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ARTICLE

Representations of Latinos in a Democratic Party Campaign in the United States: Identity Ownership, Narratives, and Values

Juan S. Larrosa-Fuentes

Department of Sociocultural Studies, ITESO, Guadalajara, Mexico
Email: larrosa@iteso.mx

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Abstract

In the 2016 United States presidential election, candidates Trump and Clinton embraced the demands of certain social groups and in this way, politically and symbolically, chose to "own" the social identities of these groups. Trump decided to attack the Latino community, while Clinton positioned herself as an advocate for this community. This article presents the results of a social narrative analysis of the values that Clinton and her team used to reach out to Latino communities during the 2016 election. The Spanish-language messages produced by the Democratic campaign compose the sample, which includes blog posts, Facebook posts, tweets, and television ads. Clinton's campaign produced narratives about who the "good Latinos" are and, consequently, the "good immigrants" while at the same time promoting values such as globalism, cosmopolitanism, and multiculturalism. Paradoxically, these narratives and values failed to portray Latinos' diversity because they left out this community's historical, social, and cultural complexity.

Keywords: 2016 United States presidential election; Clinton's campaign; narrative analysis; political values; Latinos

Resumen

Durante las elecciones presidenciales de 2016 en Estados Unidos, los candidatos Trump y Clinton hicieron suyas las demandas de ciertos grupos sociales; de esta manera, política y simbólicamente se "apropiaron" de las identidades de estos grupos. Trump decidió atacar a la comunidad latina y Clinton se posicionó como defensora de esta comunidad. Este artículo presenta un análisis de las narrativas sociales que Clinton y su equipo utilizaron para comunicarse con las comunidades latinas en 2016. Los mensajes en español de esta campaña componen la muestra, que incluye artículos de blog, publicaciones de Facebook y Twitter, y anuncios de televisión. La campaña produjo narrativas y valores sobre quiénes son los "buenos latinos" y los "buenos inmigrantes". Además, promovió valores como el globalismo, el cosmopolitismo y el multiculturalismo. Paradójicamente, estas narrativas y valores no lograron retratar la diversidad latina porque dejaron de lado la complejidad histórica, social y cultural de esta comunidad.

Palabras clave: Elección presidencial de Estados Unidos 2016; campaña de Clinton; análisis narrativo; valores políticos; latinos

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On June 16, 2015, Donald Trump announced his intention to become the Republican candidate and compete for the United States presidency. In that speech, Trump set the tone of his campaign and made it clear that his fight was more about cultural values than policies. Trump explained that he wanted to turn the clock back to a time when globalization and multiculturalism were not part of the daily discourse. In his view, financial globalization and immigration were harmful to the economy and cultural development. He said that undocumented immigrants were taking American jobs and proposed building a "great wall in the Southern border" to stop people from Latin America who were "bringing drugs, crime, and rapists" to the United States. He also advocated an immigration ban for some Muslim countries. Trump closed his speech with the slogan "Make America great again."

In contrast, Hillary Clinton dedicated a significant part of her campaign to fighting Trump's rhetoric. As she explained several times, the election was a struggle over the values of the American electorate. For example, on September 15, 2016, in a speech addressed to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, Clinton framed the election as an ontological decision, "we need to decide who we are.... We need to stand up and repudiate this divisive rhetoric" (Clinton 2016d). In Clinton's view, the United States had to be a country that embraced the American dream, an ideology composed of values such as hard work, multiculturalism, and diversity. As this article explains, Clinton campaigned in a "defense mode" and became the defender, at least in her narratives, of political minorities such as Latinos, Muslims, and others.

The previous vignettes illustrate an electoral cycle marked by political debates grounded in the axiological realm. Both candidates tended to discuss political values, such as who could be considered an American citizen, what characteristics these citizens had to have, and which values should be pursued to build a country for this kind of citizen. The 2016 election was not a contest of ideas and policies but, as one political reporter explained, a process where people discussed "issues of identity, tribe and people's sense of where the interests of their group lie and whom they identify with" (Klein 2016). This order of things demands a cultural analysis of political communication. One route to grasp the symbolic dimension of politics is by studying how social identities are created throughout electoral cycles and, specifically, how candidates and their parties claim to "own" some of these social identities (Kreiss, Lawrence, and McGregor 2020) in the context of racialized societies that are divided into groups such as whites, blacks and Latinos.

This article presents a social narrative analysis of Clinton's 2016 Latino campaign to understand how she used the Latino social identity as a political discourse to confront Trump. The study of "social narratives" is relevant because stories reproduce a community's values, norms, signs, and symbols in space and time (Shenhav 2015). Through narratives, disseminated via public communication, people learn the political rules of operation of their community, what is allowed and what is prohibited, and the collective goals of their social group (Martín Serrano 1994).

