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Latino Evangelicals: How Their Multiple Identity Influences Their Political Preferences

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Approval of the Dissertation Committee

This dissertation has been duly read, reviewed, and critiqued by the Committee listed below, which hereby approves the manuscript of Noemi Hernandez Alexander as fulfilling the scope and quality requirements for meriting the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

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Abstract

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The pews of the American Evangelical church are browning, and so is the Evangelical voting bloc. Latino immigrants are fueling the growth of the Evangelical church in America and Latinos have the potential to influence the Evangelical voting bloc writ large. However, we have a limited understanding of the political needs of the Latino Evangelical who identifies as an ethnic person and a religious person. As the discipline of political science attempts to predict, describe, or explain the political attitudes of Latinos, understanding the political preferences of the Latino Evangelical is essential. This study seeks to understand how race and religion intersect and influence the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals. Participants of this qualitative study were interviewed and asked a series of open-ended questions regarding their identity as Latinos and as Evangelicals. Participants were then asked to articulate whether either identity plays a role in how they decide on their policy and party preferences. I found that Latino Evangelicals have deep connections to both their ethnic group and their religious group. Those deep connections are often in tension with one another when they consider their policy needs and their partisanship. In some instances, their Latino identity took primacy over their Evangelical identity when considering their attitude on immigration policy. In other instances, their Evangelical identity took primacy over their Latino identity when considering their partisanship. Almost all participants expressed feelings of in-betweenness, what this study called *nepantla*. The Latino Evangelicals in this study maintain that as ethnics and as evangelicals, they occupy a space in the polity that is in constant tension with their multiple identity.

Dedication

To Dex D. Alexander, thank you for holding it down at home and for holding me up when I was weary. I could not have done this without your unwavering support. To my daughter Zoe, thank you for being my number-one cheerleader. Your notes of encouragement got me through the toughest days of this project. To my son Zeke, thank you for coming in to my office all those early mornings to give me a hug and to say, “You got this, Mom.” Your love and your smile are God’s gift to me. This project was a family effort that required sacrifices from all of us. Thank you for taking this journey with me. To my parents, Alfredo and Aurora Hernandez whose legacy is faith, work ethic, and resiliency. Your dream of a better life has become my reality.

Acknowledgment

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Thank you to my participants for their generosity and vulnerability. These are your words and this is your story. Thank you to the Pastors of the churches in this sample for trusting me with your congregation. Finally, thank you to my friends at California Baptist Univeristy for your wisdom and support throughtout this research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview of the Research Context

The pews of the American Evangelical church are browning, and so is the Evangelical voting bloc. This is meaningful to politics because much like the Latinos who live in majority-minority districts whose geographic concentration is found to have mobilizing effects on Latino voters (Barreto et al., 2004; Fraga, 2016; Henderson et al., 2016; Leighley, 2001), Latino Evangelicals are also concentrated in ethnic enclaves. Latino Evangelical churches in particular are easily mobilizable because of the Protestant church's voluntarist nature, its community emphasis, and members' frequency of involvement. In Latino churches where services are primarily in Spanish, Latinos are exchanging ethnic and social cues about how to navigate life in the United States. It seems like it would be in the best interest of the broader Evangelical community to incorporate the needs of their churches' changing demographic. However, Wong (2018a), in her work on Evangelical demographic change, found that the Evangelical church as a political interest group has not made the policy needs of Latinos or Asians (immigrants more broadly) a political priority. As the discipline of political science attempts to predict, describe, or explain the political behavior of the Latinos, the Latino Evangelical voter should be further studied.

Ignoring Latinos' preferences could be detrimental to the local church and to the Evangelical voting bloc as White Evangelicals get older and there are fewer young people to take their place. Young Americans are increasingly moving away from organized religious affiliation, and the inevitable outcome is that conservative Christians will become a smaller portion of the voting bloc and lose influence in politics (Burge, 2018). The loss of influence can be mitigated if the political needs of those fueling the church's growth (Asians and Latinos), are incorporated

into the political platform of the Evangelical church. I argue that if the Evangelical church writ large wants to maintain influence in the political sphere, it must incorporate the political preferences of the Latino Evangelical. Thus, it behooves political scientists to understand the political needs of the new face of the Protestant church as it will soon become the new Evangelical voting bloc. This research study concentrated its focus on the political needs and preferences of Latino Evangelicals.

In the pews of America's churches sit shoulder to shoulder persons of mixed legal-status: legal residents, U.S.-born citizens, naturalized citizens, and unauthorized immigrants. This reality inevitably impacts the dynamic of the church, especially if a church family has been deported. The very existence of an unauthorized immigrant in a church can have an impact on both the way a church conducts ministry and of the political nature of the church. Churches, whether they choose to be or not, have been thrown into the battlefield of the immigration debate. With mass deportation raids, families are being torn apart. Churches are responding with either fear and they stop outreach to immigrants, or they charge the battlefield and become a safe-haven for immigrant families. One such church is 7th Street Church in Long Beach, California. The church is primarily Latino with Latino leadership, and in 2018 one of their church members, a father of four, was deported from his job site. The family sought refuge, protection, and assistance from the church, and the church responded with financial aid, moral support, and legal assistance. This is one example of how individuals rely on their religious institutions for safety, support, and belonging. This further exemplifies why the discipline of American politics should consider the policy preferences of the individuals inside Latino Evangelical churches. Their intimate interaction with the needs of their congregants has a

potential to influence how the Evangelical church writ large responds to the policy needs of Latinos more broadly.

Politically, the growth of the Latino Evangelical is significant because, as we've learned from the political participation literature, Protestants/Evangelicals have a higher rate of attendance beyond Sunday. This increased church activity leads to a higher likelihood of civic participation (Brady et al., 1995; Djupe & Neiheisel, 2012; Jones-Correa & Leal, 2001; J. B. Taylor et al., 2014). Churches are training grounds for civic participation as Evangelical churches often train their laypersons to lead and organize themselves. This is especially common in the Pentecostal and Charismatic tradition, which is popular among Latino church goers (Espinosa et al., 2003, 2005). This has political implications because these denominations are very empowering of their lay people. These churches, unlike Roman Catholic Christians and other mainline denominations, are training men and women in public speaking so they can teach and preach on behalf of the church. These Evangelical churches train their congregations in how to conduct biblical research, how to mobilize a community, conduct outreaches, organize conferences, and run multimillion-dollar fundraising campaigns. These are all acquired skills that are easily transferrable to civic and political engagement. In fact, churches have been found to serve immigrants who have been overlooked by political institutions and serve as alternative venues for political mobilization. This suggests that immigrants are more likely to join a church than they are likely to join a political party (Weaver, 2015; Wong, 2006). For these reasons, I chose to examine the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals and take a deep look into the reason why they hold those preferences.

Statement of the Purpose

This dissertation attempted to deepen the understanding of how race and religion inform the politics of Latino Evangelicals by conducting interviews that revealed how Latino Evangelicals choose their partisanship and how they make policy preferences. Latino Evangelicals embody multiple identities: ethnic, racial, ethnic, generational, and spiritual. These identities interact with one another when they make choices about politics. This project sought to understand how their multiple identities factor into their political preferences.

From the data gathered through the *Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey* (Barreto et al., 2016) and via personal interviews, Wong (2018a) found that the participants' multiple identities—being Evangelical, racialized, multicultural, and multilingual—played a significant role in their sense of belonging. Both Asian and Latino Evangelicals said that they did not feel a sense of belonging in the broader civic community (Wong, 2018a, 2018b). One of the themes Wong extrapolated was that their religious identity, in light of their racial identity, shaped the boundaries of what was perceived as their national community (Bean, 2014). Participants saw their religion as inside of the boundary line but often saw themselves outside of the boundary line. When asked about how their identities might intersect in their political decisions, several admitted to there being a tension between the two identities. Striking to Wong was that no one could articulate how or why this tension existed. As a further probe, the research team asked participants whether they ever experience racism because of their immigrant status or background. Many answered in the affirmative. When asked whether they ever had to place their racial identity first when making political decisions, no one answered yes. Participants consistently put their Christian identity in primacy over their racial identity even after having admitted experiencing racism in their lives. I interviewed Janelle Wong to discuss her findings

from her interviews with Latino Evangelicals. One of the unsettled questions she still had on her mind was the finding that Latinos would not admit to their ethnic identity taking priority over their Evangelical identity. Wong (personal communication, August 8, 2018) stated, "I just couldn't get them to explain why their religious identity has primacy over their racial identity. Even when they admitted to experiencing racism. They alluded to tension and conflict, but they didn't tell me why." This gap prompted me to find out exactly how Latino Evangelicals' multiple identity influences their political preferences.

Research Questions

Wong (2018a) maintained that during interviews conducted with Asian Evangelicals and Latino Evangelicals, "not one of the nonwhite interviewees who identified as born-again or Evangelical described their ethnic or racial identity as having primacy over their spiritual identity, and yet they all freely discussed race and racism" (p. 47). This is meaningful because this dual identity between spiritual needs and policy needs are not neatly distinguished among Latino Evangelicals.

Thus, I assert that to get the answer of identity, one must ask a different set of questions. The researcher must ask a set of open-ended questions that will in a manner hold identity as a Christian constant, and then ask a series of questions that will explain how Latinos arrive at their policy preferences. Religion historically explains why voters hold conservative political attitudes, and race often explains why voters hold more progressive political attitudes. Data collected by LifeWay Research, an Evangelical research institute, found that Latino Evangelicals are 41% more likely to say they are Independents compared to 35% to 37% of White Evangelicals who say they are Independents (Wong, 2018a). Latino Evangelicals are also 80% more likely to find Trump's comments about minorities disturbing compared to 59% of White

Evangelicals (LifeWay Research, 2018). There is a schism within the Evangelical church, and the fault line is race.

This is why I am interested in discovering the process that Latino Evangelicals go through to make their policy and political decisions. Wong's interviews with Asians and Latinos showed that Evangelicals of color struggled to prioritize the needs of their ethnic community over the Evangelical political policy priority. Conversely, they struggled to ignore the effects of racial inequality in order to prioritize Evangelical-centered policies. These policies and the parties they are connected to are often on opposing sides of the ideological spectrum. This is why I asked Latino Evangelicals whether they ever experience tension or conflict when they find themselves making those decisions. Unearthing the complexities of holding multiple identities and at times conflicting policy priorities is the motivation for research questions guiding this study.

- RQ1: What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the policy preferences of Latino Evangelicals?
- RQ2: What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the party preferences of Latino Evangelicals?
- RQ3: As a Latino Evangelical, do you experience tension when making decisions about policy and party preferences?

Research Approach

I set out to discover and eventually argue that the participants' unwillingness to give primacy of their racial identity over their religious one had to do with the way the participants interpreted the question as a mutually exclusive category. Either you are your spiritual identity or your racial identity. Evangelicals choose what they believe to be their eternal identity often over

their earthly identity; this is because they believe that what they do and say here on earth has eternal consequences in heaven. Asking each participant to self-identify what their faith means to them and how it forms their identity should provide more insight into the meaning of spiritual identity. Similarly, asking the participant to share experiences whereby their ethnicity or race played a significant role in their behavior or evaluations of society should provide more insight into the meaning of their Latino identity.

I seek to expand the measure of evangelism in political science beyond the frequency of church attendance. To do this, I provide a variety of methods for research participants to self-identify and self-define what it means to be an Evangelical. Adrian Pantoja's (2010) study used born-again as proxy for affiliation or membership to church. With the relationship between frequency of attendance and conservative attitudes well understood, I wanted to go beyond this understanding. In this study "Evangelical" is defined using the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) LifeWay Research Evangelical Beliefs research definition based on respondent beliefs. This measure of Evangelical identity was used in a study conducted by Wheaton College and LifeWay Research institute in which they surveyed Evangelicals who voted in the 2016 election (LifeWay Research, 2018; Stetzer & MacDonald, 2018). I wanted to measure born-again as a self-identifier, one that is more personal than church attendance.

At the start of this research, I held a few assumptions regarding what I might find. If the interviews yield themes of conservative policy preferences with conservative vote choices, then Latino Evangelicals will mirror the White Evangelical voter who tends to overwhelmingly vote Republican. If my findings yield themes of liberal policy preferences and with liberal vote choices, then Latino Evangelicals will mirror their Latino Catholic coethnics, who tend to vote Democrat. If my findings yield themes of liberal policy preferences and conservative vote

choices, or vice versa, then something else is happening and the phenomena deserves further exploration. I maintain that any of those scenarios are plausible as Latino Evangelicals are generationally and ideologically heterogeneous and do not neatly align themselves with the policy needs of White Evangelicals even if they share religious beliefs. The growing number of Latino and Asian immigrants to the United States is coloring evangelical Protestantism. Such diversity will likely make it more difficult for the Evangelicals, as a political interest group to maintain its relatively high levels of issue and voting cohesion politically (Smidt, 2004).

Through one-on-one interviews, I believed that interviews would reveal instances where Latinos give more saliency to ethnicity when making policy and vote choices. Further, I believed that the participants would provide insight into the complex nature of holding a Latino and Evangelical identity by describing their experiences through semistructured interviews. Their answers further illustrated the complexity that is the in-between positionality of Latinos as they consider their political preferences.

Researcher's Perspectives and Assumptions

The first assumption is that the researcher (myself) would have influence on the participants' answers. When an outside researcher comes into a church, it would be difficult for that Evangelical Christian to downplay the primacy of their faith in Jesus Christ over politics. As the name suggests, Evangelicals value the opportunity to share what is good about their faith or to evangelize their faith to an outsider. Thus, it is not surprising that they would express their spiritual identity to be of utmost importance. I tested my assumptions to see whether I got the same or different answers. As a Latina Evangelical church goer myself, I went in as an insider and asked participants open-ended questions that would allow participants to explain whether they in fact experience tension when deciding on their policy preferences and partisanship. More

specifically, I wanted to understand the process they undergo when making political decisions such as deciding on the saliency of an issue and choosing a political party. My hope was to first communicate to the participant that I understand that their identity as a Christian is first and established. Then, maybe they could understand that I was not asking them to deny their faith, but rather giving them an opportunity to talk about how their racialized experience interacts with their church and political institutions. I understood that I needed to mitigate my potential biases throughout the interview process, and I outline how I mitigated personal bias in the methodology portion of this dissertation.

The second assumption I worked under was that Latino Evangelicals can provide deeper meaning to their preferences if they are given ample time to explain how they arrive to their political preferences. I maintain this can best be accomplished through semistructured interviews whereby participants can self-define what it means to be Latino and Evangelical. The multiple choice and often binary answer choices of surveys are finite and do not allow for explanation as to how a respondent arrives to their decisions. It does not allow for a respondent to make a choice and be able to qualify their answer or their preference. Even a Likert scale survey response, which is made to measure intensity, cannot accurately capture the variation and nuance of the respondent's preferences. This criticism is shared by Christian Smith (2000) in his book, *Christian American?* He maintained that some of the generalizations made about Evangelicals are the result of survey data that perpetuate four fallacies about the Protestant population that do not accurately capture the beliefs and attitudes of ordinary Evangelicals: (a) Elite Evangelical leaders and their opinion and interests are the opinion of ordinary Evangelicals, (b) Surveys accurately represent the views of ordinary people sufficiently to make adequate generalizations about Evangelicals, (c) People normally work out their beliefs and attitudes in an ideologically

consistent fashion that reflects an internally coherent and nonparadoxical worldview, and (d) All Protestants are one monolithic social group who can all be identified as "Evangelicals," "fundamentalists," "religious-right," or conservatives (Smith, 2000).

Smith (1998) argued that generalizing survey data only helps to muddle other Americans' understanding of Evangelicals' opinions and attitudes. If political scientists want to truly understand Evangelicals, it requires conducting face-to-face interviews to capture nuance and meaning.

Wong (2018a) admitted in her latest book, *Immigrants, Evangelicals, and Politics in an Era of Demographic Change,* that aggregate data do not capture the substantive religious experience of first-, second-, and third-generation immigrants. She admitted that the current data do not reveal the rich context in which immigrant's religious adherents influence their method of political participation and political orientation. The advantages of face-to-face interviews are the rich content and nuance one can gather through listening to people's lived experiences. Listening to people's lived experiences within the context of their religious and public life provides an opportunity for the person to self-describe their identity. If ascribing to Evangelical identity and Latino identity has political consequences, I was able to extract that by probing for the stories that Evangelicals use to explain who they are, who they are not, and how that identity informs their politics.

Objectives of Methodology

The process of designing a qualitative study emerges during inquiry, but it generally follows the pattern of scientific research (Creswell & Creswell, 2013). The information gathered through asking open ended questions during live interviews yielded common words, ideas, and experiences. Those shared stories were broken into common words, which became codes,

themes, or categories to be analyzed for patterns. Once visible patterns emerged, I achieved saturation and began my analysis. The goal was to clarify each participant's story by deconstructing each participant's transcribed narrative (Bauer et al., 2014). According to Bauer et al. (2014), selective coding should identify core themes from which a foundational theoretical framework develops. The purpose of this study was to describe and explain the process of Latino Evangelicals' vote and partisan choice. However, the themes that emerged here can be used to develop a grounded theory in the future.

Rationale for Questions

This qualitative approach allowed me to give voice to the participants' experience. It also gave an opportunity for participants to express their identity narratively, which captured nuances that are missing from survey questionnaires. The directed interview questions were specific to what I was investigating. They provided a guide that signaled to the participants to consider their answer within the context of their religious and ethnic identities. Because existing political science survey inquiries are inadequate to answer the questions I asked, I drew from the field of the broader social sciences to conduct a qualitative study. Qualitative methods are most useful when one desires to achieve a depth of understanding of a specific shared behavior or phenomenon. In this case, I sought to understand how persons identifying as both Latino and Evangelical arrive at their policy preferences and their party preference. I sought to understand the personal process at the individual unit level. I believed I could understand their process by their telling me whether there were ever any lived experiences that formed their political attitudes and preferences.

Positionality and Ethical Considerations

One of the limitations of conducting qualitative research through interviews is bias of the researcher projected on the interviewee and bias projected from interviewee on interviewer. Bias is something researchers must always consider, but it is especially evident in qualitative studies because of the nature of human interaction between researcher and participant. However, it is not possible for qualitative researchers to be totally objective because total objectivity is not humanly possible. Despite this human limitation, qualitative researchers are expected to make sincere efforts to put aside their own biases to accurately describe respondents' life experiences. As the researcher I planned to mitigate my biases by practicing forms of reflexivity and bracketing to hold me accountable. This took forms of journaling and discussing my bias with my research support group that was made up of faculty colleagues.

Ethical considerations were made, and the identities of the participants were kept confidential. Aliases that were attached to their true race, language, party preference, and policy preferences were created for the names of the participants. To maintain anonymity, all participants were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire.

Significance of This Study

In 2014, the Obama administration challenged the nation's city mayors to eradicate homelessness one city at a time. In response to the White House's initiative, the city of Riverside enlisted local churches to partner with the city government, the Veterans Administration, and private businesses to work together to provide homes for homeless veterans residing in Riverside. Because of the partnerships, multiplexes were built and repurposed throughout the city, and the Grove Church built a housing village on its property. According to the National Clearinghouse on Homeless Youth & Families, the city of Riverside is one of only 62

communities in the nation to accomplish this through its Housing First initiative. Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey asserted that housing homeless vets would not have been possible without the participation of the churches in the area (City of Riverside, 2018; National Clearinghouse on Homeless Youth & Families, 2018). This is just one example of how the church and the local government can work together to solve community problems. If city leaders want to foster these partnerships in the future, it is necessary to find out who makes up the church body and what mobilizes them to act civically.

The literature shows that the growth in the Evangelical church is fueled in large part by Latinos (Cox & Jones, 2017; Jones et al., 2013; Ramakrishnan & Espenshade, 2001; Wong, 2018a). So, it is a significant endeavor to discover what policies and social issues Latino Evangelicals deem salient so that insight is gained on what might mobilize Latinos to act politically. The social capital literature and the political-church literature shows that Protestant churches are training grounds for civic participation (Calhoun-Brown, 1996; Harris, 1994; McClerking & McDaniel, 2005; Putnam & Campbell, 2010). Lay members of Protestant churches are often trained in public speaking, fundraising, and community organizing. So, if churches are training Latinos in the Evangelical church, then it behooves political scientists to understand what Latino Evangelicals find politically and socially salient. This information will contribute to the discipline's ability to more accurately explain, describe, and predict the political behavior of Latinos who are Evangelical. The findings will also provide data whereby public-church partnerships can be fostered for solving community problems.

Outline of Dissertation

Chapter 2 of this dissertation establishes the relevance of Latino Evangelicals to the study of political behavior. The growing Latino demographic is acknowledged, and the history of

Latino Evangelicals is visited. In order to situate Latino Evangelicals as a social group with subcultural group boundaries, the theoretical framework of group identity, social identity theory (SIT), and the subcultural identity theories are explained. The theoretical implications are discussed and the boundaries of Latino identity and Evangelical identity are set. The term of *nepantla* is introduced, defined, and applied to describe the in-between nature of Latino Evangelicals. The theme of in-between as describe as tension or conflict when deciding political preferences is reoccurring. It was applied to the moderate leaning policy preferences of the Latinos in this study and to describe the lack of representation that this sample feels about political parties.

A rationale of topics of identity, multiple identity, and intersectionality of gender, race, and religion are explained. The influence of this intersection of identities on the political behavior of Latinos is well established in the Latino politics literature. The policy preferences and party alignments of Latinos are heavily influenced by the identities of the individual.

Chapter 3 explains the rationale for the research design and provides a step-by-step explanation of how the research was executed. The sample population and the sampling strategies are explained from initial recruitment to snowball sampling. As is not uncommon in qualitative research after multiple hours of interviews, saturation was achieved by the 10th interview. That saturation was captured in transcripts that are analyzed in a data analysis software, MAX Qualitative Discourse Analysis (MAXQDA). The discourse analysis software was used to be better identify and organize themes and patterns in the data. Finally, measures such as self-reflection and bracketing were taken to acknowledge and mitigate bias of the researcher. Considering biases and member checking along with consistency of instrument all helped to increase the trustworthiness of this study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings that emerged from the transcript data analysis. This chapter presents the patterns and themes that emerged from demographic survey and the interview questions. The most common ideas and words are organized into themes to comprise the five main findings from the study. The major findings show that Latino identity is the driving force that influences policy preferences. Latino identity is less influential among this sample's party preference. Evangelical identity also plays a significant role in policy preferences on abortion and immigration policy. Evangelical identity also has an influence on political party although the partisanship is varied among this sample. In all political decisions of this sample, Latino Evangelicals experience tension between policies and especially between the two major parties. That tension exists throughout and is what I call the *nepantla* of the Latino Evangelical electorate.

This dissertation concludes with Chapter 5 where the findings are discussed in light of the applicable literature and the gaps in the literature about the political preferences of the Latino electorate. The research questions are revisited, and the rationale for the research design is reaffirmed by the findings. Those findings are reorganized in this chapter as analytical categories for further examination of implications and contributions to the field of political science. The chapter ends by synthesizing this work to the broader literature on Latino political behavior. This study's contribution to the discipline sheds light on the complexity of the growing Latino Evangelical electorate that does not perfectly align itself with the White Evangelical voting bloc or the broader Latino voting bloc. Finally, recommendations for action and further study are made beyond the scope of this limited study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview and Organization

Latinos are positioned to be the largest minority-voting block by 2050 (Pew Research Center, 2016). So, it is understandable that there is a growing interest in the political behavior of Latinos. Of the many facets of the Latino community, little has been written about the impact of Evangelical identity on political preferences of the Latino community (de la Garza et al., 1992; Levitt, 2008). This research intended to expand on what we already know about Latino political attitudes by taking a closer look at how Evangelicalism influences the political issues Latinos care about.

Historically, the literature on Evangelicals has focused on the political attitudes and behaviors of White Evangelicals, primarily because until the recent decade, 25% of the U.S. adult population was White Evangelical (Brint & Schroedel, 2009). Studies regarding the political proclivities of Evangelicals have drawn their conclusions using mainly a White sample. This limited sample came with overreaching inferences about all Evangelicals (Black, Latino, and Asian) that assumed that they held similar conservative stances on moral-value issues as White Evangelicals (Brint & Schroedel, 2009). The political science literature then pivoted its attention to minority civic engagement and religion, where African Americans were studied and found to have a significant connection between their religious faith and their level of political participation (Calhoun-Brown, 1996; Harris, 1994; Tate, 1991). In short, when social scientists studied Evangelicals, they historically studied White Evangelicals (Brint & Schroedel, 2009; Fowler et al., 2004; Wallis, 2005).

In making connections between religion and civic engagement, African Americans are studied because of the strong foundational ties between the Black Protestant church and the Civil

Rights movement. Some literature maintains that social pressure, group consciousness, and group associations are key motivators for political participation among the Black community (Harris, 1994; Tate, 1991; Verba et al., 1995). The thesis of this study hinges upon this premise being applicable to the Latino community—specifically, Latino Evangelicals who tend to be unified on social issues, hold a strong group consciousness with Latinos living the United States, and have strong group associations with the Evangelical church writ large. Those associations are found to be present among the participants of this study and maintained as a motiving factor for increased political participation among the Latino community as well.

In acknowledgement of the growing Latino demographic in the United States and what I call the *browning* of the Evangelical Christian church, scholars have increasingly written about the impact that religiosity has on the political attitudes and political behavior of Latino Christians. Vast is the existing literature that examines the political consequences of having high levels of religiosity as marked by church attendance on the political behavior of Evangelical voters (Bean, 2014; Brint & Schroedel, 2009; D. E. Campbell & Monson, 2008; Fowler et al., 2004; J. C. Green, 2004; Guth et al., 2006; Pantoja, 2010; Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Smith, 1998; J. B. Taylor et al., 2014; Wilcox & Jelen, 1990; Wilson, 2007). The growing literature on Latino voters has an established work that examines vote choice based on a number of factors that influence Latinos preferences (Jackson, 2011; Leal et al., 2005; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; J. Wong, personal communication, August 8, 2018). Other scholars have considered the influence of Christian (Protestant and Catholic) beliefs on their social and political attitudes and have found a significant relationship between the level of religiosity and their sociopolitical attitudes (Brint & Schroedel, 2009; Espinosa et al., 2003; Fowler et al., 2004; Pantoja, 2010; Pantoja et al., 2008; J. B. Taylor et al., 2014; Wilcox & Jelen, 1990). The literature reviewed here examines

the influence that Latino identity, coupled with Evangelical identity, has on policy and party preferences of Latinos.

Theoretical Framework: Group Identity

According to McClain et al. (2009), group identity refers to an individual's "awareness of belonging to a certain group and having psychological attachment to that group based on perception of shared beliefs, feelings interests and ideas with other group members" (p. 474). Studies that consider influence of group identity have found an increased sense of feelings of efficacy, trust in government, and an increased sense of civic duty. Group identity has been conceptualized within the context of social identity theory (SIT; McClain et al., 2009).

Social Identity Theory

The SIT, introduced by (Tajfel, 1982) and later expanded upon by Abrams and Hogg (1988), provides insight into how Latino Evangelicals process their political preferences in the context of their religious and ethnic group identities. The SIT suggests that individuals assume a personal identity that reflects their membership in a larger group based on any number of characteristics such as religion or ethnicity. This membership to the larger group is internalized and constitutes a potentially important part of an individual's self-concept (Wilcox-Archuleta, 2018). The boundaries of the social group, in this case ethnic group or religious group, are set by those inside the group (Bean, 2014). These boundaries provide meaningful cues to individuals inside the group on how they should see themselves and those outside of the boundaries. Indeed, these social boundaries determine the individual's political and moral worldview.

The concept of self-categorization (either ethnically or religiously) expands upon the SIT to establish the self-categorization theory, which suggests that individuals categorize themselves as members of social categories and then define, describe, and evaluate themselves in terms of

these categories (Turner, 1985). Since individuals in this study evaluate themselves by their multiple (ethnic, gendered, religious, and professional) identities, they hold multiple representations of self (Worchel, 1998). According to self-categorization theory, individuals identify with groups to the extent that they perceive a match between themselves and the ingroup prototype (Worchel, 1998). This is why it is essential to this research design that participants self-categorize, in their own words, what it means to be Latino and what it means to be an Evangelical Christian. Once those identities are established, I can better understand how they see the political world around them.

