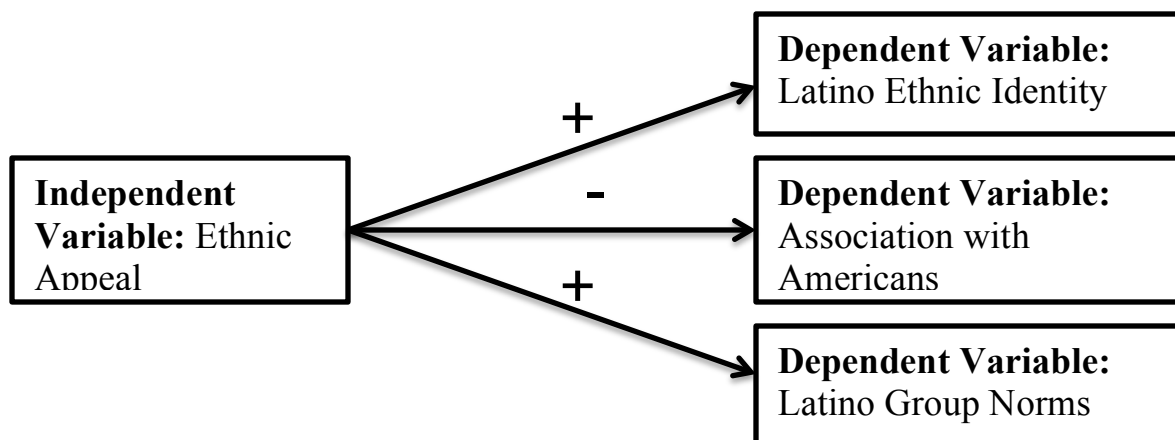


Figure 4. Ethnic Appeal Arrow Diagram



Experimental Design

To examine the impact of microtargeting on identity, this study employs an experimental design, because this type of research design allows for the manipulation of conditions. Although survey research is the traditional political science methodology, it is not conducive to this study, which is primarily interested in cause and effect. A fundamental factor to experimentation is researcher control over the production of settings, chiefly through the creation of treatments to isolate the factor of interest (Kinder & Palfrey 1993). Consequently, this design is advantageous because of the capacity to examine cause and effect. As Kaplan (1964) explains, the experimental process is, “making observations in circumstances so arranged or interpreted that we have justification for analyzing out the factors relevant to our particular inquiry” (Kinder & Palfrey 1993, 6). A survey experiment allows for the examination of how participants define their political identity and how individual’s perceive their identify in response to a particular stimuli, in this case

microtargeting. In addition, other key works have utilized experimental design to study identity and microtargeting (Tajfel 1970; Jackson 2005; Schneider 2007).

Experimentation has strengths and weaknesses. This method is useful, because it is internally valid, meaning cause and effect can be established with a significant degree of confidence. According to McDermott (2002), the advantages of experimentation include: “ability to derive casual inferences,” “experimental control,” “precise measurement,” and “ability to explore the details of the process” (39). In effect, experiments are highly structured, conducive to comparisons, and to studying the influence of stimuli. However, experiments also have several disadvantages that are important to consider in developing this study. Kinder and Palfrey (1993) theorize that the creation of an artificial environment to study the effects of a particular stimuli has potential to influence results. More specifically, experiments are considered low in external validity, because people may respond differently to a stimulus when they know they are being studied than they would outside the experiment. A related drawback to consider is the idea of realism. In a campaign environment voters are exposed to numerous advertisements, however in an experiment, such as this one, participants are exposed to only one advertisement. Consequently, the study experience is unlike that of an actual campaign. Furthermore, a low-exposure study environment may result in short-lived effects.

Additionally, sampling impacts the generalizability of experiments. Many experiments utilize a convenience sample such as, a sample composed of undergraduate students at a particular university is considered a convenience sample. Theoretically, convenience samples reduce the diversity within the sample and consequentially it cannot be determined if the result pertains only to that particular sample or if results can be applied to

the whole population (Kinder & Palfrey 1993). This drawback has particular significance for political science, which tends to be primarily focused on trends and generalizability.

However, Druckman and Kam (2011) argue that political scientists' definition of external validity is exceedingly narrow. Rather, "external validity refers to generalization not only of individuals, but also across setting/contexts, times and operationalizations" (Druckman & Kam 2011, 43). Overall, experiments are highly advantageous in examining the relationship between two variables; however, the potential limits of generalizability must be accounted for in development of the design.

In addition to considering the strengths and weaknesses of experimental design, in developing this study, which utilizes a survey research, it is important to also consider the nuances of survey research. Surveys are useful to this study, because I am primarily interested to assess how individuals interpret their identity and relation to others. Surveys allow for the creation of standardized questions to investigate many aspects of how each participant responds to the stimuli, or assigned campaign appeal (Johnson & Reynolds 2012). However, survey research can also be considered costly. A significant challenge to survey research is the construction of measures that are both valid and reliable, meaning that the survey "produces an accurate picture" and "consistent results across time and users" (Johnson & Reynolds 2012, 308). One way to overcome this obstacle is through the use of an existing measure. Further, the survey must be long enough to collect the data needed to draw conclusions, but not so long that it takes up too much of the participant's time. If the respondents lose interest and start answering the questions carelessly, it will have a negative impact on research reliability (Johnson & Reynolds 2012). Additionally, surveys responses can be influenced by social desirability, which prevents participants from being completely

honest, thus impacting the validity of results. Overall, well-designed, concise survey research is a useful means to examine how individuals identify themselves. Despite the challenges of experimental and survey research, a survey experiment was the most advantageous means to study the effects of microtargeting. By creating a short survey instrument and relying on previously used measures, this study was designed to mitigate the drawbacks associated with these types of research. The full survey instrument developed for this study can be found in Appendix B.

Independent Variable

Experimentation provides researchers control over the “production of settings, the creation of treatments, and the scheduling of observations” (Kinder & Palfrey 1993, np). The ability to manipulate conditions is fundamental in analyzing the effect of stimuli, in this case microtargeting. In this study the treatment, or independent variable, is campaign appeal. I manipulate a television advertisement to create a group-based appeal to target either the Latino ethnic group or the American national group. To mitigate the costs associated with the artificial nature of experiments, an existing advertisement was manipulated rather than developing a new ad. The use of an existing ad increased authenticity making the treatment less distinct and thereby enhancing external validity. Although past studies of microtargeting have focused on direct mail and phone calls, the treatment in this experiment is a television advertisement, (Jackson 2005; Hillygus & Shields 2008) because it provides a strong illustration in a relatively short time period. Further, other communication strategies, such as direct mail or canvassing, are not possible to organize within the time and financial restraints on this project.

The advertisement chosen for this study was originally developed by the Peter Shumlin for Governor of Vermont Campaign in 2010 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xhTV0_Ttok&list=FLcOeFGS8NDXdnNZ3KZb5Sgw). However, several advertisements were considered in crafting this study. Across campaign ads that target the Latino electorate several themes appeared. Most advertisements focus on salient Latino issues, chiefly bilingual education programs and immigrant rights (Sanchez 2006b). Additionally, candidates utilize Spanish and rhetoric of equality, to foster a connection and to appear as a potential voice for the Latino community. Many of the advertisements, particularly those developed by federal campaigns, feature highly politicized imagery. For instance, there is not a lot of diversity in the people featured in the advertisements and there were several symbols of Latino and American culture.