The texts that Clinton created to communicate with Latinos crystallized how she understood Trump's campaign, projected her symbolic self to Latinos, and interpreted Latinos and their ideal role in the United States. Understanding these symbolic struggles offers valuable insights for unpacking the political and cultural meanings of the 2016 presidential elections and Latinos' role in contemporary US body politic. In addition, this article contributes to studying public representations about contemporary immigration—especially about immigrants coming from Latin America, who inform the heterogeneous Latino community in the United States.

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The 2016 presidential campaign and Latinos

The racialization of the American electorate and the political communication campaigns that structure this racialization are not new phenomena. These processes of racialization can be observed in the treatment and framing that Latino communities receive during electoral campaigns. The efforts of political parties, candidates, and campaigns that explicitly address this community can be traced to 1960, when John F. Kennedy organized the first formal efforts to reach out to Latinos. Since then, many other presidential campaigns of both major parties have reached out to Latinos as a distinct social group (e.g., Abrajano 2010; Saavedra Cisneros 2017; García Bedolla and Michelson 2012; Sanchez, Fraga, and Ramírez 2020). However, efforts to mobilize Latino voters have increased in the last decade because of the "recognition based on demographic data that Latinxs were becoming a larger portion of the population" (Soto-Vásquez 2020).

The political science field offers valuable insights about Latino mobilization and turnout in the 2016 campaigns. In that year, the Latino community was made up of 57 million people, 27 million potential voters, and 12.7 million registered voters (Pew Research Center 2016), numbers that showed an increase in Latino voter registration in this electoral cycle. At the end of the campaign, Clinton won the Latino vote by a wide margin. According to the National Election Poll, she received 62 percent of the Latino vote (Krogstad and Lopez 2016); the Latino Decisions Poll showed that 79 percent supported her and 18 percent supported Trump (Gomez-Aguinaga and Sanchez 2020, 36). From this literature, scholars demonstrate that Trump's xenophobic, racist, and nativist discourse affected how Latinos turned out and favored the Democratic candidate (Gutierrez et al. 2019; Sanchez, Fraga, and Ramírez 2020).

The 2016 presidential elections and the Latino community have also been studied using interpretative tools. In this line of inquiry, some studies and essays address the rhetorical and discursive construction of Latino identity by political campaigns. Cisneros (2017) found that during the primaries, the candidates spread two main stories: the sleeping giant narrative, in which Latinos were portrayed as an electoral force that has a lot of potential but that is not currently active; and the Latino threat narrative, in which Latinos were depicted as dangerous immigrants (a narrative previously suggested by Chavez 2013). Aligned with the latter narrative, Slaughter (2016, 542) analyzes how Latinos used Facebook and Twitter during the presidential elections to create rhetorical spaces for questioning the Latino threat discourse. Further, Anguiano (2016) offers an essay about "the 'hispandering' and racial hostility prevalent in this 2016 political climate" toward Latino communities. Of these three articles, two are essays and only one (Slaughter 2016) is methodologically based on empirical evidence.

In 2016 the Latino community became highly visible because immigration, as an electoral issue—and not exclusively in outreach to Latinos—was at the center of the national conversation; Donald Trump placed immigration as a central column of his political discourse. The Republican candidate framed Latinos, and immigrants in general, as a threat to the cultural and economic development of the United States (Anguiano 2016; Cisneros 2017, 516; Gross and Cuevas-Molina 2020; Montgomery 2019, 302), and used an "us versus them" rhetoric, as is common in populist campaigns (Aswad 2019, 65). In contrast, Hillary Clinton, as this article will describe, framed immigration as an asset for the economy and framed herself as a defender of minorities.

The salience of immigration during the 2016 presidential campaigns not only shows the axiological disputes about the political culture within the United States, but also demonstrates how contemporary immigrants and migration are represented in the public sphere. Public representations of migrants change according to the different phases of immigration. For example, when migrants are in their Latin American countries, they are conceived as a potential threat to the security of the United States that has to be deterred

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(e.g., Hiskey et al. 2018). When traveling to the North, they have been depicted as an economic asset that can be exploited (e.g., Izcara Palacios 2015). Indeed, there are other ways in which migrants and emigrations have been represented. These examples illustrate the contributions of this article, which offers a study on how a presidential campaign constructed social identities, through textual representations, of those immigrants who are in the last phases of their journey, which includes both living as undocumented and becoming legal members of the body politic.