In this study, the boundaries of these social categories overlap or are hierarchically ordered, and the saliency of each category varies across time and situations (Kramer & Brewer, 1984). This is consistent with Wong's findings in her interviews with Latino and Asian Evangelicals when they repeatedly placed their religious identity above their ethnic or racial identity even when experiencing racialized discrimination. The Latinos in this dissertation ordered their identity over the other at various points when one identity became more salient in response to a policy concern.

The social group nature of coethnic, Latino church services is a space for what Wilcox-Archuleta (2018) called a source for "ethnic stimuli" because of the "availability of social interaction with other ethnic group members" (p. 967). Jiménez (2010) stated that Latino congregations' interactions provide "powerful building blocks that are key to the construction of more salient ethnic identities" (p. 151). Their church environment is both a source of spiritual stimuli and a source of ethnic stimuli. The more entry points for ethnic stimuli, the stronger the intergroup identity of Latino Evangelicals (Wilcox-Archuleta, 2018). In an effort to recruit

Latinos with a strong sense of religious group consciousness, the sample population was Evangelical churches with Spanish language services.

Subcultural Identity Theory

One of the theoretical frameworks leaned upon in this study was subcultural identity theory of religious strength proposed by Smith (1998). Smith developed this theory as an explanatory proposition that gives merit to their argument that the Evangelical church while embattled is thriving. One of the reasons Smith believed it is thriving is because of individuals who make up the Evangelical church have assumed an Evangelical identity whose meaning is far deeper than a label. Hogg and Abrams (1988) maintained that self-categorization is essential to an individual's identification with a group that shares certain characteristics. Smith (1998) and his colleagues built their subcultural identity theory upon the SIT of Michael Hogg and Dominic Abrams who relied on social-psychological hypotheses to explain intragroup behaviors such as group cohesiveness, prejudices, stereotypes, ideology, social conformity, language communication, and other features of social life (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). It is these social behaviors and beliefs that construct the norms and boundaries of the group, in this case the Latino Evangelical group. The goal in setting Evangelical identity in the empirical and theoretical work of sociology and religion, is to extend and elaborate on the significance that religious identity has on an individual's sense of belonging. For Latino Evangelicals, church attendance provides a place to belong spiritually and socially among coethnics (Putnam & Campbell, 2010). Once the importance of belonging is (or is not) established, I will look at the role a sense of belonging plays in a person's feelings of political efficacy.

One proposition upon which the subcultural identity theory is constructed on is, as Smith (1998) stated, "The human drive for meaning and belonging are satisfied primarily by locating

human selves within social groups that sustain distinctive, morally orienting collective identities" (p. 90). This proposition articulates a basic principle in social behavior, which admits that human identity is not self-engendered but rather socially constructed through interactions with other humans within the context of patterned social groups. The church, and more specifically here the Evangelical church, is a social group that provides purpose and meaning by sustained belonging and participation in the group.

One of the ways social groups provide their members identity and meaning is by instilling in them a normative and moral orientation toward life and the world. Charles Taylor in his 1989 *Source of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* maintained, "Human beings, are inescapably normative and moral creatures. Their actions and identities are formed not only by their understanding of what is, but also of what ought to be" (p. 19).

It is important to acknowledge the social science literature of Charles Taylor because he provides insight into human behavior, which can be applied to political behavior of self-identified Evangelicals and self-identified Latinos. Taylor maintained that one of most basic aspirations of human beings is the need to be connected to or in contact with what they see as good, or of crucial importance, or of fundamental value (C. Taylor, 1989). What Taylor was saying was that belonging to a social group renders a sense of location and normative direction that informs a person's identity. Thus, identity and belonging must be investigated in tandem.

Smith and his colleagues (1998) built their subculture identity theory of religious strength based upon three premises: one, that no one takes a normative view from nowhere, and no one lives a life neutral and disengaged with regard to fundamental "ought's and should(s)" (Smith, 1998). Two, the place where people find, learn, and preserve those moral orientations is in the concrete social groups, actual relational networks, and subcultures in which their lives are

embedded. And the third premise, religion is, by its intrinsic character, a natural and primary source of the kinds of morally orienting collective identities that provide people meaning and belonging (Smith, 1998). When applying Smith's theory, I suspected that there might be tension when Latino Evangelicals make political decisions based on their multiple identities and subscriptions to multiple social groups, subcultures, and relational networks.

Nepantla (In-Betweenness)

Gloria E. Anzaldúa's theories of nepantla offer language to describe the transnational spaces that American Latinos occupy. The word nepantla is a Nahuatl word claimed by Anzaldúa to describe the Mestiza as one who occupies a position that is on both sides of a boundary or "in-between spaces" (Anzaldúa, 1987). She also applied this in-between space to differences in class, race, sexuality, and other identities. Drawing on Anzaldúa's theory of nepantla, I examined other works that have used the Nahualt term to describe the Latino electorate. In 2003, Espinosa et al. drew on Anzaldúa when they described the Latino electorate as the Aztecs, an in-between people who embrace their Spanish conquerors' religion while retaining their own culture. Jones-Correa (1998) also described this in-between identity as one that is applied to the sociopolitical location of the Latino electorate—which is not a stage "en route," rather an in-betweenness. In many respects, Latinos represent a nepantla political community in that they both accommodate and resist certain aspects of U.S. political society while at the same time retain some aspects of their Latino American political, cultural, and social heritage and worldview (Espinosa et al., 2003).

Considering the level of in-betweenness of Latino Evangelicals, there is evidence that they hold both conservative and liberal political proclivities. Latino Pentecostals in New York have been known to be courted because of their growth as a voting bloc. Republicans and Latino

Pentecostals seem like natural allies in their stance on family values, pro-life, and anti-gay marriage stance. However, the Democratic platform is more amenable to the policy needs of immigrants and the poor (Gonzalez, 2007). This causes tension, according to the pastor of a storefront Pentecostal church who told a *New York Times* reporter that it causes Latino Evangelicals to feel torn and unwilling to align themselves with politicians on either side of the ideological spectrum (Gonzalez, 2007). This is a common complaint from the Latino Evangelicals who are asked in interviews how they feel about their place in the civic community. It is this in-betweenness that can only be captured through open-ended questions, and follow-up questions. These nuances and nonbinary political preferences are what this dissertation captured through interviews.

The phenomenon of nepantla employed by Espinosa et al. (2003) and Jones-Correa (1998) is used to identify the in-between nature of the Latino electorate—the nepantla. The nepantla is very apparent when one walks into a Latino Evangelical church with Spanish language services. One can see it and feel it in the language, the Latin rhythms during corporate worship (Espinosa et al., 2005; Rodriguez, 2008; Streeter, 2014). Reverend Samuel Rodriguez, president of National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, said that Latinos are a hybrid people. They encompass both the faith tradition of Billy Graham and the social justice of Rev. Martin Luther King. Latinos are pro-life from the womb to the tomb. Their policy concerns range the whole life spectrum: abortion, child care, education, poverty, family reunification, immigration, and anti-death penalty. I hope this study uncovers the complexity of policy preferences of Latinos beyond the two-themed policy priority of abortion and same-sex marriage.

Theoretical Implications

My theory was that both social identity and subcultural identity theory explain the boundaries that Latino Evangelicals navigate to form cohesion within the Latino community and with the broader Evangelical community. Latino Evangelicals receive both ethnic stimuli and religious stimuli when they attend their Evangelical churches. They engage in the interactions that provide the building blocks for a more salient identity. Their church environment is both a source of spiritual stimuli and a source of ethnic stimuli. This produces stronger intergroup identity with the broader Latino community and a stronger intergroup identity with the broader Evangelical community. However, this study implies that if they have a disconnect with one of their dual identities, it may influence their opinion on a political issue. If tension or a strong sense of in-betweenness that leads to feelings of disconnect from one of the groups emerges from the data, Latino Evangelicals will elevate one identity over the other when making political choices. In the unique case of Latino Evangelicals, they receive both ethnic stimuli and Evangelical stimuli in the same space-church.

Ultimately, the nepantla nature of the Latino Evangelical shows itself in the tension that is exposed in their policy and party preference selection process. Their policy concerns range the entire life spectrum: abortion, child care, education, poverty, family reunification, immigration, and anti-death penalty. Social identity and subcultural theories, along with the nepantla phenomenon, may help to explain that the boundaries of religion and race are fluid, situational, and not neatly contained for a Latino Evangelical.

Rationale of Topics

The literature that I expand upon here is the literature most relevant to this dissertation, which specifically looks at the role that Evangelical, born-again, Protestant *identity* has on

Latino's political preferences of partisanship and policy priorities. Pantoja's (2010) work on the *Effects of Being a Born-Again Christian on Latino Socio-Political Attitudes* found that Latino born-again Christians display more conservative attitudes than do Latino Catholics. Pantoja compared the public opinion of Latino Catholics and Latino born-again Christians on a myriad of topics ranging from divorce, same-sex relationships, out of wedlock children, husband head of household, abortion, and whether they were Republican or not. His analysis yielded the greatest differences between the two Latino groups on their opinions regarding abortion, same-sex relationships, and children out of wedlock. According to Pantoja (2010), in all cases, "the born-again Latino held the most conservative responses and the identity of being a born-again Christian had a significant impact in structuring Latino attitudes toward a host of policy issues most closely identified with the Republican party" (p. 9). As significant as the denominational affiliation finding was, it was not as powerful as the religiosity variable (the frequency of church attendance). This begs the question, do born-again Christians hold more politically conservative attitudes (than Catholics in this study) simply because they attend church more often, or is there something else going on? Religiosity is the most significant predictor of conservative attitudes even among Catholics. So, it is not the church membership or affiliation that is a factor, rather it is the level of devotion or religiosity when captured as frequency of church attendance. Pantoja's study confirmed and paralleled a similar study on White Evangelicals by Olson and Green (2006) that also affirmed that high levels of religiosity or church attendance significantly increases sociopolitical conservative attitudes.

With the relationship between frequency of attendance and conservative attitudes well understood, I would like to go beyond this understanding. Studies by Pantoja (2010) and Wong (2015) used born-again as proxy for affiliation or membership to church. It was not a

measurement of identity. I would like to expand these studies and measure born-again as a self-identifier one that is more personal than membership to a church. If this study is consistent with both findings, then Pantoja's conclusions are supported and not only will Latino Evangelicals align themselves just with the Republican Party but their policy preferences will also mirror White Evangelicals.

Wong (2018a) and her latest work with born-again identity among Latino and Asians, confirmed my suspicion. She found that Latino and Asian Evangelicals do not hold the same political attitudes as White Evangelicals. The information that she gathered via face-to-face interviews gave her an insight to the tension that Evangelicals of color experience when making political decisions. Even devout, highly religious participants struggled with affirming fully conservative attitudes. Conversely, even after discussing experiences of racism and feelings of rejection from community and church institutions, they still maintained that their identity as a Christian was foremost in their lives—even more than being a Latino or an Asian. In the same interview some of those participants had policy needs that were inconsistent with the Republican party. When probed further about their decision-making process, some of the participants admitted feelings of tension and having to navigate between multiple identities.

This dissertation focused on the social and political proclivities of the growing Latino-Protestant demographic that self-identify as Latino Evangelicals. The Latino population I am examining here are Latinos who are not active members of any Christian political interest group. I did not seek out conservative Protestant special interest groups or leaders of the religious right or authors, influencers, and outspoken Evangelical leadership. The perspectives and vote choice or political affiliations of those most vocal and most organized have come to be understood as what we know as Evangelical. But not much is written about why Evangelicals, especially Latino

Evangelicals, vote the way they do and hold the political preferences that they hold. Further analysis is necessary to better understand why people have the political proclivities that they do. What is needed to better understand Latino Evangelicals as a voting bloc is an analysis of Latino Evangelicals' opinions on politics that explores the actual views of the ordinary Evangelical at an individual level, not just the official positions of some of the well-known pastors, authors, or other vocal politicos.

Multiple Identity as Intersectionality

The focus on multiple identities as a factor of influence on Latino preferences is similar to the considerations of intersectionality. Intersectionality acknowledges that human beings possess multiple identifications simultaneously and that the intersection of those identities has significant implications for their attitudes and beliefs and experiences (García Bedolla, 2014). The term intersectional emerged from critical race theorist Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) in her seminal work, *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex*. The original work was a critique of the law's limited view of a singular analysis of discrimination based on race and sex. Intersectionality has been adopted into the social science vernacular to describe the overlap of social identities (race, gender, sexuality, class) and in this instance, also religion. The understanding of the influence of overlapping identities, or intersections is important for understanding Latino political behavior. The Latino population is heterogeneous in all forms of the term, so this study initiates its investigation with the understanding that the multiple identities have intersectional influence.

Latinos

Terminology

This dissertation engaged Latinos at the individual unit level and asked them whether and how they self-identity as a person of Latin American origin. The term Latino(a/x) is meant to describe all individuals, foreign and U.S. born, who have ancestry in any of the Spanish-speaking nations of Latin America (García Bedolla, 2014). The term Hispanic was assigned by the U.S. Census during the 1970s to enumerate Latinos living in the United States and is often used interchangeably with the identifier, Latino(a/x). For the purpose of this study, the term "Latino" is used to encompass women and men who self-identify either ethnically, racially, or culturally as any variations of Hispanic, Latina(o), Latinx, Chicano, or any combination of Mestizo, whose roots can be traced to Latin America and by extension, the Iberian Peninsula. Participants of this study were given the opportunity to self-determine which term best identifies them personally. The written analysis of this study uses the term Latino to mean male and plural and Latina to refer to female participants.

Latino Demographics

According to a U.S. Census report, the U.S. Latino population reached a record 59.9 million in 2018, up 1.2 million from the 47.8 million recorded in 2008 (Flores et al., 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). This population estimate takes into consideration that the average annual growth rate in U.S. Latino population has declined from 3.4% per year to 2.0% per year since 2010 (Flores et al., 2019). The state of California holds five of the top 11 U.S. counties with the largest Latino population. At number 6 is Riverside County with a Latino population of 1,210,000. The 1.2 million Latinos in Riverside County make up 50% of the total county's population (Flores et al., 2019). The county of Riverside is where 80% of the participants of this

study reside. The other 20% of the participants reside in San Diego County, which is home to 1.4 million Latinos, who make up 34% of the county's population. The participants interviewed for this study came from one of the top 10 counties with the largest Latino population.

Latino Religious Identity

Espinosa et al. (2003), in conjunction with the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, created the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life Survey in which they questioned 2,310 Latinos throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, making it the largest bilingual survey of its time. Their purpose was to examine the impact of religion on political and civic engagement in the Latino community (Espinosa, 2003). They found that 10.6 million or (30%) of U.S. Latinos identified as non-Catholic in 2003, and 8.1 million of those non-Catholics identify as Protestant or Christian.

A Pew Survey taken in 2007 showed that about 70% of Latinos were Catholic and 20% were Protestants. The same survey was administered in 2010, and results showed that about 67% of Latinos were Catholic, and 22% of Latinos are Protestant. Then again in 2013, the best estimates suggested that about 55% of U.S. Latinos are Catholic and 22% are Protestant. Of those 22% Protestant Latinos, about 16%, or roughly 2 million, describe themselves as born-again or Evangelical Christians (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013). In 2013, the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) conducted a Hispanic Values Survey, which examined how Latinos' identities and experiences influence their approaches to politics in the United States (Jones et al., 2013). The PRRI found that 53% of Latinos in the United States identify as Catholic and 25% identify as either Evangelical or mainline Protestant (Jones et al., 2013). The study also found that 12% of Latinos are religiously unaffiliated, and that number is growing. The diversity of religious affiliation in Latino faith communities suggests that Latinos are not religiously

homogenous and that other forms of heterogeneity (like politics) may be present (Avalos, 2004; McKenzie & Rouse, 2013).

Latino Political Behavior

It is understood in political science literature that persons with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to vote and participate politically (Verba et al., 1995). That idea is generally transferable to most of the electorate. However, when looking deeper into the motivations for political participation of minority groups, political scientist Katherine Tate (1993) found that education and income are only occasionally related to the likelihood of African Americans' participation. This is also the case for Latino electoral and nonelectoral participation. Socioeconomic status (SES) can only partly predict or explain Latino political behavior. The literature has expanded beyond political science and has tapped into the psychosocial and sociological explanations such as feelings of political efficacy, linked fate, social identity, and even group-threat as motivating factors for political participation (Kramer & Brewer, 1984; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Sanchez & Masuoka, 2010; Sanchez & Vargas, 2016; Wilcox-Archuleta, 2018; Wong, 2006). Studies that have looked at these social/psychological factors have found that they have an influence on the political attitudes and behavior of Latinos and other racial minorities.

The sociological factor of identity has also been shown to influence the political attitudes and behavior of Latinos. Broadly speaking, people hold multiple identities based on religion, ethnicity, gender, race, nationality, familial status, and a myriad of other factors that people find influential in their lives. For the purposes of this study, the influence of multiple identities of Latinos was examined to consider the influence that ethnicity and faith have on their political preferences.

Policy Preferences

According to Wong (2018a), Latino Evangelicals prioritize the election of a Christian president but also prioritize the political needs of non-Christian coethnics and people of color in general. This signals that Latino Evangelicals might be more willing to vote their policy needs rather than their partisanship. Put another way, Latinos might be more willing to swing their votes based on policy needs. So, what are the policy needs that mobilize the Latino Evangelical to participate politically?

In 2013, the PRRI published the results of the Hispanic Values Survey in which they explored how religious identities and experiences influence Hispanics' approach to politics (Jones et al., 2013). The Hispanic Values Survey was conducted by the PRRI among a random sample of 1,563 Hispanic American adults and found that Hispanics (72%) rank jobs and unemployment as the top issue facing the country, followed by 65% of respondents who report that rising health care costs are a policy priority. The other half of Hispanic respondents reported that the quality of public schools (55%), the federal deficit (54%), the cost of college (53%), and immigration (53%) are critical policy priorities. Fewer Hispanics found that abortion (32%) and same-sex marriage (22%) are critical issues (Jones et al., 2013).

The PRRI found considerable diversity of policy opinions based on political affiliation, religious identity, education, and citizenship status (Jones et al., 2013). In this study, Hispanic Democrats (59%) prioritized immigration as a critical issue more than Hispanic Republicans (49%), and Hispanic Catholics (59%) were significantly more likely to say immigration is a critical issue than their Evangelical Protestant (48%) counterparts (Jones et al., 2013). Not surprisingly, there were also significant differences of opinion on immigration policy depending on citizenship status. Approximately 74% of respondents who were not U.S. citizens said that

immigration is a critical issue facing the country compared to 63% of Hispanics who were naturalized, and only 40% of native-born citizens (Jones et al., 2013). The 2013 findings showed the heterogeneity among Hispanics surveyed.

The findings from the American Values Survey reported that 42% of Hispanic Americans expressed significant concerns about the economic future of themselves and their children. Roughly six out of 10 (62%) Hispanics said that equality of economic opportunity is an important policy issue in American politics (Jones et al., 2014). Hispanic-Protestants (57%) maintained that they were concerned about the government interfering with their ability to freely practice their religion (Jones et al., 2014). The political context in which the survey was administered may have influenced the policy priorities since 2014 was only 4 years after the start of the economic recession. The 2014 American Values Survey was also a general survey that did not specifically target Hispanic respondents, and the policy priorities may have been different if the sample was Hispanic only.

The 2016 *Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey* (CMPS) surveyed over 10,000 individuals and included policy preferences in their survey (Barreto et al., 2016). The respondents were isolated by race and the policy preference were captured. Policy priorities were immigration, middle-class tax cuts, and health care reform. When asked about their policy priorities, 82% of Latinos supported a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants living the United States. Nearly three quarters of Latinos (73%) agreed with the need for a tax cut for middle-class families. The third policy priority was health care reform with (70%) of Latinos prioritizing the need for improvements of the Affordable Health Care Act.

In 2019, on behalf of Priorities USA, Latino Decisions surveyed a total of 1,632 Latino registered voters in Arizona (N = 303), Florida (N = 1,028), and Nevada (N = 301), asking

Latinos in those key states what policy priorities will motivate their decision in 2020 (Barreto & Manzano, 2019). They found that immigration and health care costs were the most pressing issues to Latinos in these three states (Barreto & Manzano, 2019). Gun violence, civil rights, and climate change followed at third place in Florida, Arizona, and Nevada respectively. The Latinos in this study were asked not only what policies are important to them, but also specifically which policy issues are motivating factors for voting in the 2020 election. Latino Decisions also found that Latino, U.S. citizens, while not under personal threat of deportation, care about immigration in reaction to the Trump Administration's anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric. Latinos in this study also cited that they worried specifically about children being detained at border area facilities and that they disagreed with the expansion of the border wall (Barreto & Manzano, 2019). This study only surveyed three states, but it provides a deeper understanding of what exactly about immigration Latinos care about. Immigration is a policy concern for many, but it is not enough to ask what policy domain voters care about; it is useful to understand what concerns them about the policy. These follow-up questions are necessary to fully understand the policy priorities of Latinos.

Latino Partisanship

For decades, Latinos were synonymous with Catholicism and Catholicism synonymous with the Democratic Party. The literature has shown that even when Latinos leave the Catholic religion, they still tend to lean toward the Democratic Party. Espinosa et al. found in 2003 that many Latinos (both Catholic and Protestants) tended to vote Democrat in the 1996 and 2000 elections and that, even though Latino Protestants hold similar theological and moral values to Anglo Protestants like their views on abortion and homosexuality, they do not necessarily hold the same political views. A great example of this is the National Evangelical Coalition who

urged partnering churches to encourage their congregations to work to end capital punishment around the country (Merritt, 2015a).

Scholarship by Leal et al. (2005) demonstrated that the Latino vote has "flip flopped" in adjacent elections from 2000 to present. For example, Latinos in Florida supported Gore in 2000 and then came out in support to elect Jeb Bush for governor. Then in the Kerry versus Bush election, Latinos split their vote based on denominational lines. Latino Catholics gave Kerry a 40-point lead, and Latino Protestants supported Bush (Leal et al., 2005). To make it even more difficult to box in the Latino electorate, when Latinos were asked in a *Washington Post*/Univision survey, "Which political party has more concern about Latinos?" 51% of born-again Christians said that the Democratic Party cares more about Latinos (Leal et al., 2005 p. 46). There appears to be a conflict within the Latino community as to which party to align themselves with based on their conflicting social and political needs.

Tesler and Sears in their (2010) study on the 2008 Obama race found that Latinos increased their votes for Democrats significantly from 2004 to 2008, giving Obama close to 67% of the Latino vote and suggesting that Latinos were leaning Democratic. Pantoja in his 2010 study made different observation of the attitudes of Latinos who self-identified as born-again Christians. When comparing Latino born-again Christians to Roman Catholic Christians, he found that born-again Christians have much more conservative attitudes. Thus, based on their position on the issues like abortion, family, gay marriage, and the war in Iraq, they were ideologically more aligned with the Republican Party. However, Pantoja found that the differences in attitudes between Latino Catholic and Latino born-again Christians were attributed to the amount of church attendance, not denomination. Born-again Christians attend church more frequently than Catholics do, so Latinos mirror Whites in that church frequency is a strong

influencer of conservative attitudes regardless of religious denomination. It follows, according to Pantoja (2010), if more Latinos become Evangelicals (born-again), then religiosity will rise and the "greatest beneficiaries of this shift will be the Republican Party" (p. 2).

The data that came out of the PRRI (2018) and Wong's (2018a) research showed that Latinos (and Asians) are the demographic fueling the growth of the Evangelical church. So, is a shift in Latino partisanship from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party likely? Based on the well-established studies that point to a positive relationship between an increase in religiosity, increased conservatism, and Republicanism, a party shift seems probable (Heyer et al., 2008; Pantoja et al., 2008; Wong, 2018b). However, an increasing number of Latinos are upset at the attacks directed toward Latinos in the United States and the leader of the Republican Party, President Trump, their most vocal adversary. Between the 2016 and the 2020 election cycle, scholars of race, religion, and politics are investigating the impact of these parallel realities to see whether their theories hold true and Latinos are leaning Republican. This is still a topic of discovery that will not yield definitive data until the 2020 election. The idea that Latinos, who are highly religious, hold both conservative and progressive political attitudes is not unusual. Long before the 2016 election, studies showed that religious diversity accounts for a substantial amount of political variation among Latinos (Kelly & Morgan, 2007; Weaver, 2015).

Evangelical Identity

Terminology and Beliefs

The outcomes of research on Evangelicals often vary because of the differences in the methods used to identify and define Evangelicals. In response to that challenge, the NAE and LifeWay Research developed a tool to provide a consistent standard for identification of Evangelical belief (Smietana, 2015). In the NAE/LifeWay survey, respondents are asked their

level of agreement with four separate statements using a four-point, forced-choice scale (*strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree*). Those who strongly agreed with all four statements were categorized as Evangelical. Those statements are as follows:

1. The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.
2. It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.
3. Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.
4. Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

The concepts represented in the four questions correspond favorably with beliefs that often appear in writings by Evangelical scholars (National Association of Evangelicals, 2015). Historian David W. Bebbington (1989) extended the fourth quality to include activism as the belief that faith should influence one's public life. This fourth quality is most reflective of the political definition of Evangelical as a voting bloc or policy interest group. The identifying term "Evangelical" has been associated with politically active conservatives who mobilize other Christians to lobby policy makers for policies that are amenable to the Western-American Christian worldview. This narrow, political definition of Evangelical identity more accurately describes the political special interest group that uses Christianity as a method of approaching politics from a moral position. This is not the working definition of Evangelical that was used here.

Throughout this research project, the term Evangelical was used to encompass any person who self-identifies as Protestant Christian, Evangelical Christian, nondenominational Christian,

or born-again Christian who is not Roman Catholic. Evangelicals can also be self-defined by denominational beliefs. Denominational definitions are also appealing because they help to mitigate two common criticisms of social scientists: that they do not all agree about the core beliefs of Evangelicals and that most social surveys do not ask questions about all core beliefs of Evangelicals (Brint & Schroedel, 2009; Greeley & Hout, 2006; Merritt, 2015b; Smith, 2000). This study interviewed Latino Evangelicals who attend churches from the Baptist and Assemblies of God denominations as well as two nondenominational churches. After looking at each individual church's Statement of Faith,[1] I can say with certainty that the churches in the population sample are all churches that share the four core beliefs proposed by the NAE. [2] The variations of these core beliefs among Evangelicals are considerable, but for the purposes of this study, the definition was loosely held to allow for respondents to self-describe their Evangelical identity.

The identity Latino Evangelical is more than just an identifier; it is important for this project that the significance of religious identity is understood by both the researcher and the participant interviewees.

Evangelical Identity

The most recent PRRI 2018 American Values Survey yielded some interesting findings that support my contestation against the presumption that Evangelicals only care about two issues: abortion and same-sex marriage. The findings do not isolate Latino Evangelicals, but they do show an interesting shift among Republicans that can provide some insight into the shifting

[1] A Statement of Faith is a written declaration of the church's position on matters that pertain to the essentials of historical Christianity (Harvest Christian Fellowship, n.d.).

[2] These core beliefs can be found on the Statement of Faith page of Magnolia Baptist Church Riverside, Harvest Christina Fellowship, New Beginnings Community Church, and Evermore Church. Links listed in reference pages.

policy priorities of typically Republican Evangelicals. The salient issues prioritized by party show that Republicans are more likely than Democrats to prioritize the economy (44% vs. 24%), national security (40% vs. 9%), and immigration (36% vs. 18%). Few Democrats or Republicans say abortion or LGBTQ rights issues are the first or second most salient issues for their vote this year (Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2018). In fact, the PRRI findings show that abortion and gay, bisexual, transgender issues are the least salient issues with only 10% of Republicans citing abortion as a top priority and only 1% citing LGBTQ issues (Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2018).