Although ethnic microtargeting ads tend to be highly political, a neutral advertisement is ideal for this study, to reduce the impact of political factors, such as party alliance, and to isolate the effects of ethnic and national appeal manipulations. In selecting an advertisement three factors were considered: candidate familiarity, neutrality, and perceived audience. A pre-test of three advertisements was developed and administered to College of Wooster students to examine these three factors and to choose the most effective ad for the study. The three advertisements included in the pre-test were Shumlin for Vermont Governor, Martin O'Malley for Maryland Governor, and Lonie Hancock for California State Senate.

As can be seen in Table 4, which illustrates pre-test results, Lonie Hancock was the least familiar candidate; only 3 participants (7%) recognized her. However, this advertisement was not selected because 11 participants (27%) considered the content of the

advertisement to be very political and 36 participants (88%) identified her as a Democrat. An advertisement that asserts strong partisan opinions could influence participants to respond based on the political content, rather than the treatment, thus this advertisement was not suitable for this study. Participants were more familiar with Shumlin and O'Malley; 5 (12%) and 10 (24%) participants respectively reported that they recognized these candidates. In terms of political content, 4 respondents (10%) reported that the O'Malley ad was "very politically charged" and no participant considered the Shumlin ad to be very political.

Table 4. Pre-Test Results

		Shumlin	O'Malley	Hancock
Familiarity	No	36 (88%)	31 (76%)	38 (93%)
	Yes	5 (12%)	10 (24%)	3 (7%)
Party Affiliation	Republican	3 (7%)	15 (37%)	1 (2%)
	Democrat	27 (66%)	12 (29%)	36 (88%)
	Can't tell	11 (27%)	14 (34%)	4 (10%)
Political Charged	Not Politically Charged- 1	1 (2%)	(0) 0%	2 (5%)
	2	10 (24%)	6 (15%)	3 (7%)
	3	6 (15%)	5 (12%)	4 (10%)
	4	18 (44%)	11 (27%)	13 (32%)
	5	6 (15%)	15 (37%)	8 (20%)
	Very Politically Charged- 6	0 (0%)	4%	11 (27%)

The last component considered was perceived audience. In a study of microtargeting, it is important that the participants do not believe the ad was meant to appeal to a different audience. Participants were asked to select all groups they believed to be the intended audience, out of a list of five commonly targeted groups including: women, youth, African Americans, Latinos, and the American general public; no group was also an option. The vast

majority, 26 respondents (63%) thought that the O'Malley ad was intended for the American public in general and no participant thought the ad was targeted at the Latino community.

The Shumlin results were not as favorable in this respect. As show in Table 5, 20 participants (49%) believed the ad to be aimed at all Americans and 1 person (2%) thought Latino voters to be the intended audience. Since, the baseline of the Shumlin ad has a tilts towards an American appeal, this advertisement could produce a conservative test of shifts in Latino identity. In general, the results were not exceedingly conclusive. Treatments were developed with both the O'Malley and Shumlin ads and ultimately, the Shumlin advertisement was selected, because the content and design of the ad provided the best medium for inconspicuous manipulation.

Table 5. Perceived Target Audience of Pre-Test Ads

	Shumlin	O'Malley	Hancock
Women voters	16 (39%)	3 (7%)	9 (22%)
Youth voters	1 (2%)	11 (27%)	0 (0%)
African American voters	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Latino/Hispanic voters	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The American people in general	20 (49%)	26 (63%)	23 (56%)
No group	3 (7%)	1 (2%)	9 (22%)

Although in reality voters are often targeted extensively throughout the campaign and by different forms of communication, I expect that a single television ad would still be effective in fostering an ethnic or national appeal strong enough to influence identity.

According to Jackson (2005), political identities can be created by just one exposure to the identity. Thus, I can argue that any influence this group-based campaign appeal may have had on political identity, would be stronger in scenarios, such as presidential elections, when

exposure is more extensive. Experimental designs are high in internal validity, because of high researcher control over the environment. It is important to the results of this study that extraneous factors were controlled for. Consequently, the advertisements are held the same between the two experimental groups. That is, beyond the manipulated appeal that appears in the first and last frames of the advertisement, the issue, content, imagery, and audio featured remain identical, as can be seen in images of each advertisement located in Appendix A. The national group treatment states “Peter Shumlin has a plan to support American youth,” that appears in white text over a black background for four seconds in the beginning of the advertisement. In the last frame the appeal is reiterated, “Support American Youth, Vote Shumlin” appears in white text over a black background for 2.7 seconds. The manipulations in the Latino ad are identical except “American” is replaced with “Latino.” Thus, in ethnic group treatment the opening frame states, “Peter Shumlin has a plan to support Latino youth” and the last frame states, “Support Latino Youth, Vote Shumlin.” With this strategy, extraneous factors of the ad, such as imagery, are controlled for and conclusions about the effect of the appeal can be made with confidence.

Dependent Variables

Based on social identity theory, the overall argument of this study is that microtargeting campaign appeals affect political identity. I define political identity by five dependent variables: ethnic identity, national identity, Latino values, American values, and group similarity. As seen in Table 6, to measure the dependent variables, I develop four sets of survey questions: group association, American national identity, Latino ethnic identity, and political values. The group association set explores the participants’ relationship with each group, specifically how much they feel a part of both their national and ethnic groups

and how similar they believe they are to other members of those groups. Both the American national identity and Latino ethnic identity sets tapped into the cognitive, evaluative, and affective framework of social identity to measure how significant these memberships are in their self-concept. The final set of survey questions, values, is designed to measure values associated with each group and is used as a measure of group norms. An analysis of adherence to values is suggestive of how membership affects perspectives. Based on prior research of traditional American values, I look at individualism, and egalitarianism, while Latino group values are determined to be family and religious based values. To reduce the cost of participating in the study and respondent fatigue, a drawback associated with survey length, the survey is limited to four questions to examine each dependent variable.

Additionally, a few questions are included in to conceal the specific intent of the survey, such as “did you vote in the 2012 presidential election?” The purpose of this strategy is to mitigate the effects of social desirability, or the tendency to answer questions based on cultural standards, also considered to be a challenge with survey research. The survey questions are as follows:

Table 6. Dependent Variable Survey Questions

Question Set	Question	Response Options
Group Association	When I think of the American/Latino people, I think of people who are a lot like me.	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	How strongly do you feel a part of or relate to American people/people in your racial or ethnic group?	Not at all (1), somewhat (2), very strongly (3)
American National Identity	Being American is important to the way I think of myself as a person.	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	I am a person with strong ties to American people.	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	Were would you place American people as a group?	Extremely untrustworthy (1) - Extremely trustworthy (5)
	Where would you place American people as a group?	Extremely intolerant (1) - Extremely tolerant (5)
Latino Ethnic Identity	Being Latino is important to the way I think of myself as a person.	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	I am a person with strong ties to Latino people.	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	Were would you place Latino people as a group?	Extremely untrustworthy (1) - Extremely trustworthy (5)
	Where would you place Latino people as a group?	Extremely intolerant (1) - Extremely tolerant (5)
Group Norms	Do you agree that any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding?	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	Do you agree that if people were treated more equally in this country, we would have fewer problems?	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	Do you agree that it is better for children to live in their parents' home until they are married?	Strongly disagree (1) - Strongly agree (5)
	How important is religion in your life?	Very important (1) - Not at all important (5)

In addition to the two experimental groups (ethnic and national appeal), the design of this experiment includes a control group. Control groups are not exposed to experimental treatments and provide a baseline for comparison (Kinder & Palfrey 1993). Participants

assigned to the control group respond to survey questions without previous exposure to a campaign appeal. A comparison of how the control group responds to the survey questions without the effect of artificial treatments provides a point of comparison to ensure that appeals do have an effect. Without a control group, it would not be possible to detect if there was indeed a change in identity.