Candidates as symbolic representations and political identity ownership

Political communication can be observed from both pragmatic and symbolic dimensions. The pragmatic dimension explains that political communication is used and performed for achieving specific objectives. From a strategic point of view, winning an election is the primary goal of political communication campaigns (Stromer-Galley et al., 2016, 12). Also, from theoretical and normative perspectives, political communication campaigns are part of more extensive infrastructures that distribute information among citizens—information that is useful for making political decisions, such as voting (e.g., Schudson [1998] 2011). These perspectives have shaped political communication scholarship. From various fields, scholars have traditionally studied how candidates, parties, and social organizations use communication to conquer political power through persuasion, distribute political knowledge among citizens, and mobilize citizens during elections.

The second dimension, in which this article is grounded, falls into the symbolic realm. Communication campaigns have cultural outcomes that transcend winning or losing an election, mobilizing voters, and distributing information as the basis for making rational choices. As Alexander (2009, 86) explains, "To become a representative of the civil sphere is less a matter of rational deliberation than of symbolic representation." Signs, symbols, and values structure these "representations," which are produced, disseminated, and interpreted through public communication. Thus, from a symbolic dimension, political communication and, consequently, electoral campaigns, are mechanisms that allow the production and reproduction of symbolic structures that build up the social and public life of a community (Alexander 2011). The former ideas offer an argument to justify why it is relevant to study not only those campaigns in which the candidate won but also those that in the pragmatic dimension were not successful. A presidential campaign has consequences in political life because it performs social and cultural functions, such as producing and disseminating the political culture of a community, which is mainly informed by the values "that underlie a political system" (Calhoun 2002, 365).

A path for researching the symbolic dimension of political communication is to study how campaigns produce "social identities"—a concept that explains how people "define themselves in relation to the groups to which they belong (in-groups) and those that they do not (out-groups)" (Kreiss, Lawrence, and McGregor 2020, 2). Candidates seek to convince or remind voters, through campaign communications, that they represent in-groups and reject out-groups. The former political performance has been called "identity ownership," which occurs when candidates "try to make elections turn on those group identities they can credibly claim to represent and turn out at the polls for competitive advantage through both in-group appeals and out-group criticism" (Kreiss, Lawrence, and McGregor 2020, 3).

The texts generated by political campaigns' communication systems crystallize some of the values that structure social identities—values, as already explained, that inform part of the political culture of a community. These texts are structured by narratives (i.e., stories), which seek to sculpt and control the image of a candidate (Denton 1998, 6), who has the mission to become, in the symbolic dimension, a collective representation

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(Alexander 2009, 68) of some of the groups that pertain to a body politic. Through speeches at rallies, television and radio advertisements, Facebook and Twitter messages, and more, campaigns spread stories about the candidate's life, their visions for a community, and the social aspirations of the groups they seeks to represent.

Thus, a route to penetrate the symbolic realm of political communication is by analyzing "social narratives," which are stories produced and shared "by a group of people [in this case political campaigns]—as opposed to literary or artistic narratives, or anecdotal accounts of individuals' experiences" (Shenhav 2015, 17). This concept assumes that within the stories that groups of people produce and disseminate, there are embedded social meanings, such as social groups' collective goals and values (Martín Serrano 1994).

Case and method

The preceding literature review about Latinos and the presidential election, as well as the theoretical framework of the symbolic dimension of political campaigns, present opportunities for researching the symbolic representation of Latinos as part of the contemporary United States body politic and presidential elections as processes that go beyond a rational contest about policies and the dissemination of information. This article renders a social narrative analysis of Hillary Clinton's Latino campaign communications during the 2016 elections and asks: What social narratives structured the messages that the Democratic campaign created for Latinos? (RQ1).

The universe of the narrative analysis for this article consists of all the messages produced by Clinton and her team (including the Democratic Party super PACs) to reach out to Latino communities during the presidential campaign. The Spanish-language messages produced by the campaign constitute the sample, including 46 multimedia blog posts, 248 multimedia Facebook posts, 692 multimedia tweets, and 19 television ads.

All messages were downloaded by the author, except for the Facebook posts supplied by the Illuminating 2016 Project (Stromer-Galley et al. 2016). For gathering the radio and television advertisements, I relied on the Political TV Ad Archive (https://politicaladarchive.org) and Democracy in Action's ad collection (http://www.p2016.org/adsg/adsgeneral.html). To the best of my knowledge, the sample includes all the Spanish messages published on Clinton's website and her Facebook and Twitter accounts, as well as all the national television advertisements. Messages in English, such as newsletters, text messages, transcripts of Clinton's speeches, and multimedia texts that also included outreach to Latinos, complement the sample.