The low saliency of abortion and same-sex marriage signal that Evangelicals care about policies beyond the two issues that have held Evangelicals' loyalty to the Republican Party in the past. The same study showed that there are significant ethnic and racial divides on the saliency of various issues like immigration, health care, the economy, national security, and gun policy. There is less information on the policy preferences of Latino Evangelicals specifically.

White Evangelicals (76%) hold the attitude that the American way of life needs to be protected from foreign influence (Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2018). Embedded in that attitude are policy preferences to curtail immigration, lower entry levels to refugees, secure the border with Mexico, and prioritize national security. Tangentially related are the common attitudes among White male Republicans that both the Christian faith and the American way of life are threatened by the increase of racial diversity in the U.S. population. In opposition to this assumptive connection between racial diversity and a threatened Christian faith is the reality that Latino and Asian Christians are driving the growth in the Protestant church (Cox & Jones, 2017; Jones et al., 2013; Rodriguez, 2008; Wong, 2018a). The growth of the Evangelical church can be traced to Latino immigrants who emigrate to the United States with a Protestant faith. The story of the Latino Evangelical is not always one of conversion as assimilation. Latinos, especially from

Central and South American countries, arrive with deeply held associations with the Protestant church. The Protestant church and the Protestant church's political interest groups need to look at the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals.

Latino Evangelicals

History of Latino Evangelicals

Markedly, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (in 1848) merged the Catholic Mexicans with the Protestant Anglo forming the new southwest territory of the United States. The racial and religious collision between two nations forced the birth of U.S. Latino Protestantism. In 1850, Baptist missionaries reported the establishment of a few congregations among the *neomejicano* converts in New Mexico. Southern Methodists also organized Latino converts around Corpus Christi but halted their efforts when the Civil War began. After the Civil War, the Baptist denomination continued its efforts and in 1851, reported 112 baptisms in New Mexico (American Baptist, 1851). The first Latino Protestant churches were Baptists churches that were established in Peralta and Socorro, New Mexico. Fast forward to 1939, a young man by the name of Reies Lopez Tijerina became a Pentecostal preacher and influenced a large number of Latinos and also became a controversial Chicano civil rights leader; the pastor rose up from within the Latino faith community. Tijerina's notoriety was largely linked to his civil rights activism for land grant rights of Mexican Americans in New Mexico. However, his Pentecostal-charismatic faith was front and center in his political activism. Later, Cesar Chavez would openly incorporate Catholic liturgy and prayers during peaceful protests. Still, for much of the 20th century, Latinos in the United States were largely linked to the Roman Catholic faith. Conversion from Roman Catholic to Protestantism was then assumed to be an act of American assimilation that happened on U.S. soil. That notion began to shift as a result of legislation like the 1965 Immigration and

Naturalization act and the 1986 Immigration Reform Control Act, which significantly increased immigration of Latino families to the United States. This influx of Latinos from various Latin American countries brought in the diverse religious affiliations that had initiated in their country of origin.

A recent report by Chile-based survey research firm, Latinobarómetro, found that between 1995 and 2013, Catholic affiliation declined 13 percentage points. In 1995, eight in 10 (80%) residents of Latin America identified as Catholic compared to two thirds (67%) in 2013 (Latinobarometro, 2018). Reuters followed the visits of Pope Frances to Latin America and reported a decline in interest from Roman Catholics. They proposed that the vibrant sermons of Evangelical churches have replaced the solemn Catholic mass. In a Reuters poll conducted in 2014, they found that roughly one in five Brazilians self-identified as an Evangelical Christian (Ulmer, 2014). Latinobarómetro (2018) found that Latin Americans leave the Catholic church to embrace Protestant Christianity.

The increase of Evangelicals is more pronounced in Central American countries where only 47% of the population is still Catholic. In Guatemala 40% of the population is evangelical, in Honduras 41%, and Nicaragua 37% self-identify as evangelical protestant (Navarro-Rivera, 2014). According to Navarro-Rivera (2014),

> Among Latinos in the U.S., those with roots in Central America and the Caribbean are the least likely to identify as Catholic (45 percent) and the most likely to identify as evangélico (16 percent). To put it differently, Latinos with roots in Central America and the Caribbean are over-represented among evangélicos: 21 percent of Latino adults have roots in Central America and the Caribbean, as do nearly 3-in-10 (27 percent) of evangélicos, but fewer 1-in-5 (18 percent) Catholics hail from Central America and the Caribbean. (para. 3)

According to the U.S. Census, American Community Survey, over the last 10 years, the foreign-born population from Latin America increased by 5.1 million reaching 21.2 million in 2010. The

majority of the foreign born from Latin America were from Central America (70%; Acosta & de la Cruz, 2011). It is a logical inference, then, to connect the growth of Evangelicals in Latin America with the growth of Latino Evangelicals in the United States currently.

Evangelical Christianity, particularly Pentecostal denominations (like Assemblies of God) were embraced in Latin America because of the influence of Evangelical missionaries from the United States. Historian R. Andrew Chesnut (as cited in Rockwell, 2015) noted in an interview on *Latin Pulse* podcast that many churches with roots in Latin America are now sending missionaries to the United States to preach to the Latino diaspora. According to Chesnut, Evangelicals are expected to become a more prominent segment of the American religious landscape (Rockwell, 2015). We are seeing the large Latin American faith conversions and transnational relationships result in an increase in the number of Latino Evangelicals. The PRRI 2016 report on America's religious identity found that more than one quarter (26%) of Americans who were surveyed for the American Values Survey identified as Protestant Evangelical (Cox & Jones, 2017). Of those who self-identified as Evangelical, one in 10 is also Hispanic (Cox & Jones, 2017). The PRRI has not conducted a Hispanic American Values Survey since 2013, which showed a much higher proportion of Hispanics who self-identified as Evangelical.

Belonging to a Church

Informs Identity

According to 2007 Pew Research Center report, Latinos closely follow Blacks in terms of the intensity of their faith and religious behavior (Lugo & Pond, 2007). The study revealed that 87% of Latinos report some sort of formal religious affiliation that spans several denominations (Lugo & Pond, 2007). In fact, 44% of Latinos report they attend church weekly, 68% of Latinos

say religion is very important to them, and 38% of Latinos say their religious beliefs influence their political thinking and believe that church is an appropriate forum to address social and political issues (Lugo & Pond, 2007; Pew Research Center, 2014). The openness of Latinos to receive political messages from their church may indicate that belonging to a church shapes the political attitudes of Latinos.

Belonging is tightly knit to identity, and they must be examined in tandem when considering why people align themselves with a political party or a church or self-identify culturally. Verba et al.'s (1995) *Voice and Equality* stressed the unique importance in which socioeconomic status factors interplay with religious institutions. They posited that associational memberships to institutions like church make up for socioeconomic disparities among ethnic groups. This is because the networking and social safety net that church members provide for one another make up a lack of access to government or financial institutions. More specifically, the voluntarist nature of Protestant churches provides opportunities for involvement and leadership, which teaches skills that are transferable to civic engagement.

So why does belonging to a church matter? Belonging represents personal attachments to a valued community that shares common beliefs, practices, and commitments (Roof & McKinney, 1987). McKenzie and Rouse (2013) examined the religious foundations of political attitudes and argued that the agreed upon set of norms and viewpoints generated in a religious assembly shape the mindset of the church members.

The National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), a coalition of almost 11,000 Hispanic Evangelical churches throughout the nation, engages in political and social advocacy and seeks to empower Latinos via spiritual progressive leadership through voter registration drives, fostering interracial and interdenominational coalitions, and immigration

reform advocacy. This para-church organization is highly political, and Evangelical Latinos are leading and mobilizing it. Their position on major issues such as poverty, racial profiling, capital punishment, and immigration reform do not neatly fall within the conservative to liberal ideology divide. Members of NHCLC collectively hold conservative views on social issues like abortion and hold liberal views on issues like immigration and poverty. The NHCLC is important to consider because while this study looked at individual Latino Evangelicals and not at groups, an organization's position on policies can provide some insight into the political attitudes of Latinos more broadly.

Samuel Rodriguez (2008), the president of the NHCLC, challenged White Evangelicals on the issue of immigration and racial profiling urging them to be consistent with their Christian worldview, values, and commitment to civil and human rights. He warned White Evangelical political coalitions that if they abandoned the Latino faction of Evangelicals on compassionate immigration reform, there would be "serious ramifications in the church and in American politics" (p. 12), alluding to the possibility that Latino Evangelicals might defect to the Democratic Party. Ten years later, Rev. Samuel Rodriguez delivered a prayer at the inauguration of Donald Trump, whose platform was unequivocally anti-immigrant and anti-Latino. This reversal of Rodriguez is perplexing but provides evidence of the complexity of being a Latino Evangelical whose political needs often conflict with the policy needs of the ethnic group.

Increases Social Trust

Scholars have long noted that participation in a church is an important social force in shaping political behavior and increasing political participation, and they have asserted that belonging to a religious organization helps develop civic skills (Harris, 1994; Jones-Correa &

Leal, 2001; Verba et al., 1995). This is because the social capital that is acquired through belonging or affiliation with organizations foster social networks and increase social trust.

According to social capital theorist Robert Putnam (2000), "Faith communities in which people worship together are arguably the single most important repository of social capital" (p. 136). Putnam (2000) contended that belonging to a faith community breeds social trust, and social trust is strongly associated with many forms of civic engagement. The social trust factor cannot be overstated as Putnam maintained that people who trust their fellow citizens volunteer more often, contribute more to charity, participate more often in politics and community organizations, and display many other forms of civic virtue. In Latino Evangelical churches, social trust is fostered through the emphasis of living in community with one another. Since Putnam's claims of the benefits of social trust, there has been growing research on the relationship between social capital and political participation. Some of the limitations of Putnam's seminal work was that the sample studied was primarily White, Protestant, and from similar social environments. Also, limiting was that the 1990 social-capital index did not disaggregate racial and ethnic minorities.

Rodney Hero (2007) took Putnam's premise and contended that race is an explanatory factor in the decline of social capital and that the growing literature has understated its importance. Hero argued that increased community may lead to increased social trust, but it does not always translate into the social capital that would provide any economic upward mobility to people of color. Sylvia Manzano's (2007) work in "Bonding and Bridging: Latinos and Social Capital" took the considerations of Hero and measured the relationship between social trust and social capital in the context of the Latino population. She, however, found evidence of social capital in the Latino community through bridging networks. She found that there is a statistically

and practically significant relationship between bridging social capital and an increase in political participation among Latinos. The bridging type of social capital that Manzano spoke of is fostered in churches where the Latino congregation is a part of a larger multiethnic church. This church design provides Latinos with low social capital access to persons with broader social networks. The interaction enlarges the Latinos' social network and potentially increases their social capital. In this instance, belonging to a church mitigates the unique inequalities that minorities deal with in boarder society. Verba et al. (1995) stressed the unique importance on which socioeconomic status factors interplay with religious institutions. They posited that associational memberships to institutions like church make up for socioeconomic disparities among minority ethnic groups. More relevant is the finding that those associated with Protestant churches have a greater opportunity for involvement and leadership, which teaches skills that are transferable to civic engagement.

So why does belonging to a church matter to politics? It matters because belonging represents personal attachments to a valued community that shares common beliefs and commitments. Those beliefs and commitments can create the religious foundations of political attitudes. Moreover, the agreed upon set of norms and viewpoints generated in a religious assembly shape the mindset of the church members (McKenzie & Rouse, 2013; Roof & McKinney, 1987). That mindset then informs church-going voters' policy preferences. For instance, Calhoun-Brown (1996), Jones-Correa and Leal (2001), and McKenzie and Rouse (2013) showed that regardless of the denominational breakdown, regular church attendance has a positive effect on Latino's likelihood to register and turn out to vote. Latinos belong to churches and those churches are providing both social and ethnic cues that influence the political attitudes of Latino voters.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This research methodology chapter discusses the rationale for executing a qualitative study through interviews and the process taken to capture the words and meaning of the participant's own words. This chapter opens up with a rationale for choosing a semistructured, face-to-face interview as an instrumentation for inquiry. The purpose of this research study was to find out whether or not ethnic and religious identities play a role in the political proclivities of Latino Evangelicals. A qualitative inquiry via face-to-face interviews was employed to understand whether and how Latino Evangelicals process their political choices in light of their identity(ies). Particular attention was given to the multiple identity of the individual person who self-identifies as Latino/a and Evangelical. Once the multiple identities were well established through demographic survey and interview questions, participants were asked to consider their political choices through the lens of their multiple identities.

Participants were selected from a population of churches that hold Spanish-language worship services on Sundays where people are most likely to self-identify as a Latino Evangelical. A total of 10 interviews was conducted with seven women and three men ranging in age from 22 to 54 years of age. Ten participants were selected from a population of six churches. After explaining this project to the leadership of the various churches, access to the congregation was granted by the lead pastors, and a combination of sampling strategies were employed. Initially, people were randomly approached, followed by introductions by gatekeepers, and then other participants were found via snowball recommendations.

Methods of data analysis and synthesis are then presented. Approximately 18 hours of data were captured and transcribed into searchable documents and audio files. Those transcripts were uploaded into a qualitative analysis software for coding. The predetermined codes based on

the research question were extrapolated first, followed by the emerging themes that were also coded. These codes and themes provide the connection between the research question, the questions asked during interviews, and the data captured. Finally, the steps that were taken to ensure trustworthiness of the research methodology are discussed along with limitations of the method chosen.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design: Interviews

Semistructured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 participants. This method of inquiry required having a set of structured questions that evolved into a conversation with each question asked in an open-ended manner. Interview inquiry is appropriate for this study because it is a research method of discovery that helps explain phenomena through collecting the narratives of the individual participants. In narrative inquiry research, the researcher seeks to understand a phenomenon by extracting the individual's whole story. In this setting, the interviewer is both the audience as the listener of the stories and narrator of the lived experiences that are later analyzed to explain phenomena (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Creswell & Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). This was the approach taken throughout this research.

The data collected through interviews were captured by listening for themes and patterns and extracting meaning from words and phrases. Those words and phrases were collected as data for analysis and understanding. The methodology requires conducting semistructured interviews that are directed enough to where the participant understands the question but is open-ended enough to where they can elaborate on their answers (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008). Subquestions or follow-up questions were asked to substantiate the interviewee's responses. The objective of the subquestions effectively integrates the purpose of the study. The

subquestions also demonstrate the significance of obtaining detailed narratives from respondents so that the researcher can get to the nuances of people's political decision-making. Survey data can show how Latinos vote and their political preference, but survey data do not capture just how Latinos arrive at those decisions.

To gather honest information, the researcher must first gain the participant's trust. This trust is more easily established when the researcher is in a *participative setting* whereby the interviewee feels that the researcher is part of the community he or she is investigating. Participative research requires the researcher to be embedded in the research setting. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), the researcher's interpretation of nuance and meaning is more likely to be accurate when she has established a relationship with the person or community she is investigating. To establish that relationship, I spent hours in conversations with participants in the church setting, on the phone, and via email. After interviews were transcribed, each participant was sent his or her transcript and given the opportunity to redact or clarify anything that was said. Not one participant chose to amend or redact any portion of their transcript.

This is precisely why this method of qualitative inquiry is most appropriate for this dissertation. As an Evangelical Latina, I was an instrument of the data collecting process, and that started with establishing trust. This positionality provided a unique understanding of the multiple identities of Latino Evangelicals in this study. This was helpful in establishing credibility with church goers as I blended in as a fellow church goer. This was found to be an important step in gaining access to and trust from participants. Initially, I thought that Latino Evangelicals would answer differently than in other studies if someone from within the community asked the questions. The assumption was birthed by review of the literature. One of the reflections of Wong (2018a) about her interviews with Asian and Latino Evangelicals was

that not one participant was willing to place their racial ethnic identity in primacy to their Christian identity as a driving factor for political attitudes. It was assumed at the onset of this study that participants were unwilling to deemphasize their faith because as an *Evangelical* it is their calling to evangelize or proselytize their faith to outsiders. This assumption was tested as I assured participants that I was a member of the faith community by attending worship service and sharing about my faith background.

Population

This qualitative inquiry employed purposeful sampling to recruit interview participants. Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for identification and selection of information-rich cases when resources are limited (Palinkas et al., 2015; Patton, 2015). In this study, there was a limited amount of financial resources and a limited amount of time allotted to recruit and interview participants. Over the period of 3 months, two pilot studies were conducted, 10 interviews were recorded, and 20 hours of conversations were transcribed then coded. Approximately $900 was spent on transcription services, $100 on gift cards to participants, and $90 on coding software. The financial resources were limited and exceeded the budget allotted for data collection. In addition, it was important to complete all data collection during the summer so that analysis could begin during the fall of 2019.

The sampling criteria often employed by qualitative researchers consists of choosing a population that holds the characteristics and common conditions that the researcher wants to study (Gibton, 2015). I employed purposeful sampling by targeting Evangelical churches with a significant Latino population. In order to best examine Latino Evangelicals, participants were recruited from five different churches located in Southern California. Out of the five churches, four were churches that held separate Spanish language worship services (Spanish Ministry).

This was a strategic sampling choice because churches with Spanish ministries have a significant number of Latinos in the congregation. The 10 Latino Evangelical participants came from Magnolia Avenue Baptist Church, New Beginnings Community Church, Eastlake Church, Sandals Church, Harvest Fellowship, and Relevant Church. Among those churches, the denominations represented a range from nondenominational, Baptist, and Assemblies of God, which are all denominations that identify as both Protestant and Evangelical.

Sampling Strategies

The participants of interest are Latino Evangelicals who attend Christian, Protestant, and nondenominational churches. The churches in my sample are located in both Riverside and San Diego Counties. I had originally limited this study to the city of Riverside because Latinos make up almost 50% of the population, and 12% of the city's population is Protestant (Center for Religion and Civic Culture, 2015; City of Riverside, n.d.). Various methods of invitations to participate were employed. Pastors of targeted churches in Riverside were sent an email (see Appendix A) and contacted by telephone. Once pastors and leadership granted permission to recruit participants, I attended Sunday services. At Magnolia Avenue, the pastor introduced me from the pulpit and gave me an opportunity to explain my project. After service, I met many congregants and received several phone numbers of interested participants. From that outreach, three participants were interviewed for this study. That interaction was the most positive and most expedient. The other five churches required much more follow-up and active recruitment only to yield little to no participation.

Initially, there were seven churches in the sample. One church, Evermore, did not yield any participants, but it did provide a valuable lesson in field research. First, I sat down and explained the project to the lead pastors of the church. Once they gave me permission to recruit

congregants, I attended Sunday services and walked around the lobby introducing myself to people sitting around the church lobby. They were very open to listening to me but politely declined to participate every time. After an hour of this, the pastor's secretary who is well known and revered in the church walked around with me and introduced me to people she knew would be responsive. People's response to my invitation changed from dismissive to interested after being introduced by a church gatekeeper. Gatekeepers are people with the authority to grant permission and facilitate the researcher's entry into the field setting (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). That introduction granted access in a manner that only a fellow stakeholder can provide. Church members were quick to talk with me and were willing to give me their contact information, so we could set a meeting time outside of Sunday. This church held multiple programs all day Sunday, and most people were busy with other ministry duties. I left with six prospective participants' phone numbers. I spent the next two weeks calling people from the list, and not one person wanted to continue with the study. A huge lesson was learned about the importance of establishing trust with a community through the researcher embedding herself into the community (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). When it is not feasible for the researcher to embed herself in the community and make relationships, the endorsement from a gatekeeper becomes imperative (National Congress of American Indians [NCAI] Policy Research Center and Montana State University [MSU] Center for Native Health Partnership, 2012).

Multiple emails were sent to the senior pastor and several managers of New Beginnings Church in Norco, California. The senior pastor did not respond to my calls or emails, but the executive director/pastor did respond and ultimately participated in an interview and referred another participant. The initial contacts led to one interview and several referrals at other churches, which expanded the number of churches in the sample. The majority of participants

were attained through means of *snowball sampling*, the referral of additional participants by participants of the research study (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). This expanded the sample region beyond the city of Riverside and into Chula Vista in San Diego County.

Sample Size

The advantage of using a small purposeful sample of participants was that it yielded detailed, in-depth explanations of how Latino Evangelicals think about politics. The rich information gathered through 10 in-depth interviews resulted in over 18 hours of valuable data. Ten participants is an acceptable sample size as sample sizes very in qualitative research because the goal of a qualitative study is not to have a large N but rather to achieve saturation. Saturation is a method to gain comprehensive understanding by continuing to sample until no new information is acquired (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Palinkas et al., 2015). Saturation is achieved when repetitive patterns emerge, when the participants answer so similarly to one another that no-new information is being gathered from the interview questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Following every interview, I wrote in a field note journal that documented any new insights learned, any relevant information gained, patterns and connections to other interviewees identified, and personal biases and assumptions reflected upon. The field note journal can be found in Appendix B. After recognizing patterns in the interview transcripts, I stopped recruiting participants after 10 interviews. Some scholars of qualitative methodology suggest that a proper sample size can range from two to 15 participants depending on the quality of information and whether consistent themes emerge (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012; Creswell & Creswell, 2013). Since saturation varies by both the research design and the availability of participants, the 10 participants in this study provided enough data to achieve

saturation (Creswell & Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). Saturation was achieved and the patterns that emerged from the data are discussed in the findings chapter of this dissertation.

Demographic Data

I interviewed 10 Latinos that attend Protestant churches in the Southern California area. Table 1 shows the demographic variation of the sample to consist of seven women and three men. The ages of the participants ranged from 22 years of age to 54 years of age. The participants' annual income ranged from $20,000 to $150,000. The level of education attained by participants also ranged, with sixth grade being the lowest level of education and graduate school being the highest. The data also yielded a surprisingly diverse spectrum of political ideology and partisanship. While not all participants stated where they fell on the liberal to conservative ideology spectrum, they all stated their partisan preference. Four participants are Democrat, four participants are Republican, and two participants stated they decline to state or are not affiliated with a political party. Three out of the 10 participants admitted that they are swing voters and that while they are registered as one party, they have voted for candidates of an opposing party. The heterogeneity of the 10 participants in why there is confidence that the sample size sufficiently provided the necessary data for rich analysis.

Overview of Methodology

Gaps in the Methodology Literature

Much of what is often reported about who Evangelicals are and why they hold the political opinions that they do comes from public opinion survey research. There have been generalizations made and supported through the reliable survey data throughout the years. The most recent *Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey* provided for the self-identification of "Latinx" ("Latino/a") and "Evangelical" survey respondents (Barreto et al., 2016).

Table 1

Participants' Demographics

Individual-level variables	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Gender		
Male	3	30
Female	7	70
Age		
18-30	1	10
31-45	6	60
46-65	3	30
Self ID as Evangelical Christian	10	100
Pan-ethnic ID		
Mexican	4	40
Mexican American	4	40
Puerto Rican	2	20
Generational status		
1st generation	4	40
2nd generation	3	30
3rd + generation	3	30
Education completed		
Highs school graduate or GED	1	10
Some college	4	40
4-year college graduate	2	20
Postgraduate	3	30
Yearly income		
100,000+	3	30
90K-99K	1	10
80K-89K	2	20
70K-79K	1	10
60K-69K	1	10
50K-59K	1	10
40K-49K	1	10

This survey collected extensive data nationwide, and while it was not a truly representative sample, the research principals weighted the full data within each racial group to match the adult population in the 2015 Census ACS 1-year data file for age, gender, education,

nativity, ancestry, and voter registration (Barreto et al., 2018). As representative of the national population the samples are, there are limitations to large data sampling through surveys. The multiple choice and often binary answer choices are finite and do not allow for explanation as to how a respondent arrives to their decisions. It does not allow for a respondent to make a choice and be able to qualify their answer or their preference. Even a Likert scale survey response, which is made to measure intensity, cannot accurately capture the variation and nuance of the respondent's preferences. This criticism was shared by Smith (2000) in his book *Christian American?* He maintained that some of the generalizations made about Evangelicals are the result of survey data that perpetuate four fallacies about the Protestant population that do not accurately capture the beliefs and attitudes of ordinary Evangelicals. These four fallacies are (a) the representative elite fallacy, which assumes elite Evangelical leaders and their opinion and interests are the opinion of ordinary Evangelicals; (b) the factual survey fallacy that maintains surveys accurately represent the views of ordinary people sufficiently to make adequate generalizations about Evangelicals; (c) ideological consistency fallacy, which assumes that people normally work out their beliefs and attitudes in an ideologically consistent fashion that reflects an internally coherent and nonparadoxical worldview; and (c) the monolithic religious bloc fallacy, which often assumes all Protestants are one monolithic social group who can all be identified as "Evangelicals," "fundamentalists," "religious-right," or conservatives (Smith, 2000). Smith argued that generalizing survey data only helps to muddle other Americans' understanding of Evangelicals' opinions and attitudes. If we want to truly understand Evangelicals, it requires conducting face-to-face interviews to capture nuance and meaning. This study attempted to capture not just nuance of the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals but

also understanding of why they hold those preferences. Through face-to-face interviews, this study captured the rationale behind their political orientations.

Wong (2018a) admitted in her latest book, *Immigrants, Evangelicals, and Politics in an Era of Demographic Change*, that aggregate data do not capture the substantive religious experience of first-, second-, and third-generation immigrants. She admitted that the current data do not reveal the rich context in which immigrants' religious adherents influence their method of political participation and political orientation. For this study, face-to-face interviews provided discussion for deeper understanding of the nuances involved in political attitudes through listening to people's lived experiences. Listening to people's lived experiences within the context of their religious and public life provided an opportunity for the participant to self-describe their identity, their policy priorities, and their political party. Lydia Bean (2014) structured her ethnographic study of Canadian and American Evangelicals and their partisanship in a similar manner. She concluded in her methodological analysis that listening to the personal narratives of individuals explained nuance and gave meaning to survey responses. The process of conducting interviews in addition to surveys creates triangulation between the observed and the survey response, which increases the external validity and generalizability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Instrumentation

Consent Form

The instrumentation used to gather the data was semistructured interviews. The tools used to capture the data was email, phone communications, consent forms, demographic surveys, audio recorder, transcription software, and content analysis software. Introduction of the project was made via phone and email to the leadership of the churches sampled. After successful

recruitment of participants, I asked them to read and sign a consent form (Appendix C) that explained the project and disclosed the fact that the interview would be recorded.

Demographic survey

The demographic survey (see Appendix D) was modeled after the CMPS demographic survey so that future connections could be made between socioeconomic status, generational positioning, and ethnicity. The demographic survey was also used to provide the participant an opportunity to self-identify as Latino, Hispanic, or something else. The survey was also used to measure the participant's level of identification as an Evangelical Christian. The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in conjunction with LifeWay Research developed a tool to provide a consistent standard for identification of Evangelical belief on surveys (Smietana, 2015).[3] The questions from that tool were used for this study. Respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with four separate faith statements using a four-point, forced choice scale (*strongly agree*, *somewhat agree*, *somewhat disagree*, *strongly disagree*). Those who *somewhat agree* to *strongly agree* with all four statements were considered as ones who self-identify as Evangelical and were invited to proceed with the interview.

1. The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.
2. It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.
3. Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.

[3] The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) developed an Evangelical beliefs research definition for accurate and consistent use among researchers. In partnership with LifeWay Research the definition was crafted, reviewed, and tested for validity. On October 15, 2015, the NAE Board of Directors adopted the Evangelical research definition.

4. Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

As explained in the literature review, this set of questions created by the National Association of Evangelicals and used by LifeWay research institute measures the basic, multidenominational belief in the Bible as the highest authoritative document and faith in Jesus Christ as savior. I use these four statements to measure faith as I find it to be a more inclusive measurement of personal faith than frequency of attendance to a church. The concepts represented in the four questions correspond favorably with beliefs that often appear in writings by Evangelical scholars (NAE, 2015). Ultimately, all of the 10 participants of the study agreed to those four statements at varying degrees from *somewhat agree* to *strongly agree*. Only one potential male participant disagreed with one of the statements and was eliminated from the pool of participants. Interviewees were chosen from Evangelical churches, so there was admittedly a bias or at least an expectation that most participants would agree with the four belief tenets of Evangelicalism.