Procedure

Since the independent variable in this experiment is campaign appeal, this factor varies across experimental groups. In other words, participants assigned to the ethnic appeal view an advertisement targeted to Latino voters, while participants assigned to the national appeal watch an ad meant to appeal to voters countrywide.

With approval from the Human Subjects Review Committee, mild deception is employed to recruit participants, in that the study title and objectives are altered slightly so that participants are not aware that their identity is the focus of the study. Thus, in the context of recruitment, the study is called “Political Ideologies Within Communities in the United States” and participants are told the purpose is to learn more about the variation of political ideologies within various groups across the country. The survey description is changed to be intentionally vague, but still relate to the questions asked. Additionally, the title does not inform participants that they are being studied because of their Latino origins, information that could externally prime an ethnic identity and impact the results.

Participants recruited by the SMIS approach, email, and Mturk. They access and take the survey online by means of a link developed by Qualtrics survey software. The survey is designed to randomly assign participants to one of two experimental groups or to the control group. After reading the consent form and agreeing to take the survey, participants respond to

a question that determines eligibility. Survey logic was created to end the survey if participants do not identify as Latino or Hispanic or a person of Spanish decent to ensure that all responses are representative of the Latino community. If the participant identifies as Latino and is assigned to one of the two experimental groups, they are exposed the treatment, a short 30 second political advertisement developed to target either the American public in general or Latino Americans, and then answer several questions about their demographic information and political identity. Eligible participants assigned to the control group have an identical experience, except they are not exposed to the treatment and rather continue straight to the survey questions.

Participants recruited in person, at churches and community centers, fill out a printed version of the survey for convenience. With this method participants are able to walk around and make themselves comfortable. Each survey was pre-assigned a number to keep track of the survey for data collection and for random assignment purposes. After consenting to partake in the survey, each participant fills out the question of eligibility for consistency. It is important to note that regardless of their answer participants complete the entire survey; however, responses from participants who do not identify as Latino are excluded from the data analysis. If the participant is assigned to an experimental group, he or she is then prompted to stop for the researcher to show them the treatment on an iPad, before continuing on with the paper survey. The control group is not instructed to stop and does not watch an ad, but proceeds directly to the survey portion.

Participants

The main focus of this study is to examine the effects of microtargeting on Latino American's identity. Thus, all participants are of Latino descent and eighteen or older. The

biggest challenge to this experiment is recruiting a large enough sample size to derive reliable conclusions, between 90 to 105 participants, or about 30 in each experimental group. Although nationally representative samples are ideal to produce externally valid conclusions, this study is limited by time and cost. As a consequence, participants were dominantly recruited online distributing the survey link among personal connections. For example, a teacher at Cristo Rey, a bilingual high school in Chicago, Illinois emailed the survey link to several of her Latino co-workers. Additionally participants were recruited, by convenience, at Catholic Churches and Community Centers in Chicago, Illinois. Recruiting in predominantly Latino neighborhoods, where participants are surrounded by people who share their ethnicity, could potentially prime participants to have a strong connection to Latino culture could potentially impact the results. However, as Huntington (2004) explains Latinos tend to be regionally clustered. According to a PEW Hispanic Center report from 2013 the 100 largest counties by Hispanic population contain 71% of all Hispanics. In fact, 9% of the Hispanic population is located in Los Angeles County, California (Brown & Lopez 2013). The vast majority of Latinos in American live in predominantly Latino communities, thus this survey sample is not significantly different than a national representative survey. In addition, some Latino and Hispanic undergraduate students from The College of Wooster's "Proyecto Latino" student organization were recruited.

Online recruiting was another method employed to reach out to Latino participants. This sample will not be affected by convenience. Cassese and colleagues (2013) found online recruitment to be a cost effective means of fostering a representative sample. However, online surveys are self-selecting, meaning that there might be an important difference between individual's who chose to participate and those who do not, which has the potential

to skew the results. The SMIS approach, developed by Cassese and her colleagues, identifies and makes appeals to social mediators, such as bloggers, and forum moderators, to endorse the study and solicit participation among their network of readers. Recruitment from a known leader, rather than an unknown researcher, is effective for enhancing the likelihood of participation. Moderators of Latino political blogs, such as Latino Decisions, were contacted. A total of 17 moderators were contacted, two of which, “Two Weeks Notice: A Latin American Politics Blog” and “The Progressive Latino,” posted the survey to their blog. To complement data collected from online blogs, Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) was also used to recruit participants. A link to my Qualtrics was posted several times on MTurk. Participants were allowed to take the survey only one time; this was monitored by a six-digit code, for \$0.25.

Plan for Analysis

The data collected in this study will be analyzed quantitatively. To measure political identity, I employ the “American National Identity Index” developed by Theiss-Morse (2009). This scale will be translated to be compatible with ethnic group identity. Each question of the four political identity questions will be scaled together; a score of 1 represents a rejection of group identity, while 5 represents a very strong identification with the group. Several Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests will be run to examine my hypotheses. If there were evidence to prove my hypotheses, I expect to find a significant main effect of the treatment, microtargeting appeal, on the dependent variables, group identity, group association, and group norms.

Chapter 3: Results

Based on previous research of social identities and microtargeting, I expect to find that group-based campaigning strengthens an individual's political identity with the targeted group. Political identity is measured by three dependent variables: group identity, similarity, and adherence to group norms. More specifically, three main hypotheses outline my expectations for this study. As previously explained, my group identity hypothesis postulates that campaign appeal will strengthen group identity with the targeted group. Specifically, national group appeals lead to a strong American national identity, whereas ethnic microtargeting appeals foster a strong Latino ethnic identity. My group association hypothesis applies for only the ethnic appeal. That is, I predict that viewing the ethnic appeal reduces perceived closeness with the fellow Americans. Further, my group norms hypothesis predicts the national group appeal will foster adherence to American norms of individualism and egalitarianism, while the ethnic appeal will promote acceptance of Latino family and religious oriented values. To test the effects of microtargeting on Latino Americans' political identity perception, I developed a survey experiment that randomly assigned participants to watch the national appeal treatment, the ethnic appeal treatment, or to watch no advertisement (control group).

I begin my analysis with a summary of the study participants, focusing specifically on factors that are important to the study of Latinos' political identity including: race, ethnicity, ancestry, generation, and citizenship. Other interesting participant information, such as gender and age, that is not vital to the study of political identity in this context is presented in Table 7. After developing an understanding of those who participated in the study, I then

explore the results of analysis of variance tests (ANOVA) for each of the three hypotheses.

Participants

This study had a total of 226 participants, however the sample included 119 Latino individuals. 70 surveys were not included in the analysis, because the respondent did not identify as Latino. Further 35 surveys were excluded because the response was deemed incomplete. Survey logic was designed to skip to the end of the survey if participant responded that they did not consider themselves Hispanic, or Latino, or a person of Spanish decent. A total of 70 individuals volunteered to take the survey, but did not identify as Latino and thus were not included in the results. Further, 2 participants chose not to declare if they identify as Latino; these surveys were not included to ensure that the results reflect only Latino feedback. Consequently, the sample size was 119 to study the implications of ethnic microtargeting on Latino Americans identity perception.