From the beginning, a grounded theory approach and situational analysis guided the research (Clarke 2005, chap. 5). After collecting the materials, I performed a textual analysis to find the main themes of the campaigns (McKee 2003). The first analysis showed that Clinton's campaign crafted stories about immigration in clear opposition to Trump's rhetoric on this topic. At this point, I started to build the theoretical framework considering the symbolic nature of political communication and its power in shaping social identities. I employed social narrative analysis (Shenhav 2015) to examine the communications produced by a collectivity (Clarke 2005, 183), which was the Democratic campaign.

For learning what kind of "political identity ownership" Clinton and her staff performed for the Latino community, the narrative analysis focused on observing the values embedded in the campaign communications. Here, values are defined as "fundamental beliefs about what is important, what makes a good life, and what is true, right, and beautiful" (Guest 2016, 70). In the political realm, values enable people "to make political judgments" (Halman 2007, 6) about what is right or wrong in their social life. This theoretical background opened the door to ask two further questions: What are the values embedded in the narratives that the Democratic campaign produced for reaching out to Latinos?

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Table 1. Frequency of candidates' names mentioned in Clinton's digital accounts.

Digital Platform	Clinton	Trump
Facebook	55	62
Twitter	182	156
Blog	178	196
Total	415	414

Note: Data collected by the researcher, except the Facebook posts, which were provided by the Illuminating Project (http://illuminating.ischool.syr.edu).

(RQ2). How did Clinton's ownership of Latino identity frame the profile of acceptable Latinos for the contemporary United States? (RQ3).

Results and analysis

"I will build a great, great wall on our southern border": The original speech

The first textual analysis showed that Clinton's Latino campaign was built as a counterattack against Trump's rhetoric. The presence of Trump and his rhetoric within Clinton's messages are pervasive. For example, in the Spanish messages published on her website and her Facebook account, the name Trump appeared more times than Clinton (see table 1). According to the Illuminating Project (Stromer-Galley et al. 2016), Clinton used 19 percent of her English messages on Facebook and Twitter to attack Trump—the highest percentage of all the categories. When analyzing all the television advertisements produced by the Democratic candidate, researchers found that she devoted most of her time attacking Trump (Fowler, Ridout, and Franz 2017, 468).

Most of the ideas that Trump expressed throughout his campaign can be found in the speech where he announced his intention to run for the nomination. The gist of that speech became the center of Trump's discourse and the primary target of Clinton's campaign. In that speech, Trump presented an analysis of the contemporary United States, suggested that the American dream was dead, identified the origins of the American dream's failure, and blamed policies that allowed immigrants to come from Muslim and Latin American countries. Trump characterized Latinos as people taking jobs away from Americans and "bringing drugs, crime, and rapists." He proposed three measures to stop this situation: create an executive order to ban immigration from Muslim countries, revert Obama's executive orders on immigration, and build a wall to stop people coming from Latin America.

Trump's first speech became an "original speech," which is a set of arguments that are made public and which become an informative and symbolic reference for a further public discussion, deliberation, and debate (Acosta García, Larrosa-Fuentes, and Paláu Cardona 2014), such as the struggles that presidential candidates had during 2016. The impact of that speech on Clinton's messages to the Latino community was considerable. For example, throughout the textual analysis, the idea of "building a wall" between Mexico and the United States was mentioned twenty-two times, the words *muralla* and *muros* (two ways to refer to "walls" in Spanish) appeared on sixty-four occasions. Trump's saying that Mexicans are criminals and rapists emerged in twenty-four cases.

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"Bring them out from the shadows": Undocumented immigrants as a hidden treasure

The most influential element of Trump's rhetoric was the idea of building a wall on the southern border. This idea captured the national conversation, the public imagination, and Clinton's campaign. According to Trump's argumentation, the barrier would be helpful as a physical device to prevent individuals and things from coming into the United States. These actions were intended to prevent immigrants from taking American jobs and to bring back the investments and employments that had moved to other countries. Trump was arguing against free trade and mobility, essential elements of economic globalization.

Clinton articulated an answer to Trump's campaign. The key idea was that immigration is an asset for economic development, and, in consequence, she would continue Obama's executive orders and promote reform on this matter. These messages occurred across media, and they resonated in Clinton's speeches, tweets, television ads, and digital videos. For example, on September 15, during a speech at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the candidate explained that immigration brings people and money to the country, which is good for the economy: "Comprehensive immigration reform will not only be *the right thing to do*, but it will add $700 billion to our economy and enable America to be what it's always been—a place where people from around the world can come to reunite with family, start new businesses, pursue their dreams, apply their talents to American growth and innovation" (Clinton 2016d). Clinton linked globalization and immigration to values such as economic growth, innovation, freedom of action, and the pursuit of happiness.