Semistructured Interview Questions

A series of semistructured interview questions were developed to answer the main research questions that guided this study: *What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the policy and party preferences of Latino Evangelicals*? And *As a Latino Evangelical, do you experience tension when making decisions about policy and party preferences?* Because existing political science survey inquiries are inadequate to answer this study's research question, qualitative methods from the broader social sciences were adopted. Qualitative methods are most useful when one desires to achieve a depth of understanding of a specific shared behavior or phenomenon. In this case, I sought to understand how persons who identify as both Latino and Evangelical arrive at their policy preferences and their party

preference. I sought to understand the personal process at the individual unit level. I believed I could understand their process by their telling me whether there were ever any lived experiences that formed their political attitudes and preferences.

Transcription and Coding Software

Interviews were recorded using my iPhone and then downloaded into a secure transcription website *Rev.com*. The transcription took approximately 24 hours to transcribe 90 minutes of audio recording into a 20-25-page transcript. Once the transcript was created in printed form, a copy of the transcript was emailed to the participant for *member checking*, the process of sharing the interview transcript with the research participant to obtain their feedback and clarification of their words (Creswell & Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The transcripts were then uploaded to a professional data analysis coding software, MAX Qualitative Discourse Analysis (MAXQDA) software. MAXQDA is a computer software program that helps a researcher systematically code and weight language to evaluate and interpret qualitative text (Creswell & Creswell, 2013). The written transcripts and audio recordings were uploaded to the software system to begin coding the answers that connected to the research question and any valuable data that emerged from the interviews. Words, phrases, and paragraphs were coded into colors and themes so that I could isolate one variable at a time. The analysis software was used to create descriptive statistics, visualize the progression of the interview, compare documents, and visualize connections throughout the data. The output from analysis in MXQDA are evident through the codebook (see Appendix E).

Recruitment Strategies

Pilot Study

Prior to recruiting and holding interviews, the demographic survey questions and the interview questions were piloted with two individuals who self-identified as Latino and Evangelical. Valuable feedback was gained from the pilot study and resulted in clarifying the language on the survey and rearranging the order of interview questions.

After receiving clearance from IRB, I set up meetings with the various gatekeepers and pastors to ask for access to their congregation. I then attended Sunday morning worship services to insert myself (the researcher) as a member of the religious community. This is an important part of the research design process because I needed purposively selected participants who have life experiences to share that are relevant to the study. For this study, churches that hold Spanish language services were targeted because Latino Evangelicals were certain to be part of the population.

Data Collection

After getting clearance from the pastors of five churches in Riverside, California, I began to attend Sunday worship services. At Magnolia Avenue Church, I was introduced to the congregation by the pastor and was given an opportunity to share about my project. After that service, I had six volunteers who were willing to talk to me after church. At Evermore Church in Riverside, I was not introduced, and instead I had to walk around the church lobby and approach people to talk about my project. People were skeptical of me because they did not know who I was and they did not know about my project. I approached congregants and initiated conversation by letting them know that the pastor of the church gave me her blessing to talk to members, shared about me and my project, and they politely rejected my invitation to participate.

After the second attempt to recruit participants, the pastor's secretary joined me in the lobby and walked me around, introducing me to church members. The introduction by a church gate Keeper made a difference in people's responses. Congregants were much more willing to talk with me and were much more trusting of me and my project. I walked away with three names and phone numbers to follow up with. I learned a valuable lesson about the importance of gatekeepers and their influence on people's trust in outsiders. Interestingly, all three of those contacts failed to follow through with the interviews despite my numerous attempts to set up an interview. Thus, there were no participants in this study from Evermore Church. Six interviews were made possible through direct contact before and after church services. The other four participants were acquired through snowball sampling from recommendations of the initial six participants.

Demographic Survey

The interviews began with a demographic questionnaire that consisted of questions about how they self-identify by race, ethnicity, religion, and political party (Appendix D). Each demographic survey was assigned a number and then placed in a locked file cabinet. That number followed the participant in all recordings, transcriptions, and coding data so that participant's names were never used.

The results of the demographic survey served as a first check on two important markers for eligibility to the study. I first had to ensure that the participants considered themselves or self-identified as a Latino. The demographic survey gave the option to choose between, White, Hispanic, Latino, Black, Native/Indigenous, multiracial, and multiethnic. All participants who were accepted into the study checked either Hispanic or Latino. Once the interview began, I explained that for the purpose of this study, the term Latino would be used to define any pan-

ethnic variation of people whose family of origin is from Latin America and by extension, the Iberian Peninsula. The two people who checked Hispanic agreed to the identification of Latino for the purposes of being included in this sample. The second criterion was that the participants considered themselves to be Evangelical Christians, which I operationalized as any person who is a believer in Jesus Christ for salvation and a Protestant, non-Catholic. If the participants answers ranged from *somewhat agree* to *strongly agree* to any of the four statements of faith, they were considered in the sample and proceeded with the interview.

Semistructured Interviews

The interview consisted of 17 questions with follow-up questions for clarification. The questions were divided into sets that connect with the research question of this study: What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the policy and party preferences of Latino Evangelicals? Because the subcultural identity theory ties the sense of belonging to a group to personal identity, questions about belonging were also asked. The interview questions are attached in Appendix F.

The question sets were divided into four categories. The first set asked a series of questions related to how they identify with their beliefs and how they live out their faith in everyday life. These questions captured how each individual self-identifies as a religious person, how they practice their faith, and how they participate in church as a measure of religiosity. They were also asked whether they felt a sense of belonging in their church and among the broader Evangelical group in the United States. The second set of questions asked whether and how being a Latino forms their personal identity, whether their Latino-ness ever influences the decisions they make in their private or public life, and whether they felt a sense of belonging in the Latino community in the United States. Follow-up questions were asked to capture a sense of

linked fate or identification with the Latino group and the Evangelical group (Dawson, 1994; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Sanchez & Masuoka, 2010; Sanchez & Vargas, 2016). The third set of questions asked participants what political and social issues they care about. The follow-up questions asked whether and when being a Latino influences the policies they care about. Next, they were asked whether and when being an Evangelical influences the polices they care about. That section concluded with a question aimed at capturing any tension experienced between their Latino and Evangelical identities when they decide their position on a policy issue. The fourth set of questions asked participants about their partisanship. The follow-up questions asked whether and when being a Latino influences the political party they align with. Next, they were asked whether and when being an Evangelical influences the political party they align themselves with. That section concluded with a question aimed at capturing any tension experienced between their Latino and Evangelical identities when deciding their partisanship. The interviews progressed like a conversation, and a discussion about representation emerged from the data. The findings are discussed in the analysis chapter of this study.

With the permission of the participants, interviews were recorded using an iPhone and later uploaded to a verbatim transcription website. Some of the interviews were conducted in Spanish, so verbatim translation from Spanish to English was also transcribed. This method was very time consuming but necessary for the preservation and integrity of the narrative data that were collected. Field notes were taken during the interview and immediately after. These notes served as an additional form of data collection that was helpful in providing context for participants' answers and confirming themes expressed through participants' lived experiences (Olsen, 2012). It was important to transcribe interviews as soon as possible so that all information with observations and nuances were captured and recorded (Bauer et al., 2014).

Field notes can be read in Appendix B. The transcriptions were then provided to each interview participant so they could correct, confirm, or clarify anything that was recorded. Member checking with each participant after transcription ensures accuracy in the data (Clandinin, 2014). This form of member checking is practiced in qualitative research to increase the validity and trustworthiness of the data.

Methods of Data Analysis and Synthesis

The process of designing a qualitative study emerges during inquiry, but it generally follows the pattern of scientific research (Creswell & Creswell, 2013). The information gathered through asking open ended questions during live interviews yielded common words, ideas, and experiences. Those shared stories were broken into common words, which became codes, themes, and categories to be analyzed for patterns. Once visible patterns emerged, I achieved saturation, and I began the coding analysis process in MAXQDA. The goal was to communicate each participant's story by deconstructing each participant's transcribed narrative (Bauer et al., 2014). According to Bauer et al. (2014), selective coding should identify core themes from which a foundational theoretical framework will develop. The purpose of this study was to describe and explain the process of Latino Evangelicals' vote and partisan choice.

Transcript Analysis

Written transcripts and audio files were uploaded into the MAXQDA Content Analysis Software for systematic coding. Approximately 18 hours of interview transcripts were combed through to see what common themes and patterns emerged. I combed through the transcripts using a deductive approach to coding that started with highlighting testimony directly related to policy preferences and the process of reaching those preferences. Then, I looked for mention of political parties in their testimony followed by their stated party preference, and finally, I

extracted their stated processes of reaching that party preference. I called out and coded words and phrases that directly connected to the research question and the theoretical framework of group identity and nepantla as coded by tension, conflict of feelings of in-betweenness. Initially, testimony was highlighted when participants answered questions directly related to the major themes in the interview questions. The initial themes that emerged were related to religiosity, belonging, subcultural identity theory, social identity theory (SIT), conflict/tension/nepantla, political party, political policies, representation, and identity. These descriptive codes were generated based on various factors, the conceptual framework, my research questions, and the patterns that emerged from acknowledging saturation. They were identified rather objectively and were self-explanatory in nature; it was an identification of repetitive phrases or sentiments. These preliminary codes allowed for initial organization of the data according to what the testimony was descriptively about.

The next level of coding involved creating more interpretive codes, which involved adding more detail and inferred meaning to the data that were previously coded descriptively. The third phase of coding the data required that I connect the testimony to the analysis of the data's relevance to the research question and the existing literature. Elements of the various themes were linked to other testimonies to show relationship in a more generalizable manner. These pattern codes were considered in relationship to similar respondents with similar characteristics or similar sentiment. Similarly, contradictions between respondents were also tagged to identify any meaningful or illustrative patterns in the data. Under each major theme, several patterns emerged:

- NEPANTLA: Conflict/tension
- Group consciousness

- Policy/social issues
- Latino identity
- Evangelical identity
- Party representation

Saturation

As the list of themes illustrates, the frequency of the words are the subcodes that are attached to parent codes that show the number of instances participants discussed issues related to the themes in the interview questions. The initial intention of the main categories was to ask Latino Evangelicals their policy preferences and their partisanship. These "prefigured" categories were determined from the theoretical framework that informed the interview question (Crabtree & Miller, 1992). From the transcripts, I developed a short list of codes that match text segments of the transcripts. Then, as unexpected themes emerged, I marked and coded those exact words as *in vivo* codes and used the words at the additional code labels. Top among policy concerns important to the Latinos interviewed is *immigration* and *abortion*. What also emerged from the data was an overwhelming sense of linked fate or group consciousness among Latino participants and an admission of conflict/tension when deciding on their policy preferences and partisanship. Saturation was achieved when themes of religious identity, Latino identity, abortion, and immigration began to repeat among the participants. As transcripts were coded and organized, a visualization of patterns emerged throughout the study. More than 600 reoccurring topics were coded in MAXQDA, but only those with the most obvious patterns were analyzed and discussed.

Issues of Trustworthiness

What is known as *validity* in quantitative research is operationalized as *trustworthiness* in qualitative research. Thus, the quality and rigor of the study depends on strategies taken by the researcher (Glesne, 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to the seminal work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), validity criteria associated with empirical research are inappropriate for the interpretive inquiry of qualitative research (Glesne, 2016). They suggested that *trustworthiness* also referred to as (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) as help to assess a study's trustworthiness in qualitative research. These instruments are parallel to ones used in quantitative research (internal validity, external validity, reliability, and generalizability) but employ different strategies because of the nature of qualitative inquiry (Glesne, 2016).

The instrument used in this study was a triangulated combination of a demographic survey, interview questions, field notes, transcription, and member checking with participants. The demographic survey was modeled after the 2016 *Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey* that was cocreated by Barreto et al. (2018). The interview questions were expanded from questions asked by Wong in her (2018a) work *Immigrants, Evangelicals, and Politics in an Era of Demographic Change*. Both instruments have been successfully employed and were found to be reliable in measuring demographic data and capturing data through interviews. I also piloted the interview questions with Latino Evangelicals who were not part of the participant sample. Full pilot interviews were conducted with these persons, and feedback was solicited to determine whether my questions captured the data necessary to answer my research questions.

As a descriptive member of the people group I investigated, it is conceivable that I hold values, assumptions, and biases that could have compromised the objectivity of the data collection process. To account for this, I employed various strategies to establish the

trustworthiness of the study such as *bracketing* and *reflexivity*. Bracketing is one method used by qualitative researchers to a keep their assumptions from shaping the data collection process.

Reflexivity and Bracketing

When critically analyzing the results of Wong, I assumed that participants might express a different opinion to a researcher who is considered an "insider." That was found not to be an accurate assumption. In fact, 60% of the participants insisted that above all else, they believed their Evangelical identity took primacy over their Latino identity. It is important to distinguish however, that it was not an issue of who was asking the question. It was more an issue of how Evangelical identity was perceived as a personal belief in Jesus Christ, not a membership to a church or a group. This discussion is expanded upon in the analysis portion of this study.

The mistaken assumption that an insider or "native" would have a priori information just because he or she was a member of the same community has been disproven by Indigenous American researchers at the NCAI Policy Research Center. The NCAI in conjunction with the Center for Native Health Partnerships (CNHP) published insights from Native American scholars who conduct research with Native communities. They agreed on several common themes in research, among them, never presume that you know what is going on in a tribe because even if you know tribes, you do not know "*this tribe*'" (National Congress of American Indians [NCAI] Policy Research Center and Montana State University [MSU] Center for Native Health Partnership, 2012). This became apparent when my assumptions were unsupported during the interview process. While this research was conducted through interviews for the purpose of listening, I quickly realized that I was not listening carefully. In the NCAI recommendations, they suggested that the researcher must "tread lightly and listen carefully" (NCAI Policy Research Center and MSU Center for Native Health Partnership, 2012, p. 21). This is to say that

the researcher should approach the community with respect and address people as a learner, not as one of them. Admission and reflection of biases contribute to the trustworthiness of the study and were done in part through bracketing. Tufford and Newman (2010), in their work on bracketing, maintained that the process of bracketing requires reflexivity, which is a self-reflective process whereby the researcher recognizes and sets aside (but does not abandon) their a priori knowledge and assumptions with the analytic goal of attending to the participants accounts with an open mind. It is the process in which a researcher suspends her presuppositions, biases, assumptions, theories or previous experiences to see and describe the phenomenon (Tufford & Newman, 2010). What is important to extrapolate from these multiple definitions is that a researcher must be aware of and clearly acknowledge her biases throughout the entire research process. Aware of the social, cultural, and historical forces that shape my interpretation of the participants' words, I took measures to bracket my biases (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Bracketing is implemented by exercising reflexivity, which is the act of turning back on oneself and making the researcher an object of the research (Myerhoff & Ruby, as cited in Ahern, 1999). It is acknowledged here that first-person reference to the researcher is not the normative academic voice in political science and has the potential to diminish the objective voice. Thus, I limited reference to my personal self to dissertation proposal, direct reflections discussing limitations and biases, reflexive journaling for continuous self-evaluation, and while soliciting feedback from research community. The feedback of fellow researchers and dissertation committee was essential to reflexivity in that I could test my interview questions for traces of leading and biased wording.

Ethical Considerations

Asking individuals to share their personal experiences about identities, religious beliefs, and political preferences requires ethical considerations. Common safeguards for participants before engaging in an interview include the use of informed consent forms (see Appendix C), which were provided before the interview. Participants affirmed their voluntary participation in research with a full understanding of the possible risks involved (Babbie, 2016). This research was low risk to the participant; however, the nature of sharing one's life stories and one's personal experiences requires a significant effort on my part to establish trust through assurances of privacy and confidentiality. The informed consent form was reviewed with each participant to confirm their understanding of the risks, the time commitment, their rights to withdraw from the study, and the use of the recording device during interviews.

Each participant was ensured privacy and confidentiality by concealing their identity on the audio recordings and transcripts. The participants' names only appear on the consent form and on the demographic survey. A number was assigned to each participant upon their completing the demographic survey, and from that point forward, they were referenced only by their number. The documents with the identifying information were stored in a locked file cabinet. The transcripts that were uploaded into the content analysis software were assigned a fictitious name to go with the previously assigned number. Assurances were also made that only my committee would review the results of the study and that the data would be used for the purpose of this dissertation and publication in a scholarly journal.

Limitations of the Methodology

One of the limitations of conducting qualitative research through interviews is the influence that the interviewer has on the interviewee and visa-versa. Bias is something

researchers must always consider, but it is especially evident in qualitative studies because of the nature of human interaction between researcher and participant. However, it is not possible for qualitative researchers to be totally objective because total objectivity is not humanly possible. Despite this human limitation, sincere efforts were made to put aside my own biases in order to accurately describe respondents' life experiences. I mitigated biases by practicing forms of reflexivity through field journals and bracketing with feedback from fellow scholars. This practice was documented and can be found in Appendix B.

The most obvious limitation of qualitative research design is the time it requires to conduct interviews and subsequently code and organize the data. In order to conduct a qualitative study with a large sample, research funds are necessary to hire research assistance to conduct the interviews and code data alongside the principle researcher. For this reason, once saturation was identified, I stopped recruiting after 10 participants provided enough data for analysis. While I maintain that valuable information was gathered and it upholds the standard of trustworthiness in qualitative research, the addition of more interviews coupled with quantitative data would make these findings more generalizable.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a rationale for the use of qualitative interviews as the best method to capture the nuance, meaning, and thought process of the research participants. Through qualitative interviews, participants were directly asked questions that would answer the broader research question. This method of inquiry allowed for follow-up conversation that provided for meaning and in-depth explanation of feelings and thought processes in a manner not possible through survey methods. This chapter shows steps that were taken to ensure the trustworthiness

or rigor of sampling strategies, the data collection, efforts made to mitigate bias, and methods of data extraction.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Data

The discussion of the previous chapter included the study's qualitative design and methodology in addition to an explanation of the process of gathering data through interviews. The objective of this study was to better understand the political proclivities of Latino Evangelicals and to find out whether or not their identities have any influence on their political preferences. To this end, this chapter provides a detailed outline of the study's findings and the themes that were discovered during the transcription of interviews. Connections are also made between the research questions, the interview questions, and the themes that emerged.

Discussion of findings begins broadly under the five categories that lead the interview process: Latino identity and policy preference, Evangelical identity and policy preference, Latino identity and party preference, Evangelical identity and party preference, multiple identity, and feelings of tension or in-betweenness (nepantla). A narrower discussion then follows regarding the significant findings that either confirm or counter previous the understanding of Latino Evangelicals. Finally, new insights that emerged from the data are presented as unique contributions of this study and its design.

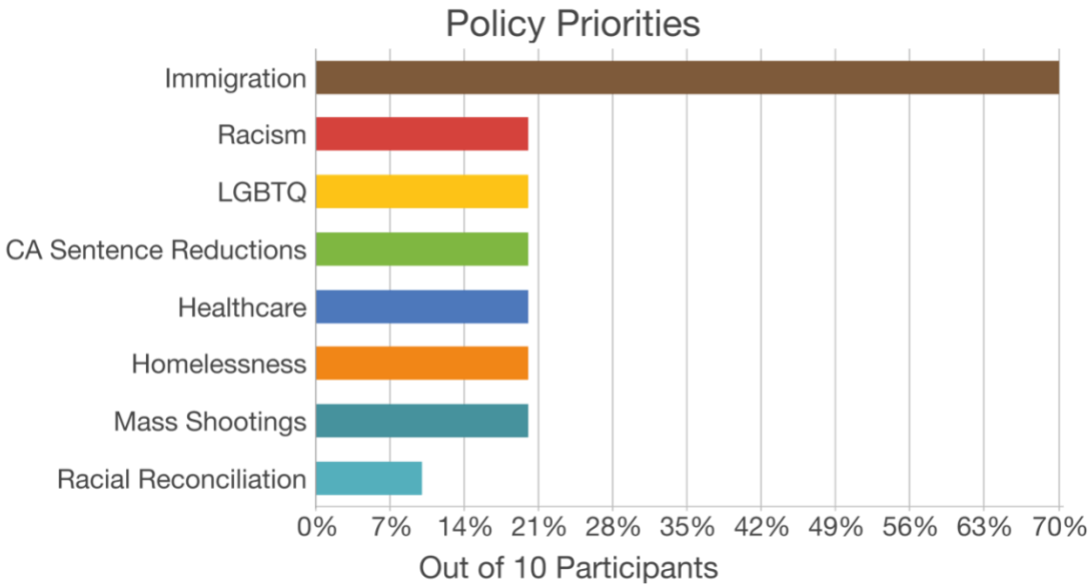
Findings

The purpose of the qualitative inquiry was to ask Latino Evangelicals what their political preferences are—and how they arrive at their political choices. The main questions that guided the semistructured interview questions were: *What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the policy and party preferences of Latino Evangelicals? Do Latino Evangelicals experience tension when making decisions about policy and party preferences*? The interviews yielded information to affirm that both Evangelical identity and Latino identity influence the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals. In most cases, tension or internal

conflict was present when negotiating political preferences. Also significant is the presence of Latino linked fate that is activated as a social identity in response to threats or negative stereotypes of Latinos. The saliency of Latino social identity took primacy among Latinos in two instances: when a coethnic candidate was on the ballot and in response to negative rhetoric by President Donald Trump. The findings are presented and discussed as they emerged from the interview process. The top policy priorities as determined by the frequency of participants' answers are shown in the Figure 1.

Figure 1

Policy Priorities



Finding 1: Latino Identity Influences Policy Priorities

The second segment of the face-to-face interviews asked questions related to Latino identity.[4] How does your Latino identity influence your decisions? The participants were later

[4] See full interview questions script in Appendix F.

asked about the political and social issues that they care about. After they stated their policy priorities, they were asked, "Are there any policies or laws that matter to you because you are Latino?" Nine of the 10 participants maintained that immigration was a top policy priority.

Patterns of policy priorities quickly emerged from the interviews. The top policy priorities that were reportedly linked to the participants' Latino identity were the various consequences of immigration policy, which are shown in Table 2. The majority of the participants stated that immigration was one of their top policy concerns. Nine out of 10 participants stated that immigration is an issue that they pay close attention to because of their Latino identity. Two participants stated that their Latina identity does not influence their policy priorities in any way. Participants were then asked to pinpoint exactly what it is about immigration that they are most concerned about. Seven of those eight participants were concerned with the human aspect of the immigrants themselves: racial discrimination, children in detention centers, the separation of families, the suspension of DACA policies, and the negative stereotypes of Latino immigrants. One of the eight participants, a sponsored immigrant from Mexico, was concerned with the equity between those that "wait for visas" and those that "cut the line." The immigration policy concerns ranged from concern for the human being to ideas of equity.

Two female participants stated that because they are Latino, their biggest concern was for children detained in detention centers without their parents. Their primary concerns were related to the physical and psychological trauma that children in detention centers are enduring. Both participants stated that the inhumane treatment of children is not a partisan issue and are incredulous that the government is unwilling to close child detention centers.

Table 2

Aspects of Immigration Priorities

What aspects of immigration policy concern you most?	Number of transcripts where this word is used	Percentage of times the word is to discuss Immigration
Deportations	7	11.29
Deuteronomy about stranger	7	11.29
Families	9	14.52
Fear/ scary	8	12.90
Talking about it is painful	5	8.06
Undocumented church members	7	11.29
detention centers	5	8.06
least of these	10	16.13
separation	3	4.84
DACA	1	1.61

Two pastors stated that immigration is their top priority because it directly affects the families in their congregation. The two pastors in the sample both said that their churches are safe places for undocumented church goers who are in constant fear of deportation. Their churches also provide English language courses and counseling on how to navigate government institutions. Pastor Ricky said that because he is Latino, he feels an obligation to offer encouragement and advice on how to be a model citizen in the United States. He said,

> Let the fact that you are here illegally be the only illegal thing you ever do in your life. Do everything right, do the best you can to earn your stay in the U.S. Be a model citizen. If we are adopted by this country, and they see that we have done all of the things right and legally, paid our debts, our taxes, contributed to the community, then when the time comes for their papers, they will have earned their right to stay.

Both Pastor Ricky and Pastor Tommy shared a strong conviction to educate and inform their unauthorized-immigrant congregants not only as a way to minimize fear but also as a way to hold them accountable to follow U.S. laws as residents.

Pastor Tommy shared his experiences of ministering to members of his church who live in constant fear of deportation. In his Spanish Ministry (church) there are mixed-status families where in one family unit, some are citizens, and others are legal residents or unauthorized immigrants. Within one family there are varying levels of privileges and immunities based on citizenship status. His opinion against deportation raids comes from his relationship with a deported church member who is a single mother of two. The woman had no family in the country, so the children were going to go into the foster system. To avoid separating the children, Pastor Tommy worked with child protective services to arrange that the foster families come from within the church congregation. The children remained in their same school, in their same community, and among families they knew well. Pastor Tommy remarked during the interview that he realized just how much the church can participate in solving community problems.

Table 3

All Policy Preferences

What policies matter to you because you are Latino?	What policies matter to you because you are an Evangelical?
Children in detention centers	Homelessness
Immigration debate causes racialized attack on Latinos	Christians negatively portrayed in the media
Deportation raids	Abortion (pro-life)
Family separations because of deportations	Family separations because of deportations
Amnesty for undocumented immigrants	Gun control
Protection of DACA students	Welcoming the stranger

Finding 2: Latino Identity Only Somewhat Influences Party Preferences

Participants were asked, "How does being a Latino influence the political party you choose?" Only two of the 10 participants affirmed that that their Latino identity influenced their political party preference. The other eight participants struggled to link their ethnic identity with their political party. Karen, one of the two who did make the link between their Latino identity and political party, stated that descriptive representation is very important to her. She expressed the importance of feeling like she is being represented by a person of color as a factor that supersedes partisan loyalty. She expressed her tendency to vote Democrat because of the Democratic Party's diversity in candidates. She admitted that while she is registered as a Democrat, she is willing to vote for a Republican candidate if she feels that she as a Hispanic or as a female was descriptively represented (Casellas, 2009; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Schildkraut, 2013). This willingness to be a swing voter was a common theme. Five out of the 10 participants expressed a tendency to be a swing voter, especially in local elections where voters get a closer look at candidates.

When Karen was asked whether her Latino identity informs her decision to vote Democrat or Republican, she admitted that she grapples with that decision. According to her, the rhetoric of the current Republican President makes her "feel pushed out by the Republican Party. I do not feel known, seen, cared for, or represented by the Republican Party." She added, "Trump ruins it for the Republican Party." She stated that she is a registered Democrat, so I asked her to tell me why.

> Interviewer: Do you feel that the Democratic Party represents you as a Latina Christian?
>
> Participant: I think I'm grappling in my own. … I don't want to generalize. But the Republican Party feels like a lot of White privilege to me, and at the end of the day I don't feel seen by them, known by them, cared by them, respected by them, and some of that simply is because I don't feel represented by them.

> I don't want to live in cynicism. There's just too much, and it's these moments of all of a sudden, something pops up in my feed regarding something Trump said during the election, or something Trump said even during the … State of the Union. I'm way bombarded with the, I cannot believe you're saying this. Here's the complexity. He's saying it, and I'm not saying every Republican agrees with him, but he's representing [The Republican Party].
>
> They're the ones who voted him in. They're the ones who are represented by him. ... It's heartbreaking. It feels like the Republicans have made it clear, it's us versus them. ... It just makes it hard to feel all beat up. You know what I mean. Like, looked down on.
>
> Interviewer: What I'm hearing you say, it's more of a running away from the Republican Party because of their political posture, I think it's the terms you used are "it's their rhetoric," and "the way they make me feel," and "they don't represent me." Are you choosing the Democratic Party because you feel seen, heard, respected, and understood by the party?
>
> Participant: I think there's a both/and. I think the reality is, and for me personally, the Republican Party made it clear, there was a level being pushed out and looked down on that I thought, ouch that's concerning.
>
> Participant: While I might have found myself somewhere more in the middle at one point, the Republican energy in this current political culture saying, whoa here's what we think. It almost created this stuff that I don't adhere to anymore. The Democrats were just kind of doing the opposite on some level. They were upping their game in representing me.
>
> Interviewer: Would you say the Democratic Party is a little bit more inclusive?
>
> Participant: I feel, in general, there's more room for all the complexities that me or my own wrestle. Again, looking at the Republican Party, I had the rich being richer, all of those things. When the power and the money increases with few, again I don't reject it as whole, all that starts to be deeply concerning. I'm not saying the Democrats do it well, but I feel like Democrats do say, hey there should be more distribution here of all things that are good. Which mirrors what I feel like has been my own theological burnings. Oh, the GOD I believe in, is a GOD of distribution. A GOD of let's share the resources.