Table 7. Participants included in Analysis

Gender	Male	52 (43.7%)
	Female	65 (54.6%)
	Missing Data	2 (1.7%)
Religious Preference	Protestant	11 (9.2%)
	Catholic	67 (56.3%)
	Jewish	1 (0.8%)
	Muslim	1 (0.8%)
	Other	15 (12.6%)
	No preference	24 (20.2%)
	Missing Data	0 (0%)
Education	Less than high school	1 (0.8%)
	High School /GED	11 (9.2%)
	Associates Degree	11 (9.2%)
	Some College	34 (28.6%)
	Bachelor's Degree	36 (30.3%)
	Post Graduate Degree	25 (21.0%)
	Missing Data	1 (0.8%)
Age	18-24	27 (30.2%)
	25-34	25 (3.6%)
	35-44	22 (20.8%)
	45-54	12 (11.3%)
	55-64	8 (7.5%)
	65+	4 (3.8%)
	Missing Data	13 (10.9%)

In analyzing the results of this study, it is important to consider the sample of the target population, Latinos living in the United States. In terms of race, 40 (33.6%) participants considered themselves white/Caucasian, 4 (3.4%) American Indian/Native American, 2 (1.7%) respondents identified as Asian, and 2 (1.7%) as African American. Importantly, 5 (4.2%) participants did not provide an answer to this question. Additionally, 64 (54.6%) respondents chose the “other” option and wrote in Hispanic or Latino. The

options provided for this question included, American Indian/Native American, Asian, White/Caucasian, African American, and Pacific Islander. Hispanic and Latino was not provided as a response options for this particular, because measuring this variable separately allowed for a clearer analysis of which responses are representative of the Latino community. Also, as separate measure, I could enable survey logic to skip to the end of the survey if the respondent did not identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Pertinent to the study of political identity is an examination of individuals bond with various political groups. An important factor to consider is birthplace and citizenship. 91 participants (76.5%) were born in the U.S. and 108 (90.8%) were American citizens. 48 (40.3%) participants were first-generation, 26 (21.8%) were second-generation, and 43 (36.1%) were third generation Americans. Among the 28 (23.5%) participants that were not born in the United States, the median number amount of time spent living in the United States was 16 years. Further, 3 participants (2.5%) were not naturalized American citizens, and 8 (6.7%) were of resident alien or permanent resident status. When analyzing a Latino population, it is important to consider ancestry in addition to race. Past studies have found that many people within the broader Latino community hold strong bonds to their country of origin (Sanchez 2006b; Masuoka 2008). Most of the sample, a total of 70 participants (58.8%) were of Mexican origins, 22 (18.5%) were Puerto Rican, and 2 (1%) Dominican. Similarly, 40 respondents (20.2%) did not feel any of the provided answers appropriately represented their ancestry and wrote in an answer. Other responses included, Argentine (1.6%), Brazilian, (0.8%) Chilean (1.6%), Colombian (1.6%), Honduran (0.8%), Paraguayan (0.8%), Peruvian (0.8%), Spanish (0.8%), and Venezuelan (0.8%). Several of these respondents' origins were rooted in two countries, for example Guatemalan and Puerto Rican

(0.8), Nicaraguan and Salvadoran (0.8), Mexican and Puerto Rican (1.6%), and Spanish and Mexican (1.6%).

Results

This study included a control group and two experimental groups: the national appeal group and the ethnic appeal group. 55 participants (46.2%) were randomly assigned to the control group and thus were not exposed to any campaign advertisement. 25 participants (21%) were exposed to the national appeal and 39 participants (32.8%) to the ethnic appeal. Although in the ideal scenario about a third of the sample would have been included in each group, the way the randomization fell did not lend the conditions to be even. The disproportionate size of each group does not prevent from examining trends within the sample, but does need to be considered throughout the analysis¹.

I employ analysis of variance tests to examine the effect of my independent variable, campaign appeal, on each dependent variable, American national identity, Latino ethnic identity, association, American group norms, and Latino group norms, across the three groups. This form of statistical analysis is advantageous for quantitative studies of categorical variables and allows for the comparison of means across groups (Johnson & Reynolds 2008). I examine each hypothesis separately, starting with group identity, then association, and finally group norms.

Group Identity

I expected to find that participants in the national appeal group would have a stronger American national identity in comparison to both the ethnic appeal and the control groups.

¹ Crosstabs revealed that randomization somewhat evenly distributed participants across groups in terms of ancestry and generation. See Appendix C.

Additionally, I expected to find that participants exposed to the ethnic appeal would more strongly identify with their Latino ethnic identity than participants who either watched the national appeal or did not watch a political ad. There were two dependent variables associated with the group identity hypothesis, American national identity and Latino ethnic identity. These dependent variables were each measured by a set survey questions modeled after Theiss-Morse's (2009) national identity index. Table 8 presents the questions in each set used measured the three components of group identity: cognitive, evaluative, and affective. Participants responses to each question were scaled together so that they ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 means that the respondent do not identify with their American or Latino group membership and 5 means the participant strongly identifies as American or Latino. Table 9 presents the results for the group identity hypothesis. As can be seen, an ANOVA analysis revealed no difference between groups in American national identity ($F = .286, 2df, p = .752$). Further, there was no difference between groups in Latino ethnic identity ($F = .802, 2df, p = .451$).

Table 8. Group Identity Measures

Dependent Variable		American	Latino
Political Identity	Cognitive	Being American is important to the way I think of myself as a person. Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)	Being Latino is important to the way I think of myself as a person. Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)
	Evaluative	Where would you place American people as a group? Extremely Untrustworthy (1) - Extremely Trustworthy (5)	Where would you place Latin people as a group? Extremely Untrustworthy (1) - Extremely Trustworthy (5)
		Where would you place American people as a group? Extremely Intolerant (1) - Extremely Tolerant (5)	Where would you place Latin people as a group? Extremely Intolerant (1) - Extremely Tolerant (5)
	Affective	I am a person with strong ties to Latino people. Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)	I am a person with strong ties to Latino people. Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)

Table 9. ANOVA Result, Group Identity Hypothesis

Group Identity	Control Group (A)	National Appeal Group (B)	Ethnic Appeal Group (C)	F-Statistic	P-value	Degrees of Freedom	N
American National Identity	3.50	3.51	3.62	.286	.752	2	119
Latino Ethnic Identity	3.57	3.79	3.67	.802	.451	2	119

p<.10+, *p*<.05*, *p*<.01**, *p*<.001***

Considering the insignificance of group-based appeals on group identity revealed by ANOVA tests, the means of each group were examined as an indicator of direction. Stated differently, the means of each group were compared to see if they progressed in the expected direction. As illustrated in Table 9, the mean of American national identity was weaker on average for participants that were exposed to the national appeal than the ethnic appeal. The same pattern, appeared for Latino ethnic identity, in that those exposed to the national appeal had a stronger ethnic identity on average than those exposed to the ethnic appeal. In both cases, the control group had the weakest group identity, which might suggest that watching a group-based appeal increased identification with a group, particularly in the case of the ethnic appeal, however further testing would need to be done to further explore this pattern.