The economic benefits of globalization and immigration appeared in various messages. It is especially salient in the story of Luisa Santos (Merica 2016), narrated in a video disseminated via Facebook and Twitter. The video begins with Luisa saying in English that growing up as an "undocumented immigrant" in the United States "basically meant living a life with fear." Then, speaking in Spanish, Luisa tells the audience that she became the owner of "Lulu's," an ice cream shop that sells the "best organic and natural ice creams in Miami." She proudly employs high school and college students. Next, she recalls her personal story and explains that her mother left her job as a teacher in Colombia, seeking better opportunities. Her mother worked cleaning houses to pay for Luisa's school tuition. Luisa switches to English and explains that she became a citizen of the United States in recent months. She continues by saying that immigration reform is a "tremendous economic opportunity." Finally, she explains that immigrants are vital to the economy because they have an entrepreneurial spirit, a spirit that constitutes the foundational basis of the country. That spirit, she concludes in Spanish, has contributed to the nation's economic growth and created a real "global country."

Drawing from narratives that describe immigrants as vital elements of the US economy, Clinton moved on to suggest that, in the event of winning the election, she would support immigration reform. In one of her speeches, she explained that "every independent analysis shows [that an immigration reform] will add hundreds of billions of dollars to our economy. It will also keep families together. We need to bring hardworking people *out of the shadows*. America has always been a place where people from around the world work hard and apply their talents to American growth and innovation in pursuit of their own dreams" (Clinton 2016b). In this speech, a narrative emerges that depicts undocumented immigrants as individuals who "live in the shadows," as people who do not have rights, who are not allowed to have a public life. To end this situation, Clinton proposed a legal reform to incorporate immigrants into the labor force: "Do we want to round up millions of people who are here working, raising their families, as he has suggested he will do? I don't think so. I think what we want is to *bring them out of the shadows* so that they can't

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be exploited by employers like Donald Trump, who refused to hire Americans and hired undocumented workers so he could pay them less" (Clinton 2016a). In these stories, the campaign framed immigration as a process that benefits the economy. These materials highlight how Latinos have contributed to the development of the country. As Santos's story shows, after decades of hard work, she became an entrepreneur helping high school and college students and "applying her talents to American growth and innovation."

The "barrier-breaker": Cultural and social dimensions of immigration

On September 28, 2016, Priorities USA, a Democratic Party super PAC, released "Desaparecer" (Disappear). This advertisement superposed audio from one source on a video from another. The thirty-second piece opens with a scene where a Latino family is eating breakfast. At the same time, we can hear audio where Trump says, "This is a country where we speak English, not Spanish." When he utters the word "English," the Latino family disappears from the dining room, and we can only see a table with dishes, cereal, and milk, but with no people. Next, a narrator says, "Donald Trump quiere vernos desaparecer" (Donald Trump wants us to disappear). In the press release, the super PAC stated, "Priorities USA is releasing a new Spanish language television ad … because if it were up to Donald Trump, most Hispanic Americans would simply disappear from this country…. Donald Trump's ideal America appears to be full of people who look, sound, and act like him." This ad contains one of the significant cultural disputes during the campaigns: a debate about cultural diversity.

The idea of building a wall on the southern border became a metaphor encapsulating Trump's political agenda. The Republican candidate sought to produce a cultural discourse that celebrated the purity and unity of the United States. One measure for achieving this ideal was, indeed, to build a wall to stop migration flows from Latin America. However, according to Trump, a barrier should also operate inside the country to protect American cultural heritage. The idea that lies behind this political program is that other cultures should integrate into the country, contrary to the notion of developing multicultural societies. To prevent multiculturalism, Trump proposed building symbolic barriers, such as language restrictions. As the Democratic ad depicted, Trump wanted to erase foreign cultures, and one way of doing that was by enforcing a monolingual society.

The Democratic campaign decided that it was relevant to fight the Republican candidate not only in his attacks on globalization and free trade but also in his strikes on the cultural dimension of immigration. For these reasons, the decision to use the Spanish language was about opening the political communication system to more audiences and creating a cultural marker to differentiate the Democrats' values from those of the Republicans. The campaign opted to fight Trump on Twitter, one of his favorite channels for communicating with his supporters. The day that the Twitter Spanish account was launched, the campaign explained in a bilingual blog post that, "Spanish is the language of more than 40 million Americans in the U.S., and here at Hillary for America, we believe that broadening our communication in an effort to reach more audiences is essential to Hillary's goal of *breaking down barriers* for all Americans. Over the course of the past year, we've seen divisive, offensive, and hateful language aimed at many of us who happen to speak Spanish and many of us who do not. Our voices will not be silenced, whether they be in English, Spanish, or any other language" (Luisi and Nemir Olivares 2016; emphasis added). Thus, using the Spanish language was a way of symbolically expressing support for liberal values. The Democratic campaign contrasted two philosophical viewpoints of American society: nativism, assimilation, and integration versus cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and diversity.