Multiple themes emerged from this line of questioning. She expressed feeling of rejection by the Republican Party because she is a Latina. She pointed to the anti-immigrant anti-Latino rhetoric of the President as one that directly offended her. She stated that as a Latina she did not feel represented by the Republican Party. When asked whether she felt represented by the Democratic Party, she did not directly say yes but rather expressed the tension that she

experiences when she considers the two major political parties. At the beginning of our interview, she mentioned that she considered herself a swing voter. And, now she has a difficult time embracing the Republican Party. Ultimately, she did affirm that she felt that the Democratic Party is doing more to be inclusive that she found it to be more in line with her theological perspective on distribution of resources.

In another interview, a Pastor of a Latino Baptist congregation was asked whether being a Latino influenced his party affiliation. He said no. When asked whether he felt represented by his political party, he said emphatically, no.

> Interviewer: How does being Latino influence the political party you choose, if at all?
>
> Participant: No. It doesn't. It doesn't influence. I choose not to identify with a party, I identify more with conservatism because I know that there's conservative Democrats as well as Republicans and vice versa ... you know. I'm more like personal responsibility, contributing, doing your part.
>
> Interviewer: Okay. you've given me a lot of good reasons as to why you've remained in the Republican Party. Is there ever a time where you don't feel represented by your party?
>
> Participant: I never feel represented. At least not by the national politicians. I don't know. Those people live in a bubble. They don't know me. They don't know nothing about me. The supposed local congresspeople, they don't anything about us. They get their mailings every 4 years or every 2 years. I sent him a letter once, never got a response.

One of the driving questions in this study was not just whether ethnic identity influences party preferences but also whether ever their Latino or Evangelical identity take primacy over the other when they make political decisions. Sara, a female therapist in her 50s said that her Latino identity does not influence her party preference. She gave some rich insight into the struggle that emerges when she considers the intersectionality of her race and her gender as they intersect with her Evangelical identity.

> Interviewer: Does being a Latino ever influence the political party you choose?

> Participant: No, being Mexican American is not my primary … I don't really use that as part of a major component of my filter.
>
> Participant: So specifically, Latino no. I don't think that there's anything that has, in recent elections especially … Not because I'm Latino but just simply being a female, just voting in our last election was the primary motivator for me, was when I had to land on so many things … that this administration would be able to set up for a lot of beliefs and policies that I know Christians would really love versus being a woman.
>
> Participant: I really struggled with that to where that made me land a certain way and I chose being a woman was greater. And being a mother of two females was greater for me to make a decision in the last election on who I was going to vote for.

In these statements, Sara was referring to her acknowledgement that voting for Donald Trump, a Republican, would yield some favorable policies for Evangelicals. But she measured that against her female identity and her desire to vote for Hillary Clinton, the female candidate. From her testimony it appears that she chose to give her gender identity primacy over her Evangelical identity.

The common consensus among most of the Latino Evangelicals interviewed in this study is that they do not feel represented (as a Latino) by either party. Consequently, their choices regarding partisanship is more about the candidate and less about party allegiance.
The themes of rejection, lack of representation, anti-Latino rhetoric, and overall tension when choosing between the two major parties are most notable.

An outlier to those themes is the response of Sinai, a first-generation Mexican in her 40s. She immigrated to the United States at 4 years of age and was raised in Southern California. When asked whether her Latino identity has any influence on the political party she aligns herself with, she said that "for now" she is a Republican because the Republican Party is the party that passed an amnesty policy in the 1980s. The interview exchange unfolded as follows:

> Participant: Well, the only party that has ever really given amnesty has been the Republican Party. So that's when I concluded, I have my hopes, and I know God loves the Latino community.

> Interviewer: That is interesting; so, the most recent amnesty was in the 1980s, and we had a Republican president at the time, Ronald Reagan. So that makes you feel good things about the Republican Party?
>
> Sinai: Yeah, it makes me feel hopeful because I do think that at the end of the day, they're not going to be able to kick out millions of Latinos. I mean, they contribute to this country, so they're going to have to come to their senses. They're going to have to realize that they do contribute, and it's going to be better for the economy. So that's why I'm hopeful that they [Republican Party] will eventually pass some type of amnesty.

This participant was referring to the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act.[5] The law granted amnesty to anyone who arrived to the United States prior to 1982 and considered the United States their permanent home. This legislation, allowed for nearly 3,000,000 undocumented immigrants to apply for legal residency. This legislation is fresh in the memory of many adult Latinos whose parents benefited from the opportunity to legalize their families and obtain green cards. This was a major point of political socialization for many Latinos in the 1980s. The act of becoming "legal" through a sweeping move of political amnesty is fresh in the minds of those who were children in 1986. Further discussion about political socialization and memory as it is linked to political party are discussed in Chapter 5.

Bluffing

Both Sinai and Pastor Tommy maintained they were Republicans primarily because they considered themselves to be morally conservative on issues surrounding abortion. They also both expressed a deep moral conviction to help and care for immigrant families. When the interviewer probed further on their rationale for supporting the Republican Party in spite of the party's stance on Latino immigrants as undesirable, their answer was surprising.

> Interviewer: Even though the leader of the party [Candidate Donald Trump] ran on the platform that [he doesn't] want Latinos in this country and that amnesty is a bad idea?
>
> Sinai: But I feel that he can say that stuff, but I don't think that it necessarily, I mean, I don't think, it's like I said, that's why there's Congress … they're not going to allow him

[5] S.1200-Immigration Reform and Control Act 1986. Sponsored by Sen. Alan K. Simpson (R-WY).

> to do everything that he wants. But that's why I kind of had to put everything in a balance. … I believe in all these, all of my moral values in regards to abortion, gender identity. And then immigration, which was a big one for me, I just thought, okay, I based it off of that. I'm so happy that we live in a democracy because even if the president were to do something that's not right, there's always that checks and balances, so it's like they're not going to just allow him to do whatever he wants.

Pastor Tommy made similar statements of his belief that the Republican Party is not going to deport everyone. The interviewer asked the question, "Are there any policies where the Republican Party breaks with you, like their stance on immigration?"

> Well, I guess. I guess that's the sticking point. But see that's where I'm torn because I like what I hear but when it comes in the face my people, then I was like ... Honestly, I don't think any of these guys want to deport anyone. It would be political suicide to deport all these people. So, they're just pandering, they're just grandstanding ... I think they want to try to keep the families together. Everybody benefits something if everybody stays. I guess if that's the party's stance then they got to try to defend it, you know? Politics can be that way. You defend something that you really don't believe in but because that's what the chief's say to defend. I don't know. It is an internal battle only because I've seen the effect on the people, in the grassroots. ... All the people that have been threatened to be [deported], people that I know, have not been [deported]. So, it's just a lot of grandstanding, I guess.

Later Tommy said, he did know families who were deported from his congregation: "The people that I know that were deported, they were productive members of society. They were deported, so who's next? I don't know. I don't know."

The data that emerged from these two conversations are that along with the apathy of government comes a comfort in believing that the government will not "actually do" those things that they disagree with. Participant Sinai put her faith in the government's system of checks and balances as one that will keep President Trump from deporting Latinos. These inconsistencies speak to the internal and moral conflict that is unique to the Latino Evangelical as they grapple with being a conservative Latino whose policy needs are not neatly represented under one party platform.

Finding 3: Evangelical Identity Influences Latino's Views on Immigration and Abortion Policy

Participants were asked to isolate their Evangelical identity and consider whether or not there are any laws or policies that matter to them because they are an Evangelical Christian. The responses varied with the top two issues of concern from a Christian perspective being immigration and abortion. Four of the 10 participants stated immigration as their top policy concern; four of the 10 participants stated abortion as their top policy concern; and two others mentioned homelessness and freedom of Christian expression as their top concern. The researcher inquired as to how those priorities were influenced by their Evangelical beliefs and they pointed to biblical scripture as their rationale.

Immigration

Immigration was the top policy priority admittedly because of their Latino identity but also because they believe that as a Christian, the Bible compels them to care for the plight of the immigrant. The reason why participants care about immigration is because the Bible says to care about the stranger, the marginalized, and to care for "the least of these." Biblical scriptures were often quoted as their rationale for their position on a more compassionate immigration policy, "So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt" (*New American Standard Bible* [NASB], 1963/1995, Deuteronomy 10:19) and "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in" (*New International Version Bible* [NIV], 1978/2011, Matthew 25:37). These Bible scriptures were quoted by those who said they wanted to see more compassionate immigration policies, especially as they relate to the treatment of children in detention centers.

Sofia, a college student in her 20s, pointed to the current asylum-seeking migrants from Central America:

> There's people seeking asylum, we need to have compassion. That's in the Bible … compassion towards those that are in need, Jesus didn't turn away because a person was dirty or filthy or because they're foreigners; he welcomed them; he took them into his arms. Why can't we do the same?

Stella, a high school teacher in her 50s was asked whether there are any policies that she cares about specifically because she is an Evangelical Christian. Her response was emphatic: "Definitely immigration because of what the Bible says about treating people who are foreigners to your land. And, I know that that's Old Testament, but if you're an Evangelical, you accept the whole Bible." Stella was referring to biblical scriptures such as, "The foreigner residing among you, you must treat as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in the Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (*New International Version Bible* [NIV], 1978/2011, Leviticus 19:23). There are several scriptures in the Old Testament where God reminds the Israelites that they too were once foreigners in Egypt and commands them to be generous to the foreigner and the poor among them (NIV, 1978/2011, Leviticus 19:10; Deuteronomy 10:18; Deuteronomy 10:19). This command may seem narrowly directed at Israelites thousands of years ago, but Evangelical Christians believe that commands in the Old Testament that are linked to loving God and loving your neighbor are commands to all Judeo-Christians and for all time.

Pastor Ricky shared that as a Mexican immigrant and a pastor, he feels a strong calling to help and defend the powerless Latinos in his congregation and in his community. He stated, "We are called to care for the 'least of these,' and these days the least of these are Latinos!"

He went a step further and maintained that he cannot separate his policy preferences based on his Latino identity or his Evangelical identity. For him they are morally the same: "I believe that as a minister of God, I have a very specific calling. My calling is to the Latino

church in the U.S. … I am here to advocate on behalf of Latinos." This caring for the Latino population is not his preference based on his Latino identity but rather his calling based on his faith.

Abortion

Abortion was tied with immigration as the top policy priorities of concern for the participants in this study. Four out of the 10 participants stated that abortion is the number one issue that influences how they vote. Candidates who hold an antiabortion or disagree with policies expanding abortion win their vote. While only four participants stated directly that abortion is the most important issue, 10 out of the 10 participants mentioned that they believe abortion is wrong. The participants who did not prioritize abortion policies qualified their responses by stating that they certainly care about the life of the unborn but that there are other policy problems that impact the broader community like immigration, homelessness, and gun violence.

Nevertheless, abortion was found to be a very important factor in how Latino Evangelicals prioritize their politics. Sinai, a 30-something-year-old mother stated that abolishing abortion is a policy priority because to her, abortion is reminiscent of the biblical story in Exodus Chapter 1 when the Pharaoh ordered that all male, Hebrew babies be killed. She also stated that her maternal instincts prompted her to defend the life of unborn babies. Sinai admitted that her multiple identity as an Evangelical and a woman are the reasons she prioritizes abortion policy.

Pastor Tommy showed that as a Latino Evangelical, his pro-life stance is one that includes the whole life spectrum *from the womb to the tomb*. He maintained that the reason immigration and abortion are important to him is that they both defend life:

> As a religious person, as a Christian, I believe firmly that we are to defend what the Bible teaches and that the Bible's clear on life. I believe from the moment of conception, there is life, and immigrants are people. So, those are the two main things that are weighing on my mind.

The pro-life perspective was affirmed throughout the interview responses. Defense of the whole life spectrum was a common theme throughout. Defense of the life of the unborn, helpless children in detention centers, unwanted children in the foster system, homelessness, and even the unjustly imprisoned were important policy problems.

Beyond abortion, participants prioritized social and policy concerns that expanded to the pro-life policy spectrum from the womb to the tomb. Sara, a marriage and family therapist in her 50s, stated abortion is not her number one issue because of the limited impact that it has on others. According to her, abortion affects one family and one child:

> I don't know if deciding to have an abortion affects everyone. My decision to have an abortion doesn't affect everyone. For the person who fights, who's called to fight for that unborn child, which I have ... I'm glad for that. It becomes everybody's problem when somebody goes in and takes an AK into an elementary or a junior high or high school and shoots it up. Into a public place, it becomes everybody's issue. It affects everyone. Homelessness is a concern that is affecting layers of our society from business owners to safety, cleanliness. Where is it this legislation. I think it's very important for them to deal with that.

Stella, a high school teacher in her 50s, stated that she had concerns for policies that affect the whole life of a child not just the unborn.

> I just don't feel like that's the one issue we need to live and die on because if we care for people more, then maybe people wouldn't be making poor decisions, having multiple abortions, yeah. If people are in a better place financially, mentally, they're just making ... if they have hope, if they have faith. So, I think that's what drives ... that's what informs almost everything.

Gun control was also a concern for Stella, and homelessness was a concern for Pastor Tommy. Stella's concern of gun control was not directly tied to her Evangelicalism but influenced by her profession as a teacher. Pastor Tommy' concern about homelessness was directly tied to his

biblical worldview of helping the poor. The shared concern for abortion coupled with homelessness, immigrants, gun safety, and even racism all tie into the idea that the Latino Evangelicals care about policies that uphold the sanctity of the whole life spectrum.

Finding 4: Evangelical Identity Does Influence the Political Party of Latinos

Participants were asked, "In what ways does your Evangelical identity influence your political party affiliation?" Two participants said that their Evangelicalism has no influence and confirmed that they are registered as Democrats. One participant maintained that they are Democrat because the Democratic Party has a more compassionate platform and her compassion is informed by her faith. One participant was not very informed as to either party platform but maintained that she likes the Democratic Party. One participant said that she sees herself ideologically a libertarian but is a registered Republican. Four participants maintained that they are registered Republicans because they agree with the Republican Party's stance on abortion, same-sex marriage, and that the Party tends to be more amenable to the policy priorities of Evangelical Christians. In total, five participants stated they are registered Republicans, four stated they are registered Democrats, and one stated he declined to state and prefers to not have a political party affiliation (see Table 4).

Table 4

Partisanship

Party affiliation	No. of participants
Republican	5
Democrat	4
No party preference	1

Sofia, a 22-year-old college student, said that the 2016 election was the first election that she was eligible to vote. She maintains that her faith compels her to be compassionate. She found the rhetoric of the Donald Trump, the Republican candidate, to lack compassion. So, she registered as a Democrat and voted for Hilary Clinton for president:

> The last presidential campaign is the one that I was actually at age to vote for, and at the time I was really angry with the Republican Party for some certain candidates. I did not like it, I did not like what it represented, I didn't stand for it, I didn't appreciate the things that were being said about the Republican Party, and not only was it the candidate but everyone else that associates with or identifies themselves as Republican for backing it up. I didn't want to be part of that so actually decided to be a Democrat for that reason.

Sofia did not proactively vote for the Democratic candidate. Rather, her rationale in her vote choice was one of rejection of Trump rather than a choice for Clinton. This vote rejection versus vote choice strategy was common practice during the 2016 election. There is a growing literature on rejection strategy in voting since the 2016 election, but it will be discussed as it is only tangentially related to this study[6].

Stella's interview was over 90 minutes long, and the issues that she cared about coupled with her libertarian leaning opinions signaled that she was either a Democrat or a Libertarian. But when I asked her about her party affiliation, she said that she was a Republican because of her Evangelical identity.

> Interviewer: So, does being Evangelical influence the party that you choose?
>
> Participant: Yeah, for sure.
>
> Interviewer: So, would you say that being Evangelical was a reason why you registered as a Republican?
>
> Participant: Oh, yeah. Oh, yes, absolutely.
>
> Interviewer: Is there ever a conflict within you with the party you've chose to align yourself with and you as a Latino or you as an Evangelical?

[6] See (Sokolova and Krishna 2016) for a discussion on 2016 presidential election and rejection strategy.

> Participant: Yes, for sure, which is why am considering being independent. I don't like the idea of having an abortion of 6 months, you know, in gestation. And, at the same time, I don't like the fact that little children are sitting in, basically, a cage somewhere along our border. Or, right now, I just heard there's kids in Murrieta, that there's a center there. That's just down the road from us, here. And so, yeah, my family's accused me of being a democrat, but there are some things in that party I agree with. There are some things I don't. I don't, and I know that ... I don't celebrate abortion. When I see that, that does concern me when I see people celebrating that like that's something to be celebrated.

Stella admits to the internal conflict and the tension between her identities when she explains why she is a Republican. She unequivocally affirms that her Evangelical identity informs her party affiliation to the Republican Party. Then, she immediately processes the conflict within her as she considers the issues that she cares about and compares them to the Republican Party and the Democratic Party platforms (*Democratic Party Platform 2016*, 2016; *Republican Platform 2016*, 2016).

The four other registered Republicans stated that they agree with the Republican Party at varying degrees because of the party's stance on abortion, same-sex marriage, and because the party tends to implement the policy priorities of Evangelical Christians.

Pastor Tommy, a registered Republican, was asked whether he ever feels conflict or tension between his identities and his party affiliation. He affirmed that his Evangelical stance on abortion is the reason he is a Republican.

> Interviewer: Is there ever a conflict between the two parties or even the party that you chose to align yourself with?
>
> Participant: I'm sure there is, yeah. Yeah.
>
> Interviewer: Can you articulate a time or a feeling?
>
> Participant: I'm registered Republican. … But like I said, I'm so sick of them all. I think I'm going to reregister as conservative, but there's no conservative party out here. My main reason for saying I am Republican is because of the abortion platform. … Abortion, I guess if I have to choose one thing, it would be that. The Republican Party platform, at least since the last election, that's it, abortion is a no-no. I've counseled many young

> ladies who've had abortions, and I've never judged them; I've never condemned them because Jesus wouldn't do it either. To see them now have kids, at least there's some kind of redemption.
>
> Participant: That to me is very deep, personal for me. That's the main reason why I am Republican.

While pastor Tommy was very clear on why he is a registered Republican, he did admit that he would vote for a Democrat, "If there's somebody that I can support, that has a message that can build up people, I'll support them."

Sinai was the participant who said that she is a Republican because Reagan was the Republican president who signed the 1986 Amnesty bill. When I asked her why she voted for Trump when he had a clear antiamnesty stance on immigrants, she answered,

> Interviewer: Even though the leader of the party ran an entire platform saying that we don't want Latinos in this country, amnesty is a bad idea?
>
> Participant: Like okay, I believe in all these, all of my moral values in regards to abortion, gender identity. And then immigration, which was a big one for me, I just thought, okay, I based it off of that. I know that the only party was the Republican Party, so eventually, I know it has to happen. I mean, it has to. I mean, [Spanish], it's like it's going to happen. Whether he wants it or not, it's going to happen. She believes that the Republican Party of today will not actually execute the anti-immigrant policies promoted during the 2016 election.

Finding 5: Tension or Nepantla is Present When Making Policy Choices

Themes of tension between policy preferences and Latino identity emerged from the interviews. Evidence of tension between policy preferences and Evangelical identity emerged from the interview data as well. Those feelings of tension were captured through participants' own words as some form of feeling "conflicted" or describing their social location as caught "in-between" two spaces as they navigate being both Latino and Evangelical. Participants were asked to acknowledge which of their identities (Latino or Evangelical) is the primary voice when making decisions on policy or party preferences. Many of the participants admitted feeling

conflicted or caught between two priorities when making political choices. This feeling of in-betweenness is what this study calls nepantla. Findings of nepantla were captured during interviews and discussed in this section. Feelings of tension and feelings of nepantla were expressed by participants when they considered their Latino identity and their position on immigration policy. Feelings of nepantla emerged when participants considered their Evangelical identity and their position on policies surrounding LGBTQ and abortion polices.

Nepantla on Policies

Immigration Policy

Participants expressed feelings of tension when they considered the human aspect of the immigration crisis with the legal realities of immigration policy. They expressed their concern for families being separated; they expressed that their church family and friends live in constant fear of deportation. Two of the participants pastor a congregation of Spanish-speaking Latinos, and they both shared that the most pressing political issue in their congregation is deportation orders. But, that ironically, immigration is not usually discussed at church. Pastor Ricky, who is also a naturalized resident explained,

> I think we don't talk about it because I think we all agree that we wish things were different and that our brothers and sisters were not getting deported. But I think Latinos in my church congregation don't like to talk about immigration because it hits too close to home. It's our families, our friends, and our fellow church members. People that look like us are suffering. So, to talk about it and know that we can't do anything about it, hurts. It hits too close to the heart.

Ricky balanced that statement with, "Look, I hate it that the Latinos are targeted so negatively. But I also understand that there are laws that we have to succumb to." He articulated the tension experienced by Latino immigrants who live in the United States and who came here seeking a better life and have watched the door close behind them.

Tension was also expressed by participants who insisted that as Evangelicals we should look to what the Bible says about welcoming a foreigner but that Evangelicals align themselves with the Republican Party because of the party's stance on abortion. One participant admitted to the tension and the incongruence of being a Latino Republican who desires compassionate immigration policies but also wants strict abortion laws. Stella, the high school teacher, shared her disdain for this administration's disregard for the wellbeing of children in detention centers. She expressed great disappointment in the president's negative rhetoric of Latinos and immigrants but later affirmed that she is a Republican because of the party's stance on abortion. Pastor Tommy also stated that compassionate immigration policies and abortion are his two top policy priorities that are often at odds in a political sense:

> Yeah. It tears me apart, is that the right word? I'm torn. Because I do believe in law. I do believe in order. So, I'm asking myself, "Am I against the law?" Just because you're bringing in the human element? The law doesn't identify genders. It doesn't identify anything. It's black and white. Unfortunately, there's things in-between. Children, sickness, family separation, all that stuff. That's where my only tension is.

The presence of tension, conflict, or in-betweenness (what this study defines as nepantla) is evident in the words and sentiments analyzed in the text. The participants were asked directly whether they experience feelings of tension: "As a Latino and as an Evangelical, do you ever feel tension between your multiple identities and the political/social issues that you care about?" Participants who answered in the affirmative, emphatically said yes but then had difficulty articulating that feeling of tension or in-betweenness. Karen, a Mexican American, started off with acknowledging that her social location as a Mexican American has placed her in an in-between space in society.

> I think I find myself in that middle road where … there are times when it's like, there's this weird part of it being in that middle zone. … I'm not Mexican enough, that sometimes I feel that. On the flip side, the times where I feel like I'm too Mexican.

This the foundational feeling of nepantla, the feeling that you occupy two spaces was mentioned in every interview at varying degrees and regarding identity, policy preferences, and party representation.

Abortion Policy

Three women admitted that while they believe abortion is morally wrong, it is not a policy priority as much as other issues of equity, homelessness, gun control, and systemic poverty. The participants were specifically asked whether they experience tension between their ethnic and religious identity. As they began to parse out the root of the tension that they feel when they consider abortion policy, they admit that on one side is their Evangelical position on abortion. And, on the other side are their ethnicity, gender, and even profession. Sara maintained that her Evangelical identity prioritizes homelessness as a policy concern even over abortion policy. Stella expressed the tension she feels when she admits that gun control policy is more important to her than abortion policy. She agreed that abortion is wrong, but she also believes that morality should not be legislated. Sara said she cares about eradicating abortion but thinks that abortion is a symptom of systemic poverty. She said that abortion will be diminished through education of young girls and accessible health care for poor women. All three participants acknowledged that they feel internal conflict between their position on abortion and their Evangelical identity. They expressed having feelings of tension between their policy priorities and their Evangelical identity. They acknowledged that as Evangelicals they feel a pressure by their religion to give primacy to abortion policies. However, they were willing to live in that tension because they think that there are other issues that are equally important. These participants showed the in-betweenness of nepantla that exists when one considers a person's multiple identities and their political policy preferences.

Karen expressed a feeling of being ashamed that she grapples with the abortion issue. When the interviewer asked whether she feels conflicted about her position on abortion, she stated,

> I'm conflicted that I'm grappling at all. That for me it's not so simple as abortions are bad. It's ... when are they bad, when are they not, when is it permissible? And even if I don't think I wouldn't agree with it, do I really want to take that right away from others? The fact that I even have those kinds of questions, like oh dang people would-judge me. Shame is there, but I think more than shame, I think I would use the word vulnerable, because it's one more way I think I don't belong. It's one more way I don't fit into this clean pretty little box that people of Evangelicals. I'm disappointing on some level.
>
> Interviewer: Can you think of a situation, or a policy, or a political party's stance, where you were like … I'm not falling in line and I need to figure this out?
>
> Participant: The abortion one for sure has been really hard. But again, it's the abortions are bad is kind of the only term we're hearing. People shouldn't have abortions. And what happens when we make abortions illegal? People still get them. They just get them in different ways. It's the matter of abortions that then go wrong, then it escalates. … It's very dynamic.

These three participants were in the minority among the 10 participants interviewed. Out of the 10 participants, eight of them stated that abortion was one of their top three policy priorities. With the exception of Stella who believes we should not be legislating morality, all other participants were glad that Evangelical interest groups prioritize pro-life abortion policies. The top two issues or policy priorities mentioned by participants were abortion and immigration. All 10 participants either mentioned immigration or abortion in their list of top priorities. Many of the participants mentioned both immigration and abortion. Abortion and immigration sit on opposing sides of the ideological spectrum with immigration occupying the liberal side and abortion the conservative side. The fact that these two policy priorities are on opposing sides of the continuum shows that Latino Evangelicals often hold both liberal and conservative policy preferences. The positionality of Latino Evangelicals position is one of political nepantla.

LGBTQ Policies

Participants were broadly asked to tell the interviewer what political or social issues they cared about. They were then asked whether there were any issues that they cared about specifically because they are an Evangelical Christian. Three out of 10 participants admitted to occupying an in-between space regarding same-sex marriage. Three admitted that they feel tension when they consider their personal position on gay marriage in comparison to the Evangelical position on gay marriage. One participant explained that she has gay friends and family members and that her personal position on gay marriage departs from the Evangelical position. The other two participants shared that they have a clear direction on what the Bible says about same-sex marriage but also feel that the church should not exclude gay members.

Participants were asked, are there any policies that you care about because you are an Evangelical Christian? Of the three participants who admitted to holding a position on gay marriage that is in tension with the Evangelical church, Pastor Ricky articulated it as follows:

> The gay identity issue, we discuss a lot among church leadership here. We have gay members of our church. We are held to the word of God. The word of God says that same-sex sexual activity is a sin … but so are so many other things. The Bible also says that the number one commandment is to love God above all else. Then the second command is to love your neighbor as yourself. If a gay person is your neighbor, then we are commanded to love him or her. So, as a church it is our responsibility is to love our gay neighbor and invite him or her to church. Look, church isn't a place for holy people; it is a place for sinners, for all of us. It is in church that we find community.

Sara stated that she is accepting of gay marriage although she knows it is not what the Bible teaches about marriage and family formation. Sinai pointed out that the conversation has moved from gay marriage being acceptable in a political sense and thinks that gender identity and gender fluidity has replaced the disagreements about same-sex attraction. It is important to point out that the three participant's opinion on same-sex marriage emerged from the interviews without prompting or being directly asked what they opined of same-sex marriage. The other

seven participants did not mention same-sex marriage or any policy issues pertaining to LGBTQ communities.