In examining each component of group identity (cognitive, evaluative, affective) individually, there was no significance found between groups. Perhaps most surprisingly, an ANOVA analysis of the cognitive component of Latino ethnic identity revealed a highly insignificant difference between groups ($F = .151, 2df, p = .860$). Based on prior research, particularly the theorizing of Tajfel et al. (1971), I would expect an advertisement that categorizes an individual as Latino would make membership to the Latino community more salient. An ANOVA analysis of the cognitive component of American national identity was less insignificant, but still far from approaching significance ($F = 1.206, 2df, p = .303$).

Association

In terms of group association, I expected to find that participants targeted as Latinos have a weaker association with Americans than those who watched an national appeal. Table

10 presents the measure for association, which included two variables: tendency to identify with group and perceived similarity.

Table 10. Group Association Measure

Dependent Variable		American	Latino
Group Similarity	Perceived group similarity	When I think of American people, I think of people who are a lot like me. Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)	When I think of Latino people, I think of people who are a lot like me. Strongly Disagree - Strongly Agree (5)
	Tendency to identify with group	How strongly do you feel a part of or relate to American people? Not at all (1) - Very Strongly (3)	How strongly do you feel a part of or relate to people in your racial or ethnic group? Not at all (1) - Very Strongly (3)

I expected to find that participants in the ethnic appeal group have a weaker association with Americans than participants in the national appeal and control groups. An ANOVA analysis revealed no significant difference between groups in association with Americans ($F = .048$, 2df, $p = .953$). Interestingly, a comparison of means revealed that on average participants in the control group were most likely to consider themselves to be similar to the typical American. However, as presented in Table 11, an ANOVA test revealed significant difference between groups in perceived similarity to Latino people ($F = 3.800$, 2df, $p = .025$). According to the results of a Bonferroni post-hoc test, the difference between the control group and the ethnic appeal group was significant ($p = .023$). However, the difference between the ethnic appeal and national appeal groups was not significant ($p = 1.00$). Thus, as

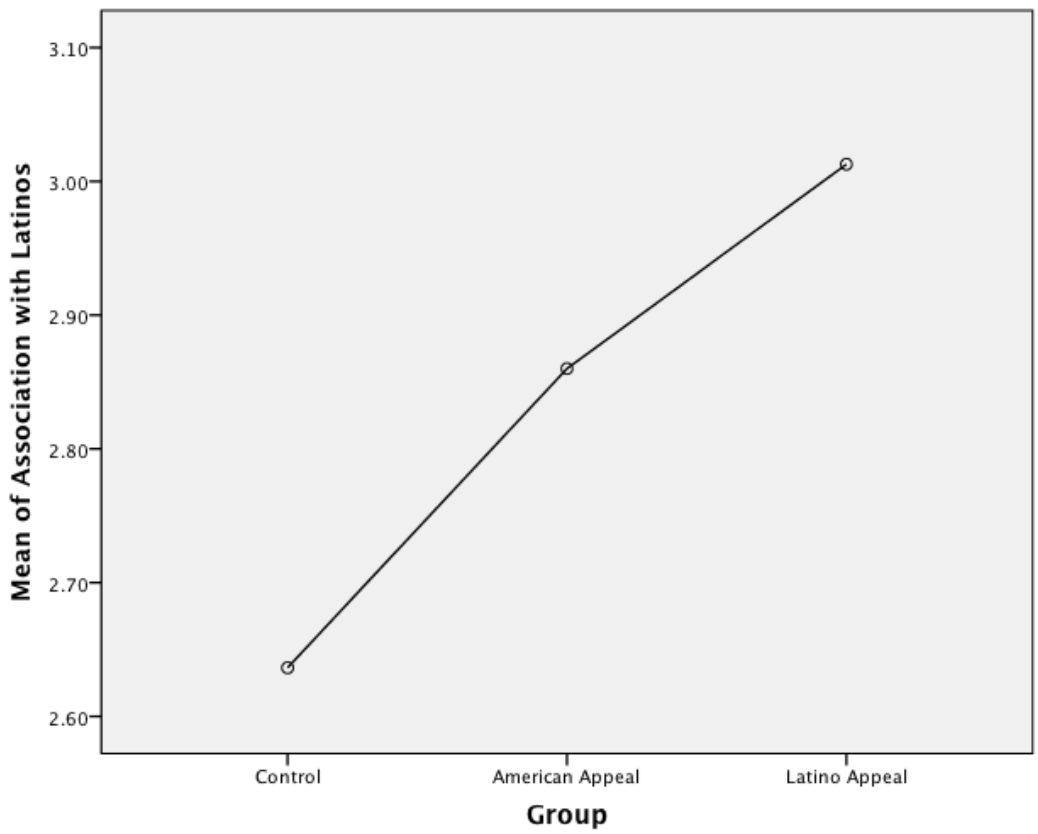
illustrated in the means plot in Figure 5 the control group was least likely to association with other Latino Americans.

Table 11. ANOVA Result, Group Association Hypothesis

Group Similarity	Control Group (A)	National Appeal Group (B)	Ethnic Appeal Group (C)	F-Statistic	P-value	Degrees of Freedom	N
American Association	2.74	2.76	2.78	.048	.953	2	119
Latino Association	2.64 ^(C)	2.86	3.01 ^(A)	3.800*	.025	2	119

p<.10+, *p*<.05*, *p*<.01**, *p*<.001***

Figure 5. Means Plot, Association to Latinos



Group Norms

In terms of group norms there are two independent variables, American norms and Latino norms. I expected to observe stronger adherence with the group's norms targeted in the appeal. That is, watching the national appeal would result in stronger adherence to norms of individualism and egalitarianism, in comparison to the ethnic appeal and control groups. Conversely, in the ethnic appeal group, norms of family and religion would be more strongly upheld than in the national appeal and control groups. As shown in Table 12, each variable was measured by two questions and scaled together, so that 1 was rejection and 5 was strong acceptance of group norms.

Table 12. Group Norms Measures

Dependent Variable	American	Latino
Group Norms (Values)	Do you agree that any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding? Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)	Do you agree that it is better for children to live in their parents' home until marriage? Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)
	Do you think If people were treated more equally in this country, we would have fewer problems? Strongly Disagree (1) - Strongly Agree (5)	How important is religion in your life? Very important (1) - Not at all important (5)

The results, presented in Table 13, did not reject the null hypothesis of no difference between groups adherence to norms. More specifically, an ANOVA test revealed no significant difference between group's adherence to American norms of individualism and egalitarianism ($F = .273, 2df, .761$). In examining the means for this variable, the trend that

occurred was the opposite of what I expected; the control group was the least committed to American group norms, while participants exposed to the ethnic appeal were on average the strongest advocates of American norms.

In terms of adherence to Latino group norms, an ANOVA test discovered no difference between groups in devotion to family and religious values associated with Latino culture ($F= 1.320$, 2df, $p= .271$). However, the means for this variable illustrate the difference between groups moves in the expected direction. Accordingly, the control group showed the least adherence to Latino norms, on average, whereas participants exposed to the ethnic appeal were the strongest advocates of family and religious values.