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The blog post for releasing the Twitter account contains another relevant narrative. If Trump proposed building physical and cultural walls, Clinton was for "breaking down barriers for all Americans" (Luisi and Nemir Olivares 2016). The image of Clinton as a barrier breaker appeared several times in the texts produced during the election. For example, Priorities USA released an ad in which Clinton is portrayed as someone who will destroy the internal barriers of the country. The ad, named "Barriers," opens with an image of a wall and a projection of a video of Trump chanting, "Build the wall, build the wall." A voiceover in Spanish utters, "Donald Trump wants to build walls, reduce taxes for millionaires, and cut education budgets." Suddenly, the wall is demolished, and the narrator explains that Clinton will eliminate barriers for Latinos. Throughout the campaign, she associated this narrative with specific proposals such as removing administrative obstacles for getting United States naturalization, removing laws that inhibit Latinos from voting, and offering English classes for workers.

In the article "Qué se siente vivir con miedo de ser deportado y recibir alivio temporal" (How it feels to fear deportation and get some temporary relief), Paola Luisi (2016), who was part of Clinton's Latino staff, interviewed four young undocumented immigrants who got temporary permission to stay thanks to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Jorge Gallegos, one of the interviewees, explained that despite having a college degree, for many years, he had to work in a cornfield because he was an undocumented immigrant. However, DACA allowed him to have a permit to work. In his words, "when DACA was enacted, I felt that a *barrier* was eliminated" (emphasis added). These kinds of texts and narratives helped Clinton to represent herself as a politician who would help young immigrants. In a letter that Clinton wrote to undocumented young immigrants, she explained, "In America, the place of your birth should never be a *barrier* that stops you from reaching your God-given potential—that's what makes our country great, and that's the promise I'm going to fight to fulfill" (Clinton 2016c, emphasis added). This letter was also published in Spanish (Clinton 2016c).

As the narratives of this section depict, Clinton wanted to build an image of a politician who had sympathy for American cultural diversity and was willing to create a presidential administration based on multicultural policies. Although Clinton is monolingual, she praised the cognitive and cultural benefits of speaking foreign languages and proposed developing bilingual education programs. She also sought to be depicted as a "barrier breaker" who would help people have more accessible paths to citizenship, opportunities to learn English and temporary relief from being deported—all measures aimed at temporarily alleviating more significant problems.

"The American dream is big enough for everyone": Immigration as an epic of hard work and sacrifice

In his "original speech," Trump declared that the American dream was dead, and then he threw out his famous motto, "Make America great again." The Democratic campaign counterattacked and defended the idea that the American dream was alive. The defense of this system of beliefs transcended the Democratic candidate and was part of the discourse of many political actors. For example, during the Democratic Convention in Philadelphia, Michelle Obama dedicated part of her speech to address these concerns: "Don't let anyone ever tell you that this country is not great. That somehow, we need to make it great again. Because this right now is the greatest country on Earth." In the realm of Latino outreach, as shown in the previous sections, the campaign told stories about successful Latino community members and how they contributed to support the idea of the American dream as a political project that is still alive and working. Thus, as in most United States presidential campaigns, the American dream worked as a "master narrative" (Shenhav 2015, 25) for the Democratic and Republican candidates alike.

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Clinton hired various Latinos such as Amanda Rentería, who became the national political director campaign; Lorella Praeli, who was in charge of the national Latino outreach; and Jorge Silva, the Hispanic media director, among many others. These staffers performed campaign organization activities and became a part of the Democratic campaign narrative universe. The most salient example is the story of Lorella Praeli. In June of 2016, the Democratic campaign released the following tweet: "El emocionante momento cuando la 'dreamer' Lorella Praeli tuvo la oportunidad de votar por primera vez" (The thrilling moment when the "dreamer" Lorella Praeli voted for the first time). The tweet contained a video depicting Lorella's transformation from being an undocumented Peruvian immigrant to an American citizen hired by the Democratic party candidate to coordinate the Latino outreach.