Tension or Nepantla Present When Deciding on Political Party

Five of the 10 participants had a clear reason as to why they choose to be a Republican. All five of them stated that it was because the Republican Party holds an antiabortion position in its platform. However, two of the five Republicans stated that they are Republicans because they are Evangelical but that they feel conflicted when they consider the party's stance on immigration and the president's behavior. The four Democrats stated they are registered Democrats because they believe that the Democratic Party holds a more compassionate position on the poor and powerless. Tension exists among the Democrats when they consider the Democratic Party's position on abortion. Among the Evangelicals interviewed for this study, abortion is still the most salient issue and the one that causes the most internal conflict among Latino Evangelicals. Two female participants (one Democrat and one Republican) admitted to bipartisan voting in both presidential and local elections. One male participant, Pastor Tommy, also mentioned that he is a registered Republican but has voted Democrat in the past.

Lack of Representation of Political Parties

Overall, the one common sentiment is they do not feel substantively or descriptively represented by either political party. The participants interviewed in this study maintained that their needs as Latino Evangelicals are not represented in either party. Pastor Tommy had this to say:

> I never feel represented. At least not by the national politicians. I don't know. But, honestly, I don't ... because they stick to the abortion issue, everything else is secondary. Those people live in a bubble. They don't know me. They don't know nothing about me. The supposed local Congress people, they don't know anything about us. They get their mailings every 4 years or every 2 years. I know who our guy is. ... I sent him a letter once, never got a response.

This study found an overall feeling that there is a lack of representation by the two major political parties. While Pastor Tommy felt some substantive representation on abortion policies from the Republican Party, he expressed a disconnect in other areas of representation.

Karen, a Mexican American in her 30s, stated that she noticed a lack of descriptive representation in the Republican Party, and that is part of the reason she is not a Republican:

> When I watch political things, my brain naturally almost does that. … I watch the speaker, the debates, whatever it is, the stuff in the courthouse, and I quickly notice whether or not there are women of color in there. Regarding the political, who I pick … it's nice to see yourself represented, even though that's not always the determining factor, per se.
> It kills me that Hispanics are such ... Mexican Americans are such a huge part of our population, and they're completely unrepresented in all the top leadership roles. That kills me. That kills me.
>
> Interviewer: So, lack of representation?
>
> Participant: Yeah, lack of representation, lack of voice, exactly.

When asked whether she, as an Evangelical Latina, felt represented by the Democratic Party, she hesitated and admitted that the abortion issue is where the tension lies. In one part of the interview she said,

> So even with the birth control stuff and the abortion stuff, it's the, before we have the conversation, it's hard for me to even want to have the conversation when the decisions are being made by people who aren't the population that this is going to really impact.

These inconsistencies speak to the conflict, the moral conflict that is unique to the Latino Evangelical as they grapple with being a conservative Latino whose policy needs are not neatly represented under a singular party platform.

Other Findings Beyond the Scope of these Research Questions

Finding 6: Religious and Ethnic Identity Is Self-Defined

The first step to collecting data was through the demographic survey (Appendix D) that was given to each participant. In the survey participants were given the opportunity to self-

identify as a Latino or something else. The survey questionnaire also provided an opportunity to self-describe their religious identity. The discussion that follows presents the finding that participants expressed their religious beliefs in relation to how they live their everyday life and downplayed the frequency of church attendance.

This research set out to expand the method of measuring Evangelicalism in political science research beyond religiosity as measured by frequency of church attendance. I propose that allowing a person to self-identify as an Evangelical and articulate their religious devotion tells us more about their belief systems than counting church attendance. For this reason, participants in this study were given two opportunities to self-identity as Evangelical and to explain their religiosity. The first opportunity was during the intake of the interview on the demographic survey and then later during the recorded, face-to-face interview. In the survey, they were asked to state their level of agreement of four basic statements that are foundational to Christian beliefs: (a) The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe; (b) It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their savior; (c). Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin; and (d) Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.[7] These four measurements of Evangelicalism are proposed by the National Evangelical Association and can be generally agreed upon interdenominationally. These criteria serve as a good starting point to measure the level of personal religiosity among participants. The levels of agreement to those four Evangelical faith statements varied slightly. Out of the 10 respondents, eight participants strongly agreed with all four of the above statements while two of respondents agreed to lesser degrees. One of the two participants strongly agreed with all statements and only

[7] The concepts represented in the four questions were constructed by the National Associate of Evangelicals in conjunction with LifeWay Research.

somewhat agreed with Statement 2 about the importance of encouraging others to trust Jesus Christ as their savior. The second participant was *neutral* about Statements 3 and 4 but later affirmed during the interview that she was an Evangelical Christian. The variations were minimal and affirmative enough to proceed with the interviews.

The first interview question asked participants to affirm whether or not they self-identified as an Evangelical Christian.[8] Then, participants were asked to explain what their faith means to their identity and how they practice their faith or religion on a daily basis. They were also asked whether or not they participate in church-related activities beyond Sunday. The measurement of religious behavior is often measured via surveys, where frequency of church attendance is proxy for religious behavior (Barreto et al., 2018; Cox & Jones, 2017; Martini, 2012; Pantoja, 2010; J. B. Taylor et al., 2014; Wong, 2015). For this analysis, participants were given the opportunity to self-articulate their level of religiosity and religious behavior. The data that emerged from this question signaled that church attendance is a marker of what they do, and their faith is a marker of who they are—their identity.

Marcy, a Puerto Rican in her 40s, was asked,

> Interviewer: Can you tell me a little bit about what being an Evangelical Christian means to you, particularly in your everyday life? Like, how does it affect specifically your identity? So, it's a two-part question. One is your identity, how does being an Evangelical Christian part of your identity? And the second part is how do you live it out in your everyday life?

Marcy articulated Evangelical Christianity as follows: "Being a Christian is … my daily hope; it's how I get through my daily life. And then the Evangelical side of that is just wanting everybody to have that hope as well." Marcy articulated a measurement of religiosity that can only be measured through conversation and extracted from the participant's own words. She

[8] See Appendix F For full set of interview questions.

expressed what it means to be an Evangelical Christian to her is to have hope that the spirit of Jesus Christ is with her daily. She defines it as an inward relationship (with Jesus Christ) that is lived outward for the purpose of sharing what she experiences as hope in Jesus Christ.

Pati, a first-generation Mexican immigrant who strongly agreed with the four markers of Evangelicalism in the demographic survey, expressed her religious identity in this manner:[9]

> All I believe in is the Bible. Not religion. There are other religions (like Jehovah Witnesses) that come to the door to try to convince us of their religion. Although there is no reason to argue with them, I am always nice. … This is why it is important to read the Bible. So, you can decide for yourself whether something is good or bad.
>
> Interviewer: Do you participate in church-related activities beyond Sunday services?
>
> Pati: I help out with the children's ministry. I saw how the volunteers were nice to my kids, and I wanted to give back and help out in that way too.

Later in the interview Pati was asked about how she sees herself as a Latina, and her response was to make a connection between being Mexican and being Catholic. I had moved on from the religious identity questions and on to ethnic identity questions, and it was then that she articulated her personal religious identity in comparison to her growing up Catholic.

> Interviewer: How do you identify as a Latina?
>
> Participant: I say that I am Mexican. I was not born here. I've adopted this country, but everything I do is influenced by being Mexican. … I grew up Catholic, but we always read the Bible. There are all of these Catholic traditions in the Mexican culture that influence our lives and our culture. I am the only Christian, non-Catholic in my family of six children. I am the youngest. My family's traditions are very tied to the rules of the Catholic church. Their traditions are very important. When I became a Christian (Evangelical) and when I learned about all of the things that do not please God, I no longer do all of the ritualistic things that my Catholic family does. It's only God. It's only the Bible. I want my brothers to only love Jesus. There is so much idolatry in the Catholic religion and in the traditions of Mexicans.
>
> Interviewer: Is being Mexican synonymous with being Catholic?

[9] This interview was conducted in Spanish between interviewer and participant. The conversation audio was recorded then a transcript was created using a professional translation service.

> Yes, it's the way you live. I grew up believing in the virgin of Guadalupe. My family still does, but I changed.
>
> Interviewer: In what way?
>
> Participant: In no longer believing in the virgin Mary. I now only worship Jesus, God. I do not worship anyone that is not God. I've had to distance myself from my family because we don't do all the things that we use to do when we were Catholic.

Pati described her decision to become an Evangelical Christian as a rejection of her Catholic upbringing. She expresses what is to her the primary difference between her Catholic Christian tradition and her Evangelical Christian identity. To her, it is an active rejection of the custom of praying to saints and the virgin Mary. She shows this by saying things like "I only believe in God," "I only worship Jesus," and "This is why I read the Bible." This intentional conversion to Evangelical Christianity has created a wedge between her and her Catholic family. She spent a good portion of this segment of the interview explaining how she navigates tension at family gatherings that are tied to religious ceremonies in the Catholic church like weddings and funerals. She shows the tension that a Mexican convert experiences when she adopts an Evangelical identity. It creates a schism in the family dynamic. To be an Evangelical Latina is an intentional move away from the traditions that are so intertwined with Mexican identity.

Stella, a fifth-generation, self-identified Chicana in her 50s, described herself as an Evangelical as follows:

> I feel like my job as a Christian is to live out my faith for people more than Bible bashing … so the way that I live out my faith is more important than anything else, and that includes all aspects of my life, so not just being in church but, "How am I giving back to my community? How am I taking care of my family? How am I taking care of my students, my coworkers?" All of it.

Stella's articulation of religiosity is one that is lived out in society not just within church walls. Her Evangelical identity is not marked by frequency of attendance at a church but rather how she

lives out her faith in everyday life. It is her worldview. Pastor Tommy also maintains that his faith is integrated in his worldview and influences his everyday life.

Ricky, a naturalized immigrant from Mexico, described his Evangelical identity as one who loves Jesus Christ and loves his neighbor:

> Someone who is a follower of Christ should love Christ above all and also love his neighbor above all. I have a passion to love others and help the community. ... My identity in Christ is how I live my life and how I love others, not just showing up for church.[10]

What this participant identified is the definition of the Evangelicalism that is outwardly focused on exhibiting his faith through acts of service outside of the church walls. Christian identity here is defined as outward action in relation to people in the community. Nine out of the 10 participants held congruent views of their Evangelical identity as one that is defined personally but lived out publicly in service to others. There is a pattern among these participants of stating that their Evangelical identity is lived out in public service—outside of the church walls.

Tommy, a 50-year-old pastor of a Spanish-language Baptist church with Latino members who are mostly immigrants, spoke at length regarding the role of Christians in society. In summary, he emphasized that Jesus modeled how we are to act in society. He said that the gospel compels Christians to be advocates of the poor and powerless. The interviewer asked Pastor Tommy what skills people acquire at church that are transferable to civic participation. He responded,

> Jesus modeled serving the poor, serving those in need, taking care of the widow, accepting the unaccepted. ... I think most Christians need to equip themselves more, to translate serving Christ in society because ... the first thing people think is religion but also Jesus fed, Jesus took care of those in need. Knowing that society is broken, knowing that there's a need. ... It gives the church an opportunity to serve the world.

[10] This interview was conducted in Spanish between interviewer and participant. The conversation audio was recorded then a transcript was created using a professional translation service.

The themes of service to society are prevalent in the responses of this participant and also articulated in other participants' responses.[11] Evangelical identity is self-identified, personally defined, and lived out in society. Directly asking the participant how their faith interacts with their identity allowed for deeper explanation and further understanding of Latino Evangelicals.

In the demographic survey (Appendix D), participants were given the opportunity to self-identify as a Latino or something else. The survey questionnaire also asked them to identify their family's ancestral Latin American region of origin. In the demographic survey, participants were asked, "How do you self-identify your race/ethnicity?"[12] A follow-up question asked, "To what Latin American country do you trace your ancestry?" The series of interview questions tied to the Latino identity segment asked, "In what ways does being Latino form your identity?" They were also asked, "Do you prefer another term other than Latino?" Then they were asked, "In what ways is being a Latino part of your identity?" These series of questions established that participants self-identified as Latino, Hispanic, Mexican, Chicana, or Puerto Rican. Three participants overlapped Latino with Mexican, Chicana, and Puerto Rican, but the majority (nine) preferred Latino(a).

Finding 7: Latino Evangelicals Hold a Positive Sense of Linked-Fate/Group Identity

As a method of measuring the level of identification with the broader Latino community, questions were asked about the participant's sense of belonging and acceptance. As a method of measuring the level of identification with the broader Evangelical community, questions were asked about their sense of belonging and acceptance. From the data emerged feelings of belonging and connectedness at their local church and very little feelings of representation by the broader U.S. Evangelical church. High feelings of belonging and connectedness to the Latino

[11] Full transcripts of all participants are available upon request.
[12] See demographic survey in Appendix D.

community emerged from the data as well. Positive feelings of pride emerged when considering the contributions of Latinos in the United States. But also, negative stereotypes and threats to other Latinos were a motivating factor to embrace pan-ethnic solidarity.

All 10 participants said they feel like they belong and are accepted in their local church community. All 10 of the participants participated in church-related activities beyond attending Sunday services such as volunteering and facilitating mid-week events. Their personal identity and group identity as an Evangelical were well established. There were mixed reviews when asked whether they felt that the broader Evangelical interest group represents their political interests as a Latino Evangelical. Four participants felt that they were connected to the broader Evangelical movement, and five participants said that they did not feel connected to the broader Evangelical movement.

Participants were asked whether they feel like they are connected to other Latinos in the United States. Nine out of 10 respondents affirmed a strong feeling of connectedness to the Latino community living in the United States because of their Latino identity. One participant, David, a naturalized citizen from Mexico in his 30s, had denied feelings of connection to Latinos here in the United States. However, he did affirm having feelings of pride when he sees other Mexican Americans make notable contributions to society. The follow-up question asked specifically whether they ever had a feeling that the success of other Latinos was a success for them personally and conversely whether the failure of Latinos felt like a personal failure to them. All 10 respondents identified those shared feelings to varying degrees.

The other nine participants held strong feelings of connectedness to other Latinos in the United States, stating that they felt a sense of connection with other Latinos, especially if they spoke Spanish. Sinai, a Mexican naturalized citizen and real estate broker, expressed a high level

of linked fate and pan-ethnicity. When asked in what ways she feels a sense of connection with other Latinos, she said,

> Yes, I do. … I think mainly because of the language, and because we're very similar in culture. So, if I come across a Columbian or a Peruvian, or somebody from Honduras, we start talking in Spanish and there's a lot of similarities in our culture. So, we connect right away.
>
> Interviewer: If one Latina is doing something, and it's great, do you ever feel a sense of pride? Or if Latinas are doing something bad, do you ever feel like ugh, man, they're ruining it for us? Or do you ever feel like, yourself as a Latina, like you strive to be successful because you want others to see that Latinos are successful? Do you have any of those feelings?
>
> Participant: All of them. Yeah, every time, it makes me want to post a #LatinaPower.

Negative Stereotypes and Threats Motivate Feelings of Linked Fate

There were at least three participants who articulated that they felt a need to push back on negative stereotypes of Latinos. Some said those negative stereotypes caused them to want to represent the Latino community in all positive forms. Others like Karen felt the negative rhetoric about Latinos by the president of the United States motivated her to remind people that she was Latina:

> I was watching this whole thing go down with Trump. And [the rise of] the women's movement was happening, and you were just hearing all these comments, these racist comments, become so normalized. There was a level of me that said, the one you fear is ... I am the one you fear. Like, I am the poster child for ... my parents came, and I got a chance. On some level, I want my [Spanish surname] to serve as a bridge—I want to use the way that I've been privileged to normalize what it means to be Mexican American. I wanted my name to declare that when I walk into a space ... I want that. And this was one small way I could do it, per se, and make a statement. We are them, and they are us.

Sofia, a second-generation Mexican American, articulated how negativity and threat aimed at new immigrants activated her politically. Her sense of linked fate and solidarity was activated by the negative political rhetoric of the Trump campaign and later administration's policies. In response to negativity aimed at Latinos in the United States, Sinai said,

> I'm very happy when I see somebody succeed, because I think that sometimes we're portrayed as people that come to, yeah, maybe take advantage of the system … but I just want to say that we're not all here for that reason, that we do want to succeed, that we do want to make a difference, set an example, even for our own generations.

There is an observable theme among Latino participants wanting to set the record straight about Latinos among their sphere of influence.

One notable narrative came from Pastor Ricky, a first-generation Mexican immigrant who was recruited by a megachurch to establish a Spanish ministry within their church network. He affirmed that he feels a sense of connection to other Latinos for two reasons. One, he empathizes with the immigrant experience:

> I feel like I am connected with all the other Latinos that have immigrated to the United States, Yes. We are all the same. Even among other Latinos, Guatemalans, Salvadorians etc. … the Anglo people don't know the difference between us. So, yeah, we are all connected. We are fully aware that we do not belong, even me that came to work for this church, because they hand-picked me because of my expertise, I am constantly reminded that I don't belong.

Two, he feels a responsibility to counter negative assumptions surrounding Latino immigrants. In this instance he makes commentary on the seemingly innocent assumptions that his coworkers have about Latinos.

> You know, there is this ignorant expectation that we like to work harder or that we want to work harder. It's funny, I am a designer and a pastor; I don't know the first thing about fixing stuff. The other day a coworker was telling me that his air conditioning was not working. In a room full of men, he asked me, "Do you know how to fix air conditioners?" Why does he think I would know how to fix it? I felt like it was a racist's assumption. I can go on and on about things like that. The other day one of my coworkers confused Guatemalans for Mexicans and then said, you guys are all the same thing. Then laughed it off. It made me mad and I asked him if he had a brother named John Smith because I assumed that all White people are named John Smith. He said, Oh yeah. And chuckled … I think he got what I was saying. It's hard and its painful to face the reality of how much we are disliked and unappreciated in this country.

The second half of his testimony provides evidence of the complicated relationship Latinos have navigated in the United States based on their pan-ethnic differences and similarities with other

Latinos. In one sense Ricky was stating his solidarity with other non-Mexican Latinos because of their shared racialized immigrant and experiences. At the end of his statement, he was upset that a coworker dismissed his individual identity and said that being a Guatemalan was the same thing as being Mexican.

Other Findings: Presence of Racialized Experiences

Themes of racisms emerged when participants were asked, "What are some of the political and social issues that you care about in the United States?"[13] Participants said that while there is no policy that they could point to, racism is a social issue that they care about because they are Latino. They maintain that the political rhetoric surrounding Central American migrants and Donald Trump's rhetoric about Mexicans sending their undesirables[14] has assigned negative stereotypes on Latinos as outsiders. Pastor Ricky articulated these encounters with coworkers that in his opinion were racist in nature:

> I was recruited to work for a megachurch in Las Vegas. It was there that I experienced racism. Midlevel managers and directors did show us opposition. We experienced rejection and racism, much opposition both verbal and active actions against us. It made me want to leave. I think the rejection and the ignorance I experienced from the White people, in particular. They had a very ignorant idea of who Mexicans are. It was denigrating and ignorant. The Media and the news portrayal of Mexicans did not help. In their minds, Mexico is just some desert with one single cactus and me sitting there drinking Tequila with no shoes on! It was like, stupid. It wasn't everyone, but there were some very racist managers.

Feelings of not belonging based on being Latino was also captured in a question regarding a sense of belonging to the church and to the broader U.S. polity. Those findings are discussed under the theme of belonging.

[13] Question 8 in interview questionnaire.

[14] "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. … They're sending people that have a lot of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." (DelReal, 2015, p. 4).

Summary of Findings

Emergent from all of the questions asked in each 90-minute interview were findings pertaining to a few themes:

- Latino identity influences policy priorities;
- Latino identity only somewhat influences party preference;
- Evangelical identity is the greatest influence on their opinion of immigration policy;
- Evangelical identity also influences Latino Evangelicals' view of abortion policy;
- Evangelical identity does influence Party alignment;
- Tension is present when Latino Evangelicals consider their Latino identity and their Evangelical identity when they make policy choices;
- Participants point to their faith as the reason they care about immigrants but acknowledge that they break with Republican policy platform;
- Latino Evangelicals experience tension when they maintain a pro-life stance but disagree on the salience of anti-abortion policies;
- Lack of feelings of representation from party;
- Latino group identity is strong, especially in pan-ethnic pride and in response to threats to the group;
- Evangelicals prefer to be measured as Evangelical identity by their personal belief rather than their belonging to a church.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Final Discussion

This dissertation study set out to learn how people process their decision-making of political preferences in light of their identity. I also set out to explore the source of the tension that exists when an individual holds conservative values and liberal policy preferences. This chapter includes a summary of the findings of this explanatory study on how Latino Evangelicals make decisions on policy priorities and party preference. The findings that emerged from interviews are discussed in light of the research questions that guided this inquiry. Comparisons to the current literature on the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals and the findings of this study are analyzed with a special emphasis on the findings that depart or expand previous research. I discuss the implications of holding both liberal and conservative attitudes have on expanding the political science literature of the politics of Latino Evangelicals. The participants' words are analyzed in comparison with the literature relied upon for this study. The themes and patterns that emerged, (policy priorities, party representation, and tension between the two) are interpreted and their contribution to the field of political science are discussed.

Summary of the Study

I set out to complete this project because we do not know enough about Latino Evangelicals' political preferences. The political behavior literature that exists is limited, and few have exclusively isolated Latino Evangelicals in their statistical models. The large sample studies rarely survey exclusively Latinos, much less Evangelical Latinos. Instead, they are often examined as a large survey project including Latinos of all faith backgrounds (Alvarez & García Bedolla, 2003; Barreto et al., 2016; Barreto & Manzano, 2019; Ellison et al., 2005). Political surveys have included Latinos as part of a larger sample with other racial and ethnic groups (Barreto et al., 2016; Pew Research Center, 2016; PRRI, 2018). Generalizable data on the role of

religion and race in politics is growing, and one of the indisputable discoveries is that Latinos are heterogeneous in all forms (racially, generationally, religiously, and politically). This suggests that a more qualitative style of research design was necessary in order to focus on the manner in which Latino Evangelicals actually make decisions about policy and how they deal with counterarguments.

This is why this project was a qualitative inquiry that explains how Latino Evangelicals' identity influences their political preferences. What was found is that one identity (Latino or Evangelical) becomes salient over the other when considering policy preferences and party preferences.

Situating the Research Problem

This work is situated in the growing Latino political behavior literature. This work moves beyond the political outcomes of vote choice and party identification. This study explains why Latinos prioritize certain policies and explains why they choose to align themselves with a particular political party. Beyond that explanation, this study examines those political preferences in light of the individual's identity. This study takes from social identity theory (SIT) in the sociology and psychology literature to situate the salience that identity (personally defined and defined within a group) has on the political preferences of Latino Evangelicals. Latino Evangelicals have shown that as a Latino and an Evangelical participant, one identity becomes salient when prioritizing policies and another identity becomes salient when choosing political party. The Latino Evangelicals in this study stated that their Latino identity took primacy when they made decisions about policy preferences. This study is situated in the political behavior literature that acknowledges the influence of one's personal ethnic and religious identity on the political preferences.

Analysis of the Research Questions

The data that emerged from the interviews answer the two main research questions: Are Latino Evangelicals influenced by their Latino identity or their Evangelical identity when they make decisions about their policy or party preferences? Do they ever experience tension between their two identities when making decisions about policy or party preferences? The three overarching questions that guided the interview questions were broken up into six subquestions that guided the questions used during face-to-face interviews.

RQ1: What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the policy preferences of Latino Evangelicals?

RQ2: What influence does multiple identity (Latino and Evangelical) have on the party preferences of Latino Evangelicals?

RQ3: As a Latino Evangelical, do you experience tension when making decisions about policy and party preferences?

Interview questions were drafted to elicit answers to the research questions above. The interview questions are the instrument with which I measured the influence of identity on political decisions. The instrument used in this study was a triangulated combination of a demographic survey, interview questions, field notes, transcription, and member checking with participants. The interview questions were expanded from the 2016 *Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey* that was cocreated by Barreto et al. (2018). The interview questions were expanded from questions asked by Wong in her (2018a) work *Immigrants, Evangelicals, and Politics in an Era of Demographic Change* and are further expanded upon in this study in order to gather a deeper understanding of how Latino Evangelicals make political choices. I also piloted the interview questions with Latino Evangelicals who were not part of the participant

sample. Full pilot interviews were conducted with these persons, and feedback was solicited to determine whether my questions captured the data necessary to answer my research questions. Thus, the interview questions as instrument have been tested for their transferability (credibility, dependability, and confirmability) and their ability to measure the influence of identity on policy preferences. Using previously employed questions and expanding those questions increases the *trustworthiness* of the study. The matrix in Table 5 shows how the interview questions are linked to the research questions of the study.

Analysis of Findings

Identity Salience

One of the reflections of Wong (2018a) in her interviews with Asian and Latino Evangelicals is that not one participant was willing to place their racial ethnic identity in primacy to their Christian identity as a driving factor for political attitudes. When asked about how their identities might intersect in their political decisions, several admitted to there being a tension between the two identities. As a further probe, the research team asked participants whether they ever experience racism because of their immigrant status or background. Many answered in the affirmative. When asked whether they ever had to place their racial identity first when making political decisions, no one answered yes. Participants consistently put their Christian identity in primacy of their racial identity even after having admitted experiencing racism in their lives. In preparation for this dissertation, I interviewed Janelle Wong to discuss her findings of Latino Evangelicals. One of the unsettled questions she still had on her mind was why Latinos (and Asians) in her study would not admit to their ethnic identity taking priority over their Evangelical identity. Wong (personal communication, August 8, 2018) stated, “I just couldn’t get them to explain why their religious identity has primacy over their racial identity. They alluded

Table 5

Research Questions/Interview Questions Matrix

Research question	Expanded interview questions				
Research question 1	Do you consider your Latino identity when making decisions about policy preferences?	Do you consider your Evangelical identity when making decisions about policy preferences?	Are there any policies that matter to you because you are Latino?	Are there any policies that matter to you because you are an Evangelical Christian?	What are some of the political and social issues that you care about in the U.S.?
Research question 2	Does being a Latino influence the political party you choose? If yes, can you tell me how it influences you?	Does being an Evangelical influence the political party you choose? If yes, can you tell me how it influences you?	Do you ever experience tension when making decisions about party preferences?	Do you ever experience tension between your two identities when making decisions about party preference?	
Research question 3	Do you ever experience of tension when making decisions about policy preferences?	As a Latino and an Evangelical, do you ever feel tension or conflict between your multiple identities and the political policies you care about?	As a member of both a racial/ethnic community and a religious community, do you ever feel a tension or conflict between your identities and your political party affiliation?	If yes, to any of these questions; Can you describe when those feelings emerge?	

to feeling tension and conflict but they didn't tell me why". Even when they admitted to experiencing racism, they would not prioritize the saliency of their ethnic identity. This dissertation study picks up from our discussion and asks participants to suspend one identity (either Latino or Evangelical) and then discuss how that identity becomes salient when considering their policy priorities and their party preference.

This study draws on SIT and research from social psychology but is designed to allow for participants to self-identify themselves, in their own words and by their self-categorization as Latino. Five of the 10 participants self-identified themselves as Latino, three as Mexican, one as Hispanic, and one as Chicana. While they had different preferences, they still exhibited a strong sense of group attachment to the Latino community more broadly. This is consistent with Turner's (1985) self-categorization theory, which emphasizes the variation of identities that people can adopt. People adopt any number of identities as their life assumes roles tied to their work, hobbies, family, religion, gender, and various socially constructed factors. The primacy or saliency of one identity moves to the fore depending on the situation. The participants in this study were no different and were mostly able to articulate if and when one of their identities took primacy when making political decisions.

What is evident is that participants elevated one identity over the other when they were asked what issues they found most pressing as a Latino. They pointed to their Latino identity as their reason for prioritizing immigration policy. And, while they did not articulate a group attachment to Evangelicals more broadly, their rationale for registering as a Republican was consistent with group attachment of the Evangelical antiabortion position. This pro-life position was consistent among all 10 participants at varying degrees. All 10 participants stated that abortion was wrong and that abortion ends the life of an unborn child. Seven out of the 10

participants affirmed that abortion policy influences their political behavior. They admitted to choosing a candidate based on his or her stance on abortion. They also stated it is their reason for registering as a Republican. This finding is consistent with the literature that shows the power of abortion policy as a consistent motivator of political behavior (Jelen & Wilcox, 2003). This is also consistent with the literature on self-categorization theory, which emphasizes how easily multiple identities can be isolated and assume primacy over the other to become salient (Transue, 2007; Turner, 1985). In the case of abortion policy, the participant's Evangelical identity was the driving force.