Table 13. ANOVA Result, Group Norms Hypothesis

Group Norms	Control Group (A)	National Appeal Group (B)	Ethnic Appeal Group (C)	F-Statistic	P-value	Degrees of Freedom	N
American Group Norms	4.00	4.08	4.11	.273	.761	2	119
Latino Group Norms	3.31	3.42	3.62	1.320	.271	2	119

p<.10+, p<.05, p<.01**, p<.001****

Overall, analysis of the group identity and group norms hypotheses did not reveal significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the means of the three groups. That is to say, the campaign appeals did not influence the strength of group identity or adherence to group norms across the three groups as was expected. Based on the results of an ANOVA test, there was significant evidence that, in comparison to the control group, the ethnic appeal fosters a strengthened association with the Latino community.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

The question examined in this study asks how do modern microtargeting strategies influence Latino Americans' political identity perceptions? It searched for differences in how Latino Americans' identify politically, nationally or ethnically, after exposure to either a national campaign advertisement or an advertisement that targeted Latinos as a subset of the population. The survey experiment also included a control group, in which participants were not exposed to an advertisement, to provide a baseline for comparison. Drawing from social identity perspective, I developed three hypotheses for the relationship between microtargeting and political identity. Broadly, I theorize that ethnic microtargeting, in which Latinos are contacted by political elites as a distinct subset of the population, obstructs the development of a bond to fellow Americans. Consequently, I expected participants who were targeted as an American to have a stronger national identity and adherence to American norms. Whereas, I expected participants targeted as Latinos to have a stronger ethnic identity, adherence to Latino group norms, and a weaker association with Americans.

Overall the results of this study were partially confirmed; of three hypotheses – group identity, group association, and group norms – just one produced significant findings. The results of ANOVA tests suggest that campaign appeals do not foster group identity or adherence to group norms. However, there is significant evidence to suggest that ethnic microtargeting fosters association with the Latino community. In deeper analysis of the results, I focus first on potential explanations, including strengths and drawbacks of experimental design, and subsequently examine potential implications and develop suggestions for future research.

Potential Explanations

This study was designed out of an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of experimental design. An advantage to using experimentation is high researcher control over study treatments and settings. By use of this methodology, I was able to isolate the effects of microtargeting. I specifically used a neutral advertisement and held the participant experience constant to ensure that external factors did not influence responses. Further, the sample of Latino respondents was relatively diverse. While some areas were under represented, overall there was considerable representation of people from a wide variety of age groups and educational backgrounds. There was also representation of different generations including some individuals who were not born in the United States. Further, the use of randomization ensured that individual characteristics of the participants did not affect the results. In addition to randomization, Qualtrics provided the methodological benefits of survey logic, which allowed for the screening of participants, thus those who did not identify as a Latinos did not finish the survey.

As with all experiments, there were some drawbacks associated with this study that are important to consider in future research. In fact, many aspects that contributed to this study were also drawbacks. A major limitation was related to sampling. The snowball technique, in which participants and personal contacts were asked to send out the survey link to others who might be willing to participate, proved to be the most efficient way of collecting data from this specific population. Although I was able to obtain responses from 119 individuals who consider themselves Latino and a relatively diverse sample, with a larger sample size the results would be more generalizable to Latinos across the country. Further of the 119 included in the survey sample, 55 (46.2%) were randomly assigned by to

the control group, whereas 39 (32.8%) participants were in the ethnic appeal group and 25 (21%) in the national appeal group. It is unclear why this pattern occurred; with more respondents the randomization function could have distributed participants in a way that evened out the study conditions. Consequently, the size in the national appeal group is on the small side for drawing statistically significant conclusions. This distribution is not ideal for drawing comparisons across groups and making conclusions with certainty.

External validity was a challenge to this study, in that there are significant discrepancies between the study experience and that of an actual campaign. Under the financial and time restraints on this study, participants were only exposed to one advertisement, where as in a campaign environment individuals are contacted extensively. Further, Latinos, who are generally considered to be politically undecided, are likely to be contacted by both parties (Abrajano 2010). Microtargeting is a categorization tool, however one, thirty-second advertisement may not have been strong enough for the effects of categorization to be influential on the participants' identity. Ethnic microtargeting fosters a sense of association with the Latino community, which is fundamental to the incorporation of group membership into identity. A stronger treatment, in which individuals were contacted more extensively and by more candidates, could potentially increase the influence of campaign appeals on identity perception.

Further, the content of the advertisement presented both advantages, in terms of studying the effect of microtargeting on political identity, and drawbacks for generalizability. An existing political advertisement was used to develop the study treatments to bolster external validity. Additionally, a relatively neutral advertisement was used to ensure external factors did not influence results and to isolate the affects of microtargeting. However, the

advertisements were also a challenge to external validity. Neutrality is not a common feature of microtargeting advertisements. That is, ads developed to reach a specific subset of the population are typically much bolder and the content is much more specific to the particular group. For example, most political ads designed to target Latinos focus on bilingual education and immigration. In fact, the ad selected was actually tilted towards an American appeal. According to the pre-test results almost half of respondents, 49%, reported that the Shumlin advertisement was targeted at the American public in general. Consequently, this created a conservative test of Latino identity and could explain why there was no significant difference in group association between the American and ethnic appeal groups. The strengths and weakness of this study should be taken into consideration for the development of future studies on the effect of microtargeting on Latino Americans' political identity perception.

Implications

Microtargeting is an increasingly dominant feature of American politics. This form of campaigning enables politicians to appeal to the specific interests of a subset of the population without influencing others voters. The Obama campaign's \$20 million dollar Latino outreach campaign illustrates the magnitude of ethnic microtargeting. The Latino community is a major electoral focus of both political parties, because it is the largest ethnic minority group and politically volatile. In order to appeal to this strategic population, candidates have focused on issues that are particular to the Latino community, such as immigration and bilingual education. Consequentially, during political campaigns Latinos are continually reminded of their ethnic identity. This study shown the potential for

microtargeting strategies, which are used extensively to mobilize this community, to influence how Latinos' identify politically.

This study contributes to the ongoing scholarly debate over how Latino Americans understand their group identity. Many scholars argue that Latinos tend to relate more strongly with their country of origin rather than the panethnic label, Latino (de la Garza et al. 1992; Masuoka 2008). Based on the results of this study, microtargeting creates a sense of community amongst group members and thus could be an important component in developing a more prominent Latino community. In fact, this finding only demonstrates the potential influence of microtargeting. This study was designed to be a conservative test of identity. Participants were exposed only once to a relatively neutral, thirty-second campaign appeal. In the context of a campaign, where Latinos are extensively targeted to stronger identity appeals, these results are likely to be amplified. A sense of closeness to other group members often leads to a common outlook and alignment of political orientations (Sanchez 2006b). This finding is significant, because it illustrates the potential for Latinos to mobilize ethnically, which could have important implications for the political culture in the United States.

As the largest ethnic minority in the United States, Latinos have the potential to be a decisive feature of American politics in the future. However, the disunion within the Latino community is a challenge Latinos' ability to exert power at the national level. In order for this demographic to be electorally influential, subgroups of the community must come to see themselves as a part of the large Latino community (Bowler & Segura 2012). According to Bowler and Segura (2012), "ethnic and racial identities have long been identified as an important political resource on which groups and individuals can draw for assistance in

forming identities ” (148). Group-based microtargeting is a powerful means of mobilization, however the normative implications of such strategies, namely misrepresentation and the creation of a Latino group identity, need to be considered.

Campaigns are a tool of agenda setting (Jackson 2005, Hillygus & Shields 2008). That is, politicians campaign on particular issues making them salient and thus a significant factor in decision-making. Campaigning to Latinos dominantly on issues related to ethnicity, such as immigration, may result in decisions that only reflect those issues, while other issues of importance are not a factor. This could lead to political misrepresentation. Further, consistently reinforcing the importance of a particular set of issues that are particular to this specific community could skew Latinos’ political priorities to be different from the rest of the United States. For example, according to Segura (n.d.) and Sanchez (2006a) Latinos tend to be more socially conservative than other Americans. Additionally, although similar to other minority groups, Latinos prefer a bigger, more active government than the country at large. Latino outreach campaigns that make social welfare issues salient could create a divide within American society. In particular, as Latinos grow into one of the largest groups in American society their views will further shape political issues and the way our nation is governed.