The video has three narrators: Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and Praeli herself. In the first part, we can listen to Clinton's speech at the National Immigrant Integration Conference in Brooklyn. In that speech, she shared Praeli's story and explained that "she went to college anyway because her grades got her a full scholarship. She decided she didn't want to live in *fear or secrecy* like many undocumented immigrants feel they must do. She was convinced that this was her country and that she had something special to offer. So, she came forward, *publicly*, as undocumented. She joined the United We Dream movement, advocating for all the young people brought here as children" (Clinton 2015, emphasis added).

Clinton went on to explain that Lorella was working with her and that "tomorrow, President Obama will swear her in as a citizen of the United States of America." Lorella appears in an automobile speaking in Spanish with her mother. Lorella is crying while telling her mom that she was on her way to vote for the first time. Finally, we see Lorella voting and arriving at Clinton's headquarters in Brooklyn. At the same time, Barack Obama, in voiceover, says, "What a remarkable journey all of you have experienced, and as of today, your story is interwoven with the story of this nation." The video closes with Clinton's logo and the phrase "Fighting for you."

Praeli's story, and those of Luisa Santos and the Dreamers,[1] are vivid examples of the Democratic version of the American dream, which highlights values like hard work, love for family and education, perseverance, sacrifice, and social mobility, expressed in the belief that there is a place for everyone in a diverse and multicultural United States. In her speech, Clinton clearly explains that Lorella is a symbol of "who we are" (referring to Americans and ultimately, Democratic supporters), and then proceeds to mark a difference with Trump's values: "We are a big country, and we should never forget that, and we shouldn't let anybody on the public stage say that we are mean-spirited, *that we are going to build walls, mentally and physically*, or that we are going to shut doors" (Clinton 2015, emphasis added).

Among all these values, the idea of "working hard" stands out. This value can be found in Clinton's discourses and not only within the Latino outreach efforts. For example, in a speech called "Remarks on American Values" delivered in Illinois on July 13, 2016, Clinton remembered that Lincoln believed that "everyone deserved—in his words—'a fair chance in the race of life.' He saw it as a defining feature of the United States and believed it was vital that hardworking people be free to enjoy the fruits of their own labor . . . . *If you work hard*, if you love this country, if you contribute to it, and want nothing more than to build a good future for yourselves and your children, *we should give you a way to come forward and become a citizen*" (Clinton 2015, emphasis added).

[1] *Dreamer* refers to a young individual who immigrated to the United States without documents. They are named "dreamers" because they aspire (i.e., dream) to become citizens in the future. The DACA program temporarily protected these young immigrants from being deported.

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Building political identity ownership through narratives

This article shows that during the 2016 presidential campaign, Clinton claimed to defend minorities in general and Latinos in particular. From a theoretical point of view, she chose to sculpt her public image and align her campaign with minority groups and, in this case, decided to "own" the Latino identity as part of her political campaign. Through this political identity ownership performance (Kreiss, Lawrence, and McGregor 2020), Clinton framed Latinos as a social group different from others—such as whites and blacks—a differentiation that is part of a broader process of racialization (Soto-Vásquez 2020). The following paragraphs analyze these frames.

The first frame—which aligns with the narrative "Bring Them Out from the Shadows"—is that undocumented immigrants were, when the campaign took place, a hidden economic treasure that had to be unearthed and exploited. Clinton envisioned Latinos as a potential workforce that could bring millions of dollars to the United States. However, in the texts under analysis, undocumented immigrants remained in the shadows. Undocumented immigrants had limited visibility in the campaign. Contrary to the carefully crafted stories of successful Latino entrepreneurs and celebrities, Democrats barely showed all the immigrants who, at the moment of the campaign, performed tough jobs such as cleaning houses, building highways, cultivating food, and serving in restaurants.

Although the campaign did not show the social and cultural features of the hidden treasure—a euphemism for talking about the legal and symbolic transition of undocumented immigrants to immigrants with an adequate legal status—Clinton and her staff presented the route to becoming a "good immigrant" and in this way framed the characteristics of the acceptable Latino. They made the case that these individuals, after making sacrifices, were patiently waiting for access to the American dream. In order to accomplish this goal, the campaign presented stories of how people should be symbolically transformed (i.e., "unearthed") to arrive in the United States. For example, Praeli's story is about the conversion of a girl who traveled from Peru and, after many sacrifices, became a "legal" citizen. The moral closure of these narratives is that if people from Latin America are willing to change and make sacrifices, they can become part of the American dream.