By asking more specific questions about the role that either identity plays in their political preferences, I was able to get participants to acknowledge the primacy of one identity over the other. Asking the interviewee directly to isolate their identity, and then consider how that identity affects their policy and party priorities yielded a more in-depth answer. The information that emerged from the interviews that expands Wong's work and contributes to the understanding of not just how they vote but why they vote the way they do. In their own words, voters in this study explained why they are Republican, Democrat, or unaffiliated. More importantly, they described the process and the tension that they experience when making those decisions.

The words and patterns that emerged from the data were grouped and identified as major themes. The major themes that are analyzed here were constructed by grouping together commonalities in words, feelings, and preferences taken from the interview transcripts. The in vivo words, the feelings of tension, and the political preferences of the participants were extrapolated from the answers given to the interview questions. Thematic analysis provided a

detailed description of the participants' attitudes, and those descriptions became the major themes that are analyzed in this chapter (Lewins & Silver, 2019).

Analytical Category 1: Latino Identity Salient in Immigration Policy

Participants were primed to consider their identity as a Latino living in the United States. They were asked a series of questions to get them to think deeply about their Latino identity. First, they were asked in the demographic survey, "How do you self-identify your race/ethnicity?" (see Appendix D). Then, during the interview, they were asked a series of questions:

> You stated in demographic survey that you self-identify as [preferred term]. In what ways, if at all, does being a Latino form part of your identity?
>
> Can you think of any instances when being a Latino influenced the decisions you made or the options you hold about your public life or your community?
>
> Are there any policies or laws that matter to you because you are a Latino?

I found that Latino identity became salient when they considered preferences on immigration policy. Eight out of the 10 participants stated that the policies surrounding immigrants are important to them because Latinos are uniquely tied to the U.S. immigration discussion. When asked what specifically about immigration policy concerns them, the top concerns were: children in detention centers and deportation leading to family separation, followed by the racialized negative rhetoric about immigrants. Two of the participants are pastors of a Latino church in Southern California, and they shared that there is a deep fear of deportations among their congregants. They are both involved in caring for families who get left without a caretaker as in the instance with pastor Tommy caring for children who were removed from the home of an undocumented congregant. They are also involved in educating and resourcing immigrants in their congregations. Pastor Ricky was asked, "What are the social and

political issues that you care about?" He expressed the visceral feelings among Latino immigrants in his congregation:

> The most pressing and looming issue is immigration. Which ironically, we don't talk a lot about in my congregation. I think we don't talk about it because I think we all agree that we wish things were different and that our brothers and sisters were not getting deported. But I think Latinos in my church congregation don't like to talk about immigration because it hits too close to home. It's our families, our friends and our fellow church members. People that look like us are suffering. So, to talk about it and know that we can't do anything about it, hurts. It hits too close to the heart.

Pastor Ricky articulated Latinos' high level of group consciousness when he said, "our brothers and sisters are getting deported" and "people like us are suffering." These statements imply that he assumes the political identification of his group—his Latino group and his Evangelical group. Even while he himself is not in danger of deportation, he includes himself in the plight of the Latinos in his congregation. This subsumed group identity is a political group consciousness that acknowledges one's group's social standing and the role that each individual plays in improving the group's status (Sanchez & Vargas, 2016). Ricky is articulating the first component of what scholars call the multidimensional definition of group identity: the recognition of the groups' disadvantaged status, identification with that group, and a desire for collective action to overcome their disadvantaged status (Garcia, 2003; Miller et al., 1981; Sanchez & Vargas, 2016).

The participants in this study recognized the immigrant's disadvantaged status, and while they themselves are not in danger of deportation, they identify with and care deeply for separated families. It is both the ethnic connection and the moral obligation of their faith that compels them to prioritize immigration as a top policy problem. Participants in the study were concerned about family separation either via deportation or detainment as the most concerning part of the immigration. Two female participants specified that as a Latina, their biggest concern is the

physical and psychological damage to children detained in detention centers. Both participants insisted that this issue is salient to them because they are Latino but also because they feel morally compelled to empathize with the suffering of children and families.

The immigration policy problem in the United States has elevated the saliency of Latino identity among these participants. The words of this study's transcript support the literature that maintains that immigration resonates at a visceral level with Latino American citizens even though they are not under threat of immigration detention or deportation themselves (Barreto & Manzano, 2019). Group consciousness was prominent among the participants as none of them were in danger of deportation but still felt a need for collective action against current immigration policy. The presence of threat, negative stereotypes, and empathy strengthened group consciousness among the participants.

Analytical Category 2: Latino Identity Only Somewhat Salient in Party Preference

Latino identity was found to be only somewhat salient in deciding on party preference. Participants were asked, "How does being a Latino influence the political party you choose?" Only three of the 10 participants affirmed that that their Latino identity influenced their political party preference. One of the three participants stated that her Latino identity influences her alignment to the Democratic Party because she rejects the Republican Party anti-immigrant rhetoric. The second participant stated that as a Latina, she is a Democrat because the party is a more diverse and inclusive one. The third participant claims that as a Latina, she has positive associations with the Republican Party because Ronald Regan signed the 1986 Amnesty Bill. The other seven participants struggled to link their Latino identity directly to their political party choice. Instead, they cited ideological and policy preferences as their rationale for choosing to be a Republican, Democrat or no party preference.

Sofia, a Mexican American college student who voted for the first time in the 2016 election, was asked whether and how her Latino identity influences the political party she chooses. She admitted that she did not know much about the Democratic Party but that the Republican Party's presidential candidate and his supporters turned her away:

> I was really angry with the Republican Party for some certain candidates. … I didn't appreciate the things that were being said by the Republican Party and not only was it the candidate but everyone else that associates with or identifies themselves as Republican, for backing it up. I didn't want to be part of that so actually decided to be a Democrat, for that reason.

The negative, anti-Latino rhetoric of the Republican candidate and now president had electoral impact on this voter. Her choice was not *for* the Democratic Party but rather *against* the Republican Party. We have seen this response before in California for example. The response to Propositions 187 and 227 (the racialized ballot initiatives targeting Latinos) was to reject the Republican Party for their anti-Latino initiatives. While the propositions were citizen initiatives, the governor at the time, Pete Wilson, was a Republican who vocally supported those initiatives. This association became a major politically socializing event for many Latino voters in California (Bowler et al., 2006; Pantoja & Segura, 2003). The anti-Latino rhetoric of the Republican President will likely have the same effect on young Latino voters such as Sofia in this study.

Karen, a Mexican American in her 30s, stated that representation is very important to her, particularly descriptive representation, which is when the voter shares ascriptive characteristics such as race, ethnicity, or gender with their political representative (Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Pitkin, 1967). This commonality with the elected causes voters to like the representative who will intuitively know the needs of their people group and see after their interests. She affirmed that she feels represented by anyone who is either a female or a person of color. Political

alienation was a strong political motivator for her as evidenced by statements like, “I feel pushed out by the Republican Party. I do not feel known, seen, cared for, or represented by the Republican Party.” She is exhibiting feelings of political alienation based on her social location as a female of color. Karen had made political alienation the strongest factor of why she did not support the Republican Party.

Descriptive representation is the occurrence in which a citizen shares demographic characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, or class with their political representative (Pitkin, 1967). Karen admitted that the mere presence of a coethnic in political office made her feel less excluded and that it motivated her to support the candidate. More important than the political party of a candidate is their demographic profile. She did not limit her feeling of political empowerment to Latinos, however; she also that she would come out to vote for a female or candidate of color based on their characteristics alone: “Barak Obama was a Black man, but as a Latina, I felt like he would care about the things that I care about.” She expressed her tendency to vote Democrat because of the Democratic Party’s diversity in candidates. She admitted that while she is registered as a Democrat, she is willing to vote for a Republican candidate if she felt that she as a Hispanic or as a female was descriptively represented by a person of color because she assumes that person will promote policies that substantively benefit people like her (Casellas, 2009; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Schildkraut, 2013). This assumption was not challenged here as this study set out only to listen and gather information from the participants. However, I could have pressed her on her assumption that President Obama’s immigration policies were good for Latino immigrants. According to data from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, interior removals of unauthorized immigrant residents peaked at 237,941 in 2009 (Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics, 2010). The Obama administration’s

immigration policies inevitably separated families of longtime residents with U.S.-born children. The numbers declined from that point and hovered around 65,000 by 2016 but nevertheless initiated the morally problematic family separation policies that many of the Latinos in this study reject. Be that as it may, Karen still felt represented by having an African American president in the White House. As a minority, she taps into her personal sources to rationalize feelings of either political empowerment or feelings of political alienation through exclusion (Citrin, 1977; Pantoja & Segura, 2003). At the time of this interview, Karla maintained that the Democratic Party puts forth candidates who are more demographically diverse and that is why she votes Democratic. This is true in California's local and state elections but will not be the case in the 2020 presidential election as all of the primary candidates are White.

Sinai, a first-generation Mexican immigrant, was the only participant who made a connection between her Latino identity and her choice to be a Republican. Her testimony is cited in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, so her interview will be paraphrased for a more succinct analysis.[15] Sinai said she is a Republican because it is the only party in her lifetime that has granted amnesty to undocumented immigrant residents. I followed up by saying, "The most recent amnesty was in the 1980s, and we had a Republican president at the time, Ronald Reagan. So that makes you feel good things about the Republican Party?" She explained that having Republicans in political power makes her feel hopeful that some type of amnesty will be offered again. I reminded her that the leader of the Republican Party, the president of the United States, ran an anti-immigrant, anti-Latino campaign with promises of curtailing paths to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Her response to me was that she did not believe that Donald Trump would actually do all of those things he promised to do and that her support for the Republican

[15] Full transcript is available upon request. Transcripts are available only as a digital file because of the size of the document.

party is unaffected by the president's words. On its face it seems counterproductive for a Latina to have both political and moral opinions of how Latinos should be incorporated in the United States and still support the Republican Party.

This exchange illuminates the power that political socialization has on political preferences. It has been shown in other studies of first- and second-generation Latinos that political socialization is directly linked to an explicitly political event such as discriminatory policies. In some cases, threat of anti-Latino policies has mobilized Latinos and prompted party realignment (Alvarez & García Bedolla, 2003; Bowler et al., 2006; Pantoja & Segura, 2003). In this case, the legalization of Sinai's family was the explicitly political event that marked her politics for years to come. The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act is fresh in the memory of many adult Latinos whose parents received amnesty and a path to citizenship through the sweeping legislation. This was a major point of political socialization for many Latinos who were children in the 1980s, and as in Sinai's case, it cemented positive feelings about the Republican Party. It is no surprise that people create a social image and develop an emotional connection to the dominant party in place at time of political socialization (Goren, 2005). At first, I was perplexed at Sinai's dismissal of the president's anti-Latino threats and her ability to convince herself that he would not execute policies against Latino immigrants. But the literature reminded me of the power of partisan attachments. Once an emotional connection is made to one party, citizens then adjust their view to see policies and politicians through their partisan lens. Sinai is example of the power of the long-standing theory that party identification is very stable and that the citizens remain loyal to their political party over time (A. Campbell & University of Michigan, Survey Research Center, 1960; Goren, 2005; D. P. Green et al., 2002). Party identification is again proven to be more stable than even core political values such as equal

opportunity for Latino immigrants. It is important to note, however, that Sinai's party loyalty does not mirror those of Anglo partisans. Rather, it is more consistent with what scholars of Latino politics find in newly naturalized American citizens who enter politics at a point of great personal change such as family amnesty (Alvarez & García Bedolla, 2003).

While the link between Latino identity and party preference was found to be somewhat insignificant, both Sofia and Sinai illuminate the lasting influence that the point of political socialization has on a person's political preference. Sofia was politically socialized during the 2016 election. She was repulsed by the comport of the Republican president and Republican supporters, so she registered as a Democrat. Sinai was socialized as a teenager when the political act of amnesty benefited her family. Sofia, previously politically unengaged, became politically socialized under the cloud of the anti-immigrant 2016 Republican campaign. It would be an interesting project to come back to interview Sofia in 16 years to see whether her party alignment has remained constant much like Sinai's party loyalty.

Analytical Category 3: Evangelical Identity Salient When Prioritizing Immigration and Abortion Policy

Immigration

When I asked participants, "Are there policies or laws that you care about because you are an Evangelical Christian?" Participants went back to what they had said all along, that they care about immigration because the Bible says they should care. The Latinos in this study prioritized Immigration policy admittedly because of their Latino identity but also because they believe that as Christians, the Bible compels them to care for the plight of the stranger, the marginalized, and to care for "the least of these." Biblical scriptures were often quoted as their rationale for their preference for a more compassionate immigration policy: "So show your love

for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt" (NASB, 1963/1995, Deuteronomy 10:18-19); "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (NIV, 1978/2011, Leviticus 19:33-34). There are several scriptures in the Old Testament where God reminds the Israelites that they too were once foreigners in Egypt and commands them to be generous to the foreigner and the poor among them. Evangelical Christians believe that the commands directed at the Israelites in the Old Testament are commands that followers of Jesus Christ should adhere to also. Christians assume the Ten Commandments as the foundation of the Christian doctrine, and so it follows that when the Old Testament scripture commands a believer to do something, it is a directive from God. But Christians make a distinct break from Judaism as it relates to the expansion of the Ten Commandments into various rules of conduct. The rationale for the distinction comes from Jesus, the Rabbi, and his rebuttal to the legal experts of Jerusalem, the Pharisees:

> Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (NIV, 1978/2011, Matthew 22:35; Leviticus 19:18)

I will not go into the theological hermeneutics of this passage as it is beyond the scope of this project. But it is important to the theological underpinnings of the Christians in this study, who prioritize the commands that are directly linked to loving God and loving others. The manner in which they love others is in direct relation to how they show their love for God. The theology of this statement is supported in the gospel of Matthew:

> For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or

> thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (NIV, 1978/2011, Matthew 25:35-40)

Evangelical Christians believe that commands in the Old Testament, coupled with the new commandment of Jesus to love, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you" (NIV, 1978/2011, John 15:12) are commands to all Judeo-Christians and for all time. The tenets of the scriptures in Deuteronomy, Leviticus, John, and Matthew were referenced by the Latinos in this study as the reason for compassionate immigration policy preferences (especially for children).

The Latino Evangelicals in this sample and in other studies look very different than their White, American-born counterparts. This is consistent with Wong (2018a) and the Public Religion Research Institute's (PRRI) conclusion that in comparison to their White, American-born counterparts, non-White Evangelicals are much more progressive on many issues, such as immigration, the environment, and social services. According to PRRI's 2018American Values Atlas, non-White Evangelical are opposed to laws that would prohibit refugees from entering the United States and opposed to the separations of undocumented children from their parents at the border. According to the most recent PRRI report, 93% of Hispanic Protestants have positive views of immigrants, and 47% of respondents oppose restrictive immigration policies. Interestingly, Black Protestants reported an opposition to more restrictive immigration policies at a few percentage points higher (55%; PRRI, 2019).

In an earlier PRRI survey taken in 2016, roughly 49% of White Evangelicals believed that immigrants hurt the economy and agreed to border apprehensions even if they lead to family separations (Cooper et al., 2016). A most recent 2019 American Values Survey found that White Evangelicals are 85% more likely to favor placing restrictions on immigration (PRRI, 2019).

I maintain the reason non-White Evangelicals are more progressive in their politics is because of their social location to the plight of people of color and because they subscribe to the love God and others theology of Jesus Christ. This follows the belief with action theology found in the connection between the Catholic Church and social justice groups like the United Farm Workers. It is the union of applying faith to acts of compassionate justice that defines what some scholars describe as *border theology, borderland theology,* or generally known as *immigration theology* (Burke, 2005; Irazábal & Dyrness, 2010). Border theology or immigration theology embraces the basic principles of social justice in Jesus' example of preferring to side with the oppressed and the marginalized (or least of these) in society. It follows that if Christians take their theological cues from Jesus, then they apply those beliefs in current-day contexts. Immigration theologists oppose the laws that brutalize the lives of immigrants, oppose the militarization of the U.S.–Mexico border, and consider the phenomenon of migration as current theological topic (Burke, 2005; Campese, 2007; Espin, 2000; Irazábal & Dyrness, 2010). As Pastor Ricky stated in his interview for this study, "We are called to serve the least of these, and these days the least-of-these are immigrants." He was providing evidence of his embracing immigration theology—one that is formed by his immigrant-Latino experience in the United States and his Christian faith.

Abortion

In their exhaustive work on abortion attitudes, Jelen and Wilcox (2003) suggested that a more qualitative research design focused on the manner in which ordinary citizens make decisions on the abortion issue and how they deal with counterarguments would be intellectually productive (Jelen & Wilcox, 2003). That is exactly the type of research that was executed here, and findings showed that Latinos are conflicted by those counterarguments. The Latinos in this

study were split on the saliency of abortion policies in their lives, with the majority of them stating that it is not their number one policy issue of concern. The six participants who did not prioritize abortion policies qualified their responses by stating that they do believe abortion is wrong. However, they maintained that they currently care about issues like immigration, homelessness, and gun control because of these problems' impact the broader community. The four participants who did prioritize abortion stated that the issue influences how they vote. Their responses provided evidence that abortion occupies a consistent saliency in the moral and political lives of Latino Evangelicals even when other policy issues become temporarily more salient.

The six Latino Evangelicals who admitted to not prioritizing abortion said they prioritize other issues above the abortion issue. Their responses are consistent with the Pew Research's findings on policy priorities. In a 2018 national Latino survey, Latinos were asked what they thought were the most pressing issues of the day. Abortion was low on the list with only 1% of the almost 1,500 respondents affirming its primacy. Twelve percent of the Latinos in the Pew study prioritized immigration (specifically family separations), followed by 7% prioritizing race relations, and 2% who stated mass shootings as the most pressing issues of the day. Abortion fell behind each one of those issues (Pew Research Center, 2018). The Latinos in this study mirror the Latinos in the 2018 National Latino Survey in that abortion is not the top priority in the minds of Latino voters. This is not to say that the Latinos in this study do not care about abortion because 100% of them said that they opine that abortions are wrong—it is just not a salient issue.

Sara in this study stated that she prioritized other issues that are more impactful to the community as a whole and that while she would not advise her own daughters to have an abortion, she does not feel it was "her fight" to tell other people not to have an abortion. Stella

took the same approach; she said she is against abortions, but she feels that her morality should not be legislated. They mirror what other scholars have shown of citizens who place value on the potential life of the fetus and also value the freedom of a woman to choose for herself (Wilcox & Norrander, 2002). Stella and Sara were joined by Karen, the Latina who said that she knowingly diverges from the public attitude of her Evangelical counterparts as it relates to abortion. The Latinos in this study were consistent with the general Latino population in their attitude about abortion (Pew Research Center, 2018). That that is not say that Latino Evangelicals are ambivalent about abortion policy as some the general American population is said to be (Jelen & Wilcox, 2003). What is found here is that it is complicated; there is evidence of tension when respondents like Karen say, "I am afraid to show my fellow Evangelical colleagues that I opine the way I do." The majority of Latinos in this study hold opinions that are more progressive than their White Evangelical counterparts and even differ from devout Catholics.

The respondents who were in the numerical minority were strong in their conviction against abortion and their religious rationale for their opinion. The response of Marcy, a woman in her 40s, was enlightening as to her thought process. She was the most ardent and vocal opponent of abortion of the sample. She also admitted that her position on abortion is directly linked to how she votes, and she explained her thought process:

> Interviewer: How does a Christian make the decision on who they support politically given all the factors? Party policy, personal behavior, all of those things, how do you land?
>
> Participant: I think for me, I try to look at what the individual stands for in light of the Word of God. What aligns closest to what the Word of God says. So, if it's Republican, what's their stance on abortion?
>
> Interviewer: Are you talking about policies or are you talking about person?

> Participant: Policies. Because I mean, there's no perfect person. So, if I was trying to base how I vote or whatever based on the person, nobody would get my vote. I want their stance to align best with what I believe is scriptural.
>
> Interviewer: So, you look at policies and then you think, okay, what would the Word of God say about this policy? Is that how you do that?
>
> Participant: Yeah.

She provided more insight than the question asked of her. She admitted that the position on abortion of a political candidate or party is what influences her vote. She also mentioned that she assesses people and policies up against what the biblical scriptures say about an issue or a decision. However, she gave the example of how she looks at the Republican Party's candidate and their stance on abortion. A Republican Party candidate will most likely have an antiabortion stance, so it seems that her preference is to vote Republican, by default.

Marcy insisted that she looks to the Bible for guidance on her voting decisions. When I pressed her about the consequences of outlawing abortions and the possibility of that leading to unwanted babies in the foster system, she agreed and informed me that her strong antiabortion stance has led her to foster multiple children over the past 20 years. Marcy is also a frequent church goer who volunteers on the worship team, holds prayer meetings in her home, and volunteers for midweek events. She mirrors the research that consistently shows that frequent church attendance is associated with greater pro-life attitudes (Cook et al., 1992). Protestants attend church more frequently and voluntarily. The suggestion in the scholarship is that frequent church attendance contributes to or is at least a factor in a person's holding an antiabortion position (Bartkowski et al., 2012). Abortion is still a consistently salient issue, even if it is at varying degrees and at varying times. In the case of this participant, abortion influences her vote choice for president, for governor, and even for lower offices (Abramowitz, 1995; Cook et al., 1992; Jelen & Wilcox, 2003).

Somewhat contrary to my assumption that Latino Evangelicals do not prioritize abortion policy, I found that it is important but not always salient. Even Latino Evangelicals who were found to be more liberal were not found to be liberal in their opinion about abortion. Contrary to the literature that concludes that in recent decades Americans are ambivalent about abortion, Latinos in this study are not ambivalent (Cook et al., 1992). They are consistent in their opinion that abortion is wrong but are willing to put it on the back burner if there are other issues that impact the broader community. The life of the unborn, school shootings, deportation raids, and homelessness are political priorities that sit on opposing sides of the liberal-conservative ideological spectrum. The 10 Latino Evangelicals are consistent in their opinion that abortion is morally wrong, but only one Latin(a) holds it as a policy priority. The other nine participants stated that they currently find homelessness, immigration, and school shootings as more salient policy problems.

Marcy exhibits the adoption of the religious schemas of the broader Evangelical subculture that prioritizes abortion policy over all other policy problems (Bartkowski et al., 2012; Sewell, 1992). Religious schemas are cognitive frameworks developed by transposing biblical principles into a group's worldview. These schemas, learned through strong church attachments, make sense of the world they live in and provide recipes for appropriate opinion and behavior (Bartkowski et al., 2012). Religious schemas provide shared understanding of what is held sacred to the group, for example, God's creation, divine law, and God's purpose here on earth. These sacred segments of life inform how religious people make choices to protect the sacred in public life. Religious schemas influence what people find morally unacceptable and ultimately influence their religious and public behavior. Thus, all 10 participants perceive abortion to be wrong because of their belief that God intentionally and "lovingly weaved human

beings in the womb" for a purpose here on earth *New International Version Bible* [NIV], Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:2, 24). However, only one participant held the opinion that it was the role of the government to uphold her moral convictions about abortion. The findings show two things: they affirm the stability of pro-life/antiabortion commitment among Latino Evangelicals, and the findings show that their policy concerns extend beyond abortion into issues that affect the broader Latino community.

Analytical Category 4: Evangelical Identity Salient in Political Party Choice

The Latino Evangelicals in this study were heterogeneous in party preference with half of the respondents as registered Republicans and the other half registered Democrat or no-party-preference. In total, five participants stated they are registered Republicans, four stated they are registered Democrats, and one stated he declined to state and preferred to not have a political party affiliation. In total, half of the respondents stated that their Evangelical identity was in the driver's seat when they made choices about party preference.

Participants were asked, "In what ways does your Evangelical identity influence your political party affiliation?" One participant maintained that she is a Democrat because the Democratic Party has a more compassionate platform and her compassion is informed by her faith. Four participants maintained that they are registered Republicans because they agree with the Republican Party's stance on abortion, same-sex marriage, and that the party stands for issues that align with their moral values. The most mentioned moral value was the issue of abortion. This study reveals how politically oriented religious schemas, such as the sanctity of life (of the unborn), are the most influential factor in Latinos choosing to be Republicans. This is no surprise as the trajectory of the relationship between antiabortion attitudes and party identification to the Republican Party is a consistently positive one, particularly among Mexican Americans (Alvarez

& García Bedolla, 2003; Cook et al., 1992; Jelen & Wilcox, 2003). In the case of these Latino Evangelicals, they seem to receive schemas or cues from both their Evangelical identity and their ethnic identity as both seem to have a similar relationship between abortion attitudes and the Republican Party. Abortion seems to be the one thing that has captured this sample's identification with the Republican Party even when asked about the party's stance on other issues that affect Latinos such as deportations and health care. This sample had demonstrated the power of "issue ownership" in which antiabortion, and by default pro-life, is directly identified with the Republican Party (Petrocik, 1996). This connection justifies in the minds of voters that they are making a moral choice when they support the Republican Party candidate even when that candidate is Donald Trump, a vocal critic of Latino immigrants.

There is a well-documented relationship between antiabortion voters and the Republican Party. But what of those in this sample who maintain that because of their Evangelical faith and moral compass, they vote Democrat or choose to be unaffiliated with a political party? Almost half of this sample point to the Bible and the moral tenants of the Christian faith to love God and love others as the reason they vote Democrat. This finding is also not uncommon as the diversity within the Latino community accounts for a substantial amount of political variation.

The four Democrats and the one no-party-preference quoted scripture and cited compassion as their reason for their party alignment even more than the Republicans in the sample. The respondents mostly evoked biblical themes of compassion and help for the powerless. Especially as it relates to immigration policy, they maintained that the Bible compels them to care for the plight of the immigrant and to care for the poor and the powerless (NIV, 1978/2011, Deuteronomy 10:19; Matthew 25:37; Leviticus 19:10-24; Deuteronomy 10:18-19; Deuteronomy 10:19). These scriptures were either quoted or referenced in the participant's

testimony as to how they decide on which political party to accept or reject. Respondents like Stela had strong convictions about what the Bible tells them to do with the poor and the powerless: “Definitely [I care about] immigration because of what the Bible says about treating people who are foreigners to your land. And, I know that that’s Old Testament, but if you’re an Evangelical, you accept the whole Bible.”

The respondents in this study mirrored the political attitudes of a growing contingency of Evangelicals who hold from the womb to the tomb, pro-life opinions about public life. These Evangelicals believe in the sanctity of all life, throughout the whole life spectrum. The whole life spectrum preference leaves out many Latino Evangelicals who care both for the unborn child, children in detention centers, and even the prisoner sitting on death row. There is a growing group of progressive Latino Evangelicals who have become increasingly more vocal and more politically active over the years. Leaders such as Gabriel Salguero, of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition and Carlos Rodriguez, of the Happy Givers have joined the progressive Evangelicals such as Reverend Jim Wallis of Sojourners in their demand for compassionate policies that are not found in wholesale by any one political party. The Democrats and the no-party-preference respondents in this study join the contemporary Latino Evangelical voices that have called for both a consideration of the plight of the immigrant and call for the acknowledgement of the electoral power of the Latino voter.

Whether respondents voted Republican or Democrat, they all justified their decision by citing moral and biblical reasons for their political choice. The “God Gap” between the Republicans and the Democrats in this sample does not exist (Claassen, 2015; Margolis, 2018). All participants in this study are devout Evangelicals in their orthodoxy, their frequency of attendance, and in their self-identification as Evangelical Christians. Thus, all respondents felt

that God was on their side because they used biblical scripture to support their opinion. Even those opinions that seemed to be on the liberal side of the ideological spectrum were supported with scripture verses about love and compassion, all of which are commands that Jesus gave to his disciples. I suggest that the political environment that the respondent chooses to give saliency to in this case (either abortion or immigration) is shaping their religious language—not the other way around. They are inserting religious language to affirm their political opinion. They all said that their religious identity (via the biblical scriptures) inform their policy choices. Once that is determined, they must decide which of the two major party platforms embrace their view of a political/moral preference. The pro-life Democrats in the sample determined that abortion would not be the deciding policy that determined their political party. Instead, they attached their biblical worldview to what they determined as more salient issues like immigration, inclusivity, and racial equality. These issues are more in line with the Democratic Party platform, and thus respondents said they felt more represented by the Democratic Party. Nine out of the 10 Latinos in this sample vocally asserted that they do not feel 100% represented by either political party. However, as they justified their party preference, they pointed to policy platform and biblical scriptures as their rationale. This rationale is representative of what Claassen (2015) argued: that church attendance and religious devotion supports one's predisposed political inclination. Both groups being equally religious, those who are already liberal learning in their policy preference biblically justify aligning with the Democratic Party. Those that are already conservative leaning in their policy preference biblically justify aligning with the Republican Party (Claassen, 2015). This is evident in the sample here but is not conclusive as the participants asserted that their Latino identity played a significant role in their policy preferences. A larger sample and an

expanded study would help to yield more conclusive data on whether policy or party has the greater influence.

Analytical Category 5: Nepantla (Tension, In-Betweenness) Is Present

Nepantla on Identity

All 10 of the Latinos signaled that they feel "conflicted" or "in-between" their Latino American identities, their policy choices, their political party preferences, and they feel caught in between their denomination and their opinions. The common thread among all of the respondents was that they were in-between, which is why I choose to use the term nepantla to describe a people group who embody multiple (religious, racial, and political) identities.[16] There was presence of tension or conflict among the Latinos in this study starting with the very nature of being both Mexican and Evangelical. Pati, a first-generation Mexican immigrant, acknowledged tension with her family when she left the Catholic Church to become a Protestant. I asked her, "In what ways (if at all) is being a Latino part of your identity?" She proceeded to explain the tension she experiences because she is an Evangelical Mexican:

> Pati: I think that many people think that Mexicans or Latinos are all Catholic. Because so much of the culture is tied to the Catholic church. So, it's almost like the same. To grow up Mexican, you grow up with Catholic traditions. But, if you ask around, there are people who are Evangelical. I became an Evangelical Christian when I got older. I stopped worshiping saints. I only worship God. So, in that way I think I am different than other Latinos. … What is the same is our culture, our food, our family values.
>
> Interviewer: Is being Mexican, synonymous with being Catholic?
>
> Pati: Yes, it's the way you live. I grew up believing in the virgin of Guadalupe. My family still does, but I changed.

16 For other works that have incorporated the term *nepantla* to describe the Latino electorate, see Espinosa, Elizondo, & Miranda's (2003) *Hispanic Churches in American Public Life: Summary of Findings*, interim reports by the University of Notre Dame's Institute for Latino Studies; Michael Jones-Correa's (1998) chapter on "In-between Identities: Race and Ethnicity in the American Context" in *Between Two Nations: The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City* (pp. 109–123), Cornell University Press. For the original use of the term *nepantla*, see Miguel León-Portillo (1992), *Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico,* Beacon Press.

Interviewer: In what way?

> In no longer believing in the virgin Mary. I now only worship Jesus, God. I do not worship anyone that is not God. I've had to distance myself from my family because we don't do all the things that we use to do when we were Catholic.

Through this exchange, Pati showed that her Evangelical identity is in tension with her ethnic identity because of the historical link between Mexico and Catholicism. She also showed the tension it creates in families when a Mexican adopts an Evangelical identity. It appears that conversion to Protestantism is not just a personal/spiritual choice; it has broader implications on a Mexican's identity and on their standing within their family's group. They go from being within the socially acceptable boundaries to becoming an outsider who no longer maintains the family norms.

Karen, U.S. born with strong ties to family in Tijuana, Mexico, voiced a similar feeling of in-betweenness as it relates to being Mexican American. She expressed that growing up she was fully aware that she was seen as an "other" in grade school because her parents spoke Spanish and she was Mexican. But when she went to Tijuana, Mexico on the weekends, kids there would call her *gringa* because she was from *el otro lado*, the other side of the wall. Karen acknowledges that she assumed two cultural identities as a Mexican American and that she considers herself as in between two identity-groups. She also maintains that in her adult life, she finds herself explaining Mexican norms to her Anglo coworkers and Anglo norms to her Mexican coworkers.

Nepantla on Abortion Policy

The Latinos in this sample showed evidence of tension or in-betweenness as it pertains to their position on abortion. This sample was interesting in that they uniformly affirmed their pro-life stance, but only one stated that abortion policy is the most critical issue facing this country. It

is not uncommon for Latinos to be pro-life but not prioritize abortion policy. In the most recent Hispanic Values Survey conducted by the PRRI, abortion policy was ranked eight out of 10 top U.S. policy issues of concern to Hispanics (Jones et al, 2013). The majority (72%) of Latinos in that survey ranked jobs and unemployment as the most critical issue facing the country. That policy priority was followed by health care costs (65%); then the quality of public schools (55%); the federal deficit (54%); the cost of college (53%), and immigration (53%; (Jones et al, 2013).

The Latino Evangelicals in this study similarly prioritized other issues beyond abortion policies. The majority of them stated that because of their religious belief, immigration and the separation of families is a critical issue for them. The eight out of 10 participants who prioritized immigration policy showed great moral conviction and pointed to their Christian worldview as the reason for their position on immigration. This conviction also prompted them to remind me that because they are Christians, they also care about the life of the unborn. When I asked them directly, "Are there any policy priorities that you hold that are at tension with your Evangelical identity?" some stated that the very fact that abortion is not a top policy priority, makes them feel at tension with their church. They feel caught in between their personal convictions regarding for example, family separations and homelessness and their religion's vocal conviction against abortion. The fact that they admitted their departure from their church's norms made them feel conflicted.

I highlight two respondents in this study to show what nepantla on abortion looks like among Latinas in this study. Sara, a leader in an Evangelical church, was asked in what ways her Evangelical identity informs her policy preferences. She started with acknowledging that there is an abortion-related case currently being reviewed by the Supreme Court, signaling that she

connects Evangelical identity with antiabortion policies. She then proceeded to talk about the mental health of young people, school shootings, and homelessness in her community. She prioritizes these issues over abortion because of their broader impact on the community. In her words,

> My decision to have an abortion doesn't affect everyone. … It becomes everybody's problem when somebody goes in and takes an AK into a school or a public place, and shoots it up, it becomes everybody's issue. It affects everyone.

She finished her answer with, "Not that I don't care about unborn children, for the person who's called to fight for that unborn child ... I'm glad for that. It's just not my fight." She was very certain of her position and her rationale of her policy priorities, but it was clear that there was tension between what she believed and the church's priority to eradicate abortions.

The attitude on abortion displayed by some of the Latinos in my study mirror studies that have shown that the internal conflict surrounding abortion policy can occasion what seems like ambivalence toward abortion (Alvarez & Brehm, 1995). The findings of studies on varying abortion attitudes suggest that moderate or situationist attitudes toward abortion are not characteristic of ambivalence but rather a reflection of the conflict between deeply held but incompatible values such as life or choice (Alvarez & Brehm, 1995; Jelen & Wilcox, 2003; Schnell, 1993). That is consistent with what was found in this study. While all of the respondents stated they were pro-life, they understated the saliency of abortion policy in their personal lives. Respondents admitted to being conflicted between competing values of sanctity of life and freedom of choice in a democracy. It is why the majority prioritized other issues like immigration and mass shootings. Wilcox and Norrander (2002) also found that respondents agree that abortion is both a "personal decision" and that "abortion is murder" and conclude that this is why most Americans have adopted a situationist opinion about *when* abortion is wrong

rather than *whether* abortion is wrong (Wilcox & Norrander, 2002). Not unlike the respondents in this study, Americans seek to balance these difficult considerations by deciding not to decide at all. This is an important set of findings as I delve deeper into my theory that occupying an in-between space or nepantla provides language for the internal conflict that the Latino Evangelical experiences when making policy choices.

Karen, a teacher in her church, was very transparent about her feelings of "shame" when she considers how differently she thinks than her Anglo Evangelical counterparts. When I asked her whether she feels conflicted about her position on abortion, she expressed that she agrees that abortions are bad but that she is not settled on what should be legally permissible. She does not fully agree with the Evangelical church's position that abortions are wrong in all circumstances or that it should be legally banned for everyone. She maintained that the tension lies in the fact that

> I'm grappling at all. That for me it's not so simple as abortions are bad ... and even if I don't think I wouldn't agree with it, do I really want to take that right away from others? The fact that I even have those kinds of questions, like oh dang people would-judge me. Shame is there.

She expanded on that feeling of shame and landed on her recognizing that her internal conflict regarding abortion policy is to her "one more way I think I don't belong. It's one more way I don't fit into this clean, pretty little [Evangelical] box. I'm disappointing on some level." Her testimony provides deep insight into just how layered this position of nepantla actually is for a voter who considers their multiple identities. Karen's identity as a woman considered the right of other women to decide for themselves whether or not to have an abortion. Her identity as an Evangelical considers her position in the group that she is most identified with by her peers. Her identity and experiences of not fitting in with her Mexican family or her American neighborhood brings up feelings of rejection and displacement. She connects those feelings to yet another space

in her life where she occupies the space in between two worlds. She occupies a space of nepantla among her religious, ethnic, and political communities, and I maintain that it is because of the intersectionality of her multiple identities.

Nepantla in Representation and Ideology

The interview data showed that the majority of the respondents (eight out of 10) felt like neither political party entirely represented their political interests. Two of the eight respondents who felt unrepresented also felt that the Republican Party does not put forth enough minority candidates. The majority of the Latino Evangelicals in this study do not feel substantively represented or descriptively represented by their political party. This feeling of a lack of representation was made known implicitly by phrases like, "I feel pushed out by the Republican Party. I do not feel known, seen, cared for, or represented by the Republican Party." Karen added, "While I might have found myself somewhere more in the middle at one point, the Republican energy in this current political culture … created this stuff that I don't adhere to anymore." When I asked her whether she felt represented by the Democratic Party, she did not directly say yes; instead, she articulated feelings of tension when she has to choose between candidates. She did eventually admit that she felt that the Democratic Party is doing more to be inclusive and representative of who she is as a Latina.

One respondent, Ricky, feels so unrepresented that he is registered as a no-party-preference and does not participate in the primaries. Another respondent, Tommy, made it very clear that the only reason why he is a Republican is because of his commitment to the pro-life/antiabortion movement. This is also the same respondent who is the pastor of a Latino church where one of his congregants, a single mom, was deported and left behind two little girls. Pastor Tommy and his wife stepped in to care for the children and petitioned for the mom's

return. This is the most obvious example of the nepantla exhibited in the Latino Evangelical community. Tommy is a strong conservative; he said that he describes himself as a conservative rather than a Republican:

> I choose not to identify with a party, more with conservatism because I know that there's conservative Democrats as well as Republicans and vice ... you know ... I'm just turned off by both major parties right now. Period. Very disappointed in all those people.

Tommy is conservative ideologically but lives out his faith in a very liberal leaning manner. Tommy runs a food pantry and grocery distribution ministry in Riverside, California. Some staunch conservatives could even accuse him of providing sanctuary to undocumented immigrants in his congregation. He does so not as an act of liberalism or rebellion but as an act of love—as a Christian. There is no home for an ideologically conservative yet liberal-acting Latino Evangelical. They occupy a space in between two mutually exclusive political party options.

These inconsistencies speak to the conflict, the moral conflict that is unique to the Latino Evangelical as they grapple with being conservative Latinos whose policy needs are not neatly represented under a singular party platform. By most accounts, the Latinos in this sample are conservative on issues of abortion, personal responsibility, and family values. However, because they are Latino and because many of them work with the Latino community in a church setting, they see firsthand the needs of the Latino community. Deportations are a real threat to their congregations, and the clergy in this sample have had to directly deal with the aftermath of families in their congregation being separated from their children. The teachers in this sample also held a more liberal opinion on mental health, homelessness, and gun control, all while holding a more conservative hope for abortion policy. By hope, I mean they signaled a hope for abortion to not be ubiquitous in our society but also maintained that they were not activated

politically to do anything about affecting abortion policy. These ideologies and policy needs may seem schizophrenic, but it only goes to show that Latinos, Evangelical Latinos specifically, occupy an in-between space that is not captured by either political party. Latino Evangelicals hold more progressive attitudes in matters of compassion and public faith. They have said as much that they do not feel represented substantively; and as it pertains to the Republican Party, they do not feel represented descriptively either. Partisanship is yet another segment of the political sphere where Latinos occupy an in-between space.

Summary of Interpretation of Findings

The data that emerged from this explanatory, qualitative inquiry showed that Latino Evangelicals are influenced by their multiple identities. At times of making choices on policy priorities, their Latino identity has a greater influence on their preferences. They tend to hold progressive policy preferences on matters of immigration, homelessness, and gun control. This was found to be in part due to their direct interaction with immigrants in their church communities. Their unique exposure to the effects of family separation through deportations has produced a more compassionate view of the immigration policy problem. Immigration was a huge factor in Latino's policy preferences in this study. When asked to consider the role of their Latino identity on their policy preferences, they affirmed that they care about immigration policy because they are Latino. They also stated that it is because of their biblical worldview to love God and love their neighbor, that they prefer compassionate immigrations policies. What I find here is that compassionate policy, in an ideological sense, is proxy for progressive immigration policy. This signals that Latino Evangelicals hold progressive views on immigration policy, but also on policies pertaining to homelessness, gun control and same-sex marriage. The last three issues were not the most prominent of policy concerns, but they did come up in the interviews as

issues that still matter to this population. In all three cases, their stance was also one of compassion and inclusiveness, signaling a progressive policy preference in all cases. This finding expands and affirms that Evangelicals of color tend to care more about the broader non-Evangelical community beyond their religious boundaries (Wong, 2018a). This is because congregations of color place a theological emphasis on issues of social justice and minority social location (McKenzie & Rouse, 2013). This was found to be true among the participants studied here. My findings confirm McKenzie and Rouse's findings. It is understandable that the theology of people of color extend beyond the spiritual and are tied to meeting the tangible needs of the community. As Pastor Tommy said in his interview, Jesus did not just preach; he also fed the poor.

The Evangelical identity of each participant was strong and influential in all political preferences of this sample. They pointed to their Evangelical identity as the primary source of moral direction in all political choices. Interestingly, they affirmed that their Evangelical identity drives their policy position on immigration and abortion. Conversely, in other studies, the conservative/Evangelical's position is one of antiabortion and pro-restrictive immigration policies. This group of Evangelicals prefers progressive immigration policies and restrictive abortion policies. However, even in their desire to live in a society where abortion does not exist, the majority in this sample did not opine that the government should make abortion illegal.

I also found that Latinos look to their Evangelical identity when they decide political party preferences. The five Republicans in the sample stated unequivocally that they are Republican because they are Evangelical, and as long as the Republican Party is antiabortion, they will align themselves with it. However, the four Democrats also stated that their biblical worldview compels them to embrace the more inclusive and compassionate policy platform of

the Democratic Party. Finally, the no-party preference Latino in the study maintained that he cannot align himself with either party because he has moral disagreements with both major parties. So, what is going on here? Are the Latino Evangelicals in this sample schizophrenic? No, what I see here is that they all believe that they are following what the Bible compels them to follow. They all exhibited a moral conviction surrounding their policy choices and their party choices. They do not think that they are following preset policies that are fed to them by the liberals or the conservatives or even the two major parties. They honestly believe that they are acting morally and that God is on their side. This is akin to what Claassen concluded about individual decision-making as it pertains to parties. People insert their Christian worldview and their moral convictions into their already stable policy preferences. They justify their political preferences with religious undertones and in this case, with biblical scripture to support their policy position. This practice was found in Michelle Margolis's (2018) work in which she argued that politics is influencing the pews, not the other way around. Certainly, the respondents in this study are sincere in their convictions, but I suspect that they too are using their biblical worldview to justify their deeply held policy preferences.

Reexamination of Assumptions

I began this study with few assumptions about what the data would unearth. I suspected that Latino Evangelicals would be conflicted between the priorities of their two social groups (Latinos and Evangelicals). As those two groups often hold conflicting policy preferences and party alignments. That assumption was held up here and the data showed evidence of tension, conflict, and grappling with competing political preferences. The other assumption that I held going into the study was my positionality as a Latina Evangelical researcher. I held an a priori assumption about why I thought Latinos prioritized their Evangelical identity over their ethnic

identity. My initial thought was that Latinos answer in a socially acceptable manner because their interviews were held in a church and by an outside researcher. I assumed that if I established myself as an insider, it would yield "more honest" responses and they would be willing to deemphasize their Evangelical identity. Respondents did feel more comfortable to be self-critical and critical of the Evangelical church writ large. But it did not change their position that their Evangelical identity takes primacy over all other identities when making political decisions. The mistaken assumption that an insider or "native" would have a priori information just because he or she is a member of the same community has been disproven by Indigenous American researchers at the National Congress of American Indian Policy Research Center (NCAI). The NCAI in conjunction with the Center for Native Health Partnerships (CNHP) asserted that one should never presume that one knows what is going on in a tribe because even if one knows tribes, one does not know "this tribe" (National Congress of American Indians [NCIA] Policy Research Center and Montana State University [MSU] Center for Native Health Partnership, 2012). This is a lesson that I gained from this research experience, and it will enhance the quality of inquiry in a further study.

Discussion and Conclusion

This dissertation started by revisiting several longstanding studies that examined the role that religious affiliation and frequency of church attendance has on political attitudes among Latinos. It was established through the literature that religion, particularly protestant religion, has a positive effect on nonelectoral political participation (Djupe & Neiheisel, 2012) and electoral participation (Calhoun-Brown, 1996; Jones-Correa & Leal, 2001; McKenzie & Rouse, 2013). Church membership also showed to have a significant effect on a person's sense of belonging and group identity (Bean, 2014; Sanchez & Vargas, 2016), which is a motivating factor to

engage politically on behalf of the group (McClerking & McDaniel, 2005; Pantoja & Segura, 2003). Moreover, because belonging represents personal attachments to a valued community that shares common beliefs and commitments, those beliefs can create the religious foundations of political attitudes. Those religiously motivated political attitudes were found in this study and supported in other works (McKenzie & Rouse, 2013; Roof & McKinney, 1987). Biblical world-view is found to inform church-going voter's policy preferences and the church goer, is Latino. Thus, it is of great importance to political science discipline and to the political party leadership to understand the Latino Evangelical voter. This dissertation's findings move us incrementally closer to that understanding.

Significance

The importance of understanding the Latino Evangelical voter cannot be overstated. The Latino is the fastest growing demographic in the United States, and the Latino Evangelical is the largest demographic fueling the growth of the Evangelical church today. They point to their biblical worldview to justify their liberal policy preferences as ones of compassion. They also maintain a moral view against abortion but do not consider abortion a salient policy problem. They hold a more holistic view of the pro-life ideology that starts at the womb and ends at the tomb. The Latino Evangelical cannot be counted on to vote with the larger Evangelical voting bloc. They are more similar to their Catholic coethnics although they maintain that they are different. Evangelical Latinos, like Catholic Latinos, consider the policy implications to broader community when they make policy choices. They consider the policy consequences on their students, their congregants, and neighbors—not just their personal interests. They vote their conscience and are admittedly swing voters. They are *nepantla*; they occupy an in-between space that can be captured by either party—if the party has found a more moderate position on

immigration, deportations, and abortion. The significance of these findings is yet another call for more moderate policies, less polarization, and more representation from party leaders.

Contributions to the Discipline

One of the contributions of this study is that it takes a deeper, qualitative approach to asking to what extent and under what circumstances ethnicity and religion influence political preferences. This question is not a new question and has been asked before, but the fact that a Jelen and Wilcox article in 2003 makes a prediction on the role of race and religion based on only an African American sample shows that the empirical research has ignored a growing segment of the Protestant church and the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population: Latinos.

The foremost contribution to American politics is the inclusion of Latino Evangelicals in political attitude research. The research on the political preferences of Evangelicals in the United States is vast. The research on the political preferences of Latinos in the United States is growing. Limited are the data on Latino Evangelicals as a stand-alone social group. This is because most survey inquiries target either Evangelicals whose sample may include Latinos, or they target Latinos with some Evangelicals in the sample. This research project contributes to the literature of Wong who is currently giving voice to Asian and Latino Evangelicals in the United States.

The qualitative research design through interview and conversation is another contribution to the heavily quantitative political science research. The research question and the subsequent interview questions were uniquely created for direct inquiry of Latino Evangelicals. Interview inquiry was appropriate for this study because it allowed for explanation that provided context and meaning that helped explain phenomena unique to Latino Evangelicals. This allowed

me to give language to the political decision-making process of these Latino voters. The data put forth in this research comes from the participant's own words and explanation of their political attitudes.

Understanding Aspects of Immigration Policy

It is no surprise that Latinos care about U.S. immigration policy. There have been multiple surveys and polls that show that immigration is a salient issue in politics. What is missing is an understanding of exactly what aspect of immigration policy Latinos care about the most. Also missing is an understanding of why a Latino who is not in danger of deportation would care about immigration policies. This research goes beyond the finding that immigration is a salient issue and provides an understanding of *why* it is important to them. More specifically, the data here tell *what* aspect of immigration policy Latino Evangelicals prioritize and *how* their unique identity informs their attitude about immigration policy. The Latinos in this study maintain that they are highly concerned with the family separation aspect of immigration policy as a result of deportations and child separations at the border. Latino identity was expectedly found to explain why they care about immigration policy. Less obvious was the finding that they pointed to their Evangelical identity as the reason for holding compassionate attitudes about immigration policy.

The findings in this study counter the Evangelical-conservative talking points that have captured the Republican party. The Latinos in this study are conservative by their own description and are not lock and step with the conservative party platform. Even the strong Republicans in this study admitted to holding attitudes about immigration that are contrary to the party platform. Additionally, Republicans in this study also admitted to holding opposing

attitudes on gun control and legislating morality. This is a call to both parties to consider the Latino Evangelicals' nuanced political attitudes and find a way to incorporate their policy needs.

Abortion is Constant in Party Preference but There Is Room for Democrats

Contrary to my assumption that abortion is no longer a salient issue, the data show that abortion is a constant factor in party choice, particularly among Republicans. That is not new information; however, what is new is the Republicans' willingness to leave the party if it were not for their stance on abortion. The Latinos in this study provided hours of testimony signaling that they held liberal views on immigration, education, homelessness, gun control, and health care. Then, five out of nine partisans in the sample said that they are Republican only because the party is the pro-life party. Upon being pressed further, those Republicans admitted to being swing voters and affirmed that their loyalty is only to the abortion issue. So, while abortion is not a number-one salient issue, it is constant and influences the decision-making of the Latino voter. If the Democratic party were to assume more restrictive abortion policies, they would easily win over a faction of the Latino Evangelical voter.

Overall, the major takeaways are that Latino identity influences policy priorities and Evangelical identity is more influential in Republican Party loyalty (because of abortion). There is overlap in policy preferences and in party preferences. That overlap often causes tension, and that tension is caused by other influential factors such as profession, gender, or time of political socialization

Party Identification and Latino Political Socialization

This study contributes to the political science literature on generational and socialization factors of voters. The first- and second-generation Latinos are not politically socialized by their families but rather by political events that impact them directly at the time they enter politics.

Two trends hold broader implications as they relate to political socialization. One is that Latino Evangelicals are receiving negative cues from party leaders and party candidates which are causing Latino voters to distance themselves from politics. Most of the registered Democrats in this study maintained that they voted Democrat in the 2016 elections because they were repulsed by the rhetoric of the Republican party. These voters essentially hold "negative partisanship" attitudes that are motivated by a desire to defeat Trump rather than a vote in favor of Democratic policies (Abramowitz, 2018). The young Democrats in this sample voted for the first time in the 2016 Presidential election and were socialized not for the Democratic party but against the Republican party. Their partisanship was not formed by the policies of the party or the party platform. Instead, they chose a party as an act of revolt against the Republican party candidate. This shows that Latino Evangelicals do not follow the party socialization patterns of the broader political science literature.

Limitations of the Study

I believe the information gathered through interviews is deep with meaning and insight into not just how Latinos opine but how they come to their political conclusions. Nevertheless, qualitative research design holds some inherent limitations. First, the sample size of 10 participants is low, certainly if we are comparing it to quantitative designs where the *N* is often in the thousands. The data gathered from such a low sample, while rich in information, are not generalizable on their own. The information here needs to be either undergirded by quantitative analysis or a much larger qualitative sample. In order to do so, much more time is needed to recruit participants, set up interviews, hold interviews, and transcribe and input the data into a content analysis software. Missing in this project were time and financial resources. In order to cut time, I limited my Spanish language interviews to only two because it took more money and

time to translate the interviews from Spanish to English, then transcribe them into a format compatible with MAXQDA. The software required to transcribe each interview was costly, and that contributed to the need to limit the number of participants. I still maintain that while there is no generalizability, there is transferability of the findings. This became apparent when I looked for literature related to the themes that emerged from the interviews. There is indeed other qualitative and quantitative research that yielded themes and patterns for further inquiry. Those studies have been cited, where applicable, all throughout this study.

Another limitation of conducting qualitative research through semi-open-ended interviews is the influence that the interviewer has on the interviewee and vice versa. It is also part of what provides the richness in data, but it requires great discipline on the part of the researcher to steer the conversation toward relevant conversation. Part of the assumption going into this research was that my positionality as an Evangelical Latina would serve as an instrument to establish trust. I attended Sunday services and worshiped with the congregation in English and Spanish language services. I believe this did put some participants at ease, but it also created a potential for bias in their view of me and I of them. Bias is difficult to mitigate, especially in qualitative studies that lean upon inference of words and body language. Despite this human limitation, efforts were made to mitigate biases by practicing forms of reflexivity through field journals and bracketing with feedback from fellow scholars.

Recommendations for Further Study

The research questions that guided this study are still worth further investigation. The policy and party preferences of an electorate with multiple identities are still unfamiliar to the broader political science discipline. Established is the link between identity, attachment to an identity, and political outcomes. Missing from the field is an understanding of how people with

multiple identities and possible multiple loyalties make political decisions between two mutually exclusive party choices. Additionally, where do people with multiple identities fall within the liberal-conservative spectrum of policy needs. To answer those questions, political scientists need to consider the thought processes and world view of these voters. What I found here is that it is complicated and that the Latino voter is further pressed in between two worlds if they are a Latino Evangelical voter. There is no doubt that multiple identities will continue to be a factor in political outcomes as people are increasingly multiracial, transnational, and religiously diverse. For future study, I would like to expand upon the group identity theories to further the discussion on the power of group attachments when one voter belongs to more than one group.

This conceptualization of identity is becoming more normalized in recent years. To scratch the surface on these questions, a further study with a larger sample and a quantitative analysis is necessary. Future work in the politics of persons with multiple identities should consider an essential take away from this work and other related work. Social and religious identities are important in understanding political preferences. But, too often our understanding of social attachments comes from homogenous samples where conclusions and oversimplified links between identity and politics are made.

Another interesting study would be to commit a deeper look into the swing-voter thesis, as many Latinos in this study maintained that they are swing voters. However, it is possible that they are actually closet partisans who regularly vote with one party. They could be partisans who do not feel represented but always vote for one party, or they could be the type of voter who votes for a third-party candidate because they are disillusioned by both major parties. To get to a better idea, a quantitative analysis of voting patterns is necessary. The findings of this could make a good case for more viable third-party options. It might also serve as an admonishment to

the Republican and Democratic parties that it is time to find a way to reach out to the moderate voter.

Recommendations for Action

The findings in this study hold some implications for policy makers and political parties if they want to capture the Latino Evangelical voter. This voter is morally motivated by the needs of the Latino and minority communities collectively. They prefer policies that seem compassionate and promote the life and well-being of the unborn, the child, the adult, and the aging. They have made it abundantly clear that they believe no one party assumes such policies. Because of their whole-life/pro-