Further, consistently remaining Latinos of their ethnic identity has the potential to strengthen group consciousness within the Latino community. Although this could be beneficial in terms of having Latino issues represented in Congress, considering the size of this group it could also have negative implications. Sidanius et al. (1997) theorize that strong racial and ethnic identities create fragmentation within the national community and foster intergroup antipathies (Jackson 2005). Continuous reinforcement of an ethnic identity

through microtargeting may create loyalties to the ethnic group rather than the country as a whole. According to Tajfel's theory of social identity, people navigate the world through ingroups and outgroups. In terms of politics, people align their political views based on their group identity (Lewis-Beck et al 2008). If Latinos are to come to see other Americans as an outgroup, it could have serious implications of political polarization and skewed policy outcomes that do not reflect the best interest of Americans. Although, Latinos present a strategic opportunity for electoral gain, candidates and political parties must consider the potential implications of campaigning to Latinos as a distinct group within the United States. The Latino community is the largest minority group in the United States and will undoubtedly play a decisive role in future political elections and thereby policy outcomes and the political culture in the United States.

Future Research

There are many exciting possibilities for further research on the influence of ethnic microtargeting on Latino Americans' political identity. This study focused specifically on national identity and ethnic identity. However, within existing literature on Latinos' group identity in the United States, there is a debate over how Latinos conceptualize their group. Latino is a panethnic label used to describe a heterogeneous group of many distinct cultures and histories (Masuoka 2008). Many scholars argue that national origin is an important group membership and determinant of political behaviors (de la Garza et al., 1992; DeSipio 1996). In analyzing the results of this study, microtargeting presents a means to develop a stronger sense of community amongst Latino Americans. Further research could benefit from examining identification with national origins, in addition to ethnic and national identity. The inclusion of national origins, or ancestry, would provide the opportunity to further explore

microtargeting's potential to strengthen the sense of community amongst individuals of Spanish descent.

Further, the impact of a campaign environment could also be important. A drawback to this study was external validity, in that the experience of microtargeting varied within the confines of this experiment compared to the real world. Many political advertisements targeted at Latinos focus on more pertinent issues, such as bilingual education, that are uniting within the Latino community. The issue focus could be an important factor in developing political identity. Future research could benefit from developing a study more accurate to the campaign experience, specifically by employing different mediums for microtargeting, using issue appeals, and increasing exposure to treatments. More over, in the context of a campaign environment could develop a more accurate assessment of how microtargeting influences political identity outside of the study.

Microtargeting is an ever more prominent feature of American electoral politics. Once more studies are done on the effects of microtargeting and Latino Americans' political identity, we will be able to develop a deeper understanding of the implication of targeting Latinos as a distinct subset of the population. American politics is at a decisive juncture as demographics shift over the next several decades and microtargeting has the potential to create group consciousness within the Latino community and ultimately influence the political culture in the United States.

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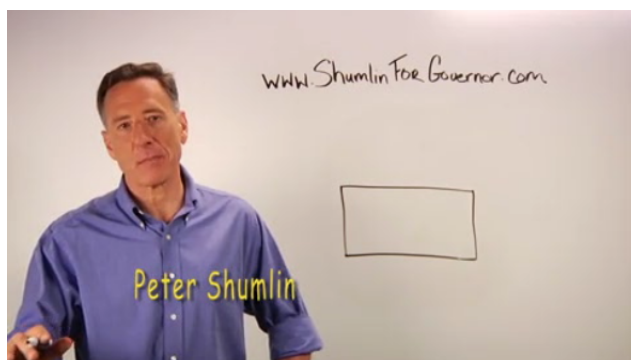
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Appendix A: Advertisements

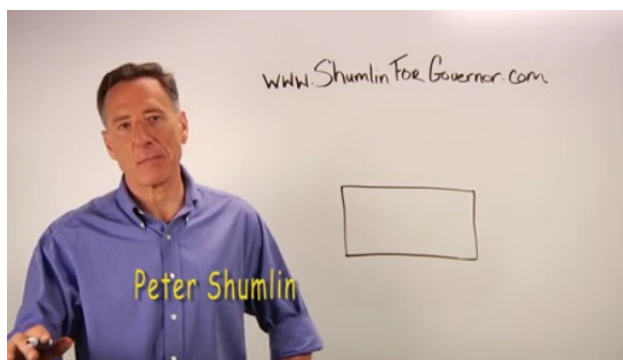
National Appeal



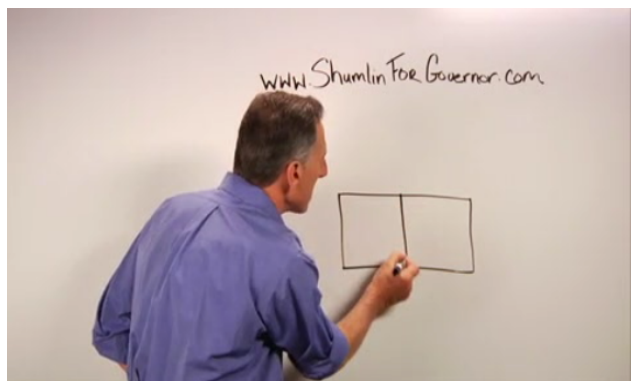
Ethnic Appeal



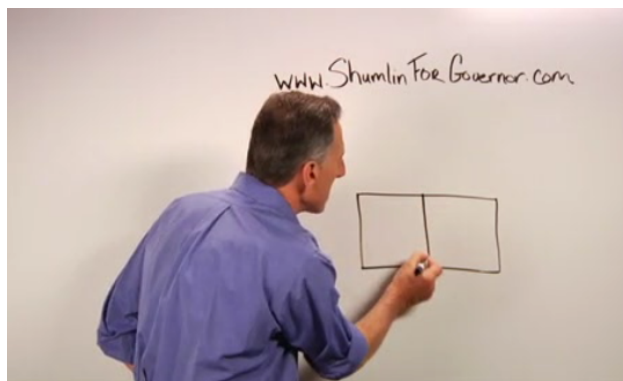
Vermont's next governor is going to have to think outside the box.



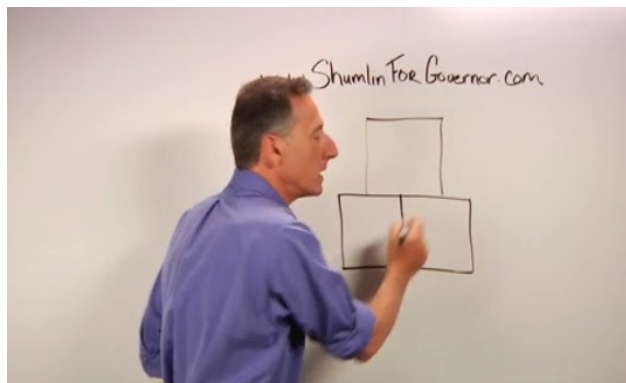
Vermont's next governor is going to have to think outside the box.



Today, half of Vermont's school children don't get the benefits of preschool...