At the same time, these narratives framed the desirable profile of immigrants. Latinos should be young individuals, entrepreneurs, celebrities, and students who embody values such as multiculturalism, diversity, and globalism. In order to achieve this goal, the campaign presented cases of successful Latinos who were able to succeed. Just to mention a few, celebrities such as Salma Hayek and Alicia Machado were part of the campaign. Moreover, Clinton presented stories about Dreamers and young entrepreneurs to highlight the features that a twentieth-first-century immigrant should have. These findings are aligned and resonate with the work of scholars who have explained the emergence in previous decades of "the new Latino" identity (Dávila 2012). This identity results from racialization and commodification processes by which Latinos have been rebranded as "someone who is bilingual in English and Spanish, young, and tech savvy" (Soto-Vásquez 2020).

Clinton won the Latino vote in 2016. If the election results are analyzed from a pragmatic dimension of political communication, it is fair to say that the Democratic campaign had not the best outcome, because although Clinton won the Latino vote, her campaign could not reach Obama's share in 2012 (Krogstad and Lopez 2016). In the same fashion, from a symbolic dimension, the Democratic campaign did not achieve what Alexander calls "fusion," defined as "the emotional connection of audience [Latino community] with actor [Clinton] and text [campaign]," which allows "the conditions for projecting cultural meaning from performance to the audience" (Alexander 2011, 53).

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The lack of "fusion" between the Democratic candidate and the Latino community is related to the political identity that Clinton and her staff built through campaign communications. This campaign presented two significant tensions. First, the campaign struggled to remember how Democrats had framed immigration in past administrations. Clinton's narratives could not openly discuss and interpret the past because she was part of the incumbent party (Aswad 2019, 68). For example, when talking about "the wall," Clinton did not use historical examples to show why a physical division could be devastating in political, economic, and environmental terms. These arguments had the potential to be a powerful rhetorical device to counterattack Trump's proposal. However, this rhetoric would have called into question the fact that there were certain parts of the southern border where barriers already existed, barriers that had been created during Bill Clinton's administration. Moreover, when discussing immigration, Clinton was in a tough spot because she was Secretary of State during Barack Obama's tenure. This president was named by some Latino activists as the "deporter in chief" because he was the president who expelled the most immigrants in recent decades (Gonzalez-Barrera and Krogstad 2016).

Furthermore, the candidate who promoted liberal and progressive values became a conservative politician who wanted to *conserve* the status quo. Clinton's narratives failed to show stories that conveyed a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of cosmopolitanism, diversity, and multiculturalism, not only as values that had to be defended but also as values that had to be cultivated in the future. She publicized the economic virtues of immigration but did not present stories about the specific roles of immigrants in the future economy. She explained what she had in mind for those who were undocumented immigrants but did not discuss what her values would be regarding future flows of immigrants. She advocated diversity and multiculturalism but did not envision the future design of American communities shaped by these values. In short, she never depicted a future where multiculturalism, diversity, and globalism were the essential values of public policies. The future was a natural extension of the present time and, by presenting it this way, Clinton advocated the maintenance of the status quo.

The relevance of a presidential campaign transcends the "success" of winning or losing an election—which, no doubt, is highly important. During several months, a presidential campaign deploys messages disseminated to millions of persons in the United States and beyond. These messages are embedded narratives that convey specific representations, which are crucial elements for constructing political identities. Representations create interpretations of (political) reality. When these representations are disseminated through public communication, as occurs during a presidential campaign, they have power to shape political cultures. As Martín-Serrano (2004, 57) argues, narratives and representations are vital mechanisms for social control because they can teach the values and collective goals of a community.

Clinton's Latino outreach is a prime example of how current campaigns create political communication strategies to reach specific chunks of the population. Campaigns tend to target salient groups because of their party affiliation, religious beliefs, ethnic origins, and identity markers in general. In the case at hand, the Democratic campaign developed a transmedia strategy to communicate with Latinos but, at the same time, to communicate to the whole electorate that the Democrats "own" the Latino identity. This identity did not include the heterogeneous diversity of Latin American immigrants. Instead, the analyzed narratives display the 2016 Democratic campaign's conception of how Latin American immigrants *should be* to become part of the body politic. These narratives became symbolic vehicles to teach and disseminate the desirable profile of Latinos. This cultural work goes beyond winning or losing an election because it contributes to the long-term construction of political cultures.

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Juan S. Larrosa-Fuentes is a researcher in the Department of Sociocultural Studies at ITESO University (Mexico), where he teaches in the School of Journalism and Public Communication. He obtained his bachelor's degree in communication sciences (ITESO University), a master's degree in communication (University of Guadalajara), and a PhD in media and communication (Temple University). His interests in the study of communication are concentrated in political communication, journalism, and the political economy of media. He has published in journals such as the *International Journal of Communication*, *Tripodos*, *Comunicación y Sociedad*, and *Global Media Journal México*.

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