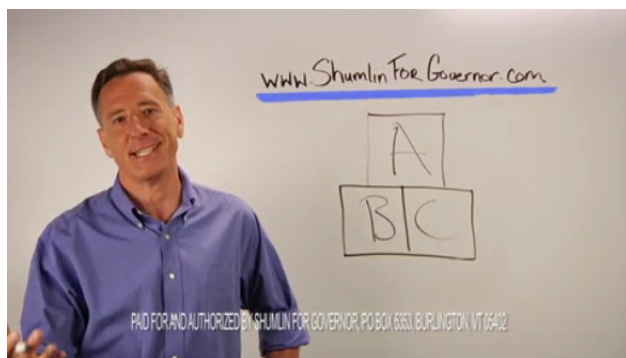
Today, half of Vermont's school children don't get the benefits of preschool...



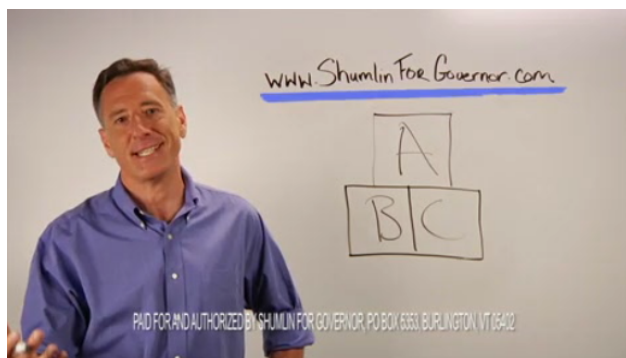
...and the lack of affordable early education is a big stumbling block to parents who need or want to work.



...and the lack of affordable early education is a big stumbling block to parents who need or want to work.



My plan to provide universal preschool will give our children the strong start that they need to succeed. Visit my website to see how, its as fundamental as A, B, C.



My plan to provide universal preschool will give our children the strong start that they need to succeed. Visit my website to see how, its as easy as A, B, C.

Support American Youth
Vote Shumlin

Support Latino Youth
Vote Shumlin

Appendix B: Survey

Note: Survey questions modeled after Theiss-Morse (2009)

Political Ideologies Within Communities in the United States

TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY AT THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER

I Agree (1)

Q1 What race do you consider yourself?

- Alaska Native (1)
- American Indian/Native American (2)
- Asian (3)
- African American/Black (4)
- Pacific Islander (5)
- White/Caucasian (6)
- Other (7) _____

Q2 Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino or a person of Spanish origins?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Logic: Participants who did not identify as Hispanic or Latino or a person of Spanish origins skipped to the end of the survey.

Please click the play button to watch this political advertisement. After watching the video, please select continue to proceed to the rest of the survey.

Participant assigned to the experimental group view one of two advertisements and then answered the following question; see Appendix A for additional details.

Q3A and B How strongly do you relate to this advertisement?

- Very Strongly (1)
- Somewhat strongly (2)
- Not too strongly (3)
- Not strongly at all (4)

Participants in the control group did not watch an advertisement but answered this question:

Q3C How old are you?

The remainder of the survey was held constant for all participants, no matter their group assignment.

Q4 Do you typically think of yourself as politically liberal or conservative?

- Very liberal (1)
- Somewhat liberal (2)
- Moderate (3)
- Somewhat conservative (4)
- Very conservative (5)

Q5 Did you vote in the 2012 presidential election?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q6 How strongly do you feel a part of or identify with people in the following groups?
People in your racial or ethnic group?

- Not at all (1)
- Somewhat (2)
- Very strongly (3)

Q7 People who share your religious beliefs?

- Not at all (1)
- Somewhat (2)
- Very strongly (3)

Q8 The American people?

- Not at all (1)
- Somewhat (2)
- Very strongly (3)

Please respond to the following statements.

Q9 Being an American is important to the way I think of myself as a person.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q10 I am a person with strong ties to the American people.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q11 When I think of American people, I think of people who are a lot like me.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q12 Where would you place American people as a group?

- 1- Extremely untrustworthy (1)
- 2- Somewhat untrustworthy (2)
- 3- Neither untrustworthy nor trustworthy (3)
- 4- Somewhat trustworthy (4)
- 5- Extremely trustworthy (5)

Q13 Where would you place American people as a group?

- 1- Extremely intolerant (1)
- 2- Somewhat intolerant (2)
- 3- Neither intolerant nor tolerant (3)
- 4- Somewhat tolerant (4)
- 5- Extremely tolerant (5)

Q14 Do you agree that any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding?

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q15 Do you agree that if people were treated more equally in this country, we would have fewer problems?

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q16 Do you agree that it is better for children to live in their parents' home until they are married?

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q17 How important is religion in your life?

- Very Important (1)
- Somewhat Important (2)
- Not Too Important (3)
- Not at all Important (4)

Q18 Note: "Latino" is used to encompass Hispanics and all people of Spanish origins living in the U.S.

Being Latino is important to the way I think of myself as a person.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q19 I am a person with strong ties to Latino people.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q20 When I think of Latino people, I think of people who are a lot like me.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q21 Where would you place Latino people, as a group?

- 1- Extremely untrustworthy (1)
- 2- Somewhat untrustworthy (2)
- 3- Neither untrustworthy nor trustworthy (3)
- 4- Somewhat trustworthy (4)
- 5- Extremely trustworthy (5)

Q22 Where would you place Latino people as a group?

- 1- Extremely intolerant (1)
- 2- Somewhat intolerant (2)
- 3- Neither intolerant nor tolerant (3)
- 4- Somewhat tolerant (4)
- 5- Extremely tolerant (5)

Q23 Are you male or female?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q24 What year were you born?

Q25 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school (1)
- High school / GED (2)
- Associates degree (3)
- Some college (4)
- Bachelors degree (5)
- Post graduate degree (6)

Q26 What is your religious preference, or do you not have one?

- Protestant (1)
- Catholic (2)
- Jewish (3)
- Muslim (4)
- Orthodox (5)
- Other, please list below (6) _____
- No preference (7)

27 What is your ancestry?

- Mexican (1)
- Puerto Rican (2)
- Cuban (3)
- Dominican (4)
- Salvadoran (5)
- Other, please list below (6) _____

Q28 Were you born in the United States? If not, how many years have you lived in the U.S.?

- Yes (1)
- No, please enter the number of years below (2) _____

Q29 Are you a citizen of the United States?

- Yes, U.S. citizen (1)
- No, not a U.S. citizen (2)
- Resident alien/Permanent resident (3)

Q30 Were your parents born in the U.S.?

- 1 parent born in the U.S. (1)
- Both parents born in the U.S. (2)
- Neither parent born in the U.S. (3)
- Don't know (4)

Thank you!

Click the yellow arrow button to submit your survey!

Appendix C

Distribution of Demographic Characteristics Across Groups

Demographics		Control Group	American Appeal	Latino Appeal	Total
Ancestry	Mexican	36 (51.4%)	14 (20%)	20 (28.6%)	70
	Puerto Rican	9 (40.9%)	4 (18.2%)	9 (40.9%)	22
	Other	9 (37.5%)	7 (29.2%)	8 (33.3%)	24
Generation	First Generation	23 (47.9%)	10 (20.8%)	15 (31.3%)	48
	Second Generation	9 (34.6%)	5 (19.2%)	12 (46.2%)	26
	Third Generation	22 (51.2%)	9 (20.9%)	12 (27.9%)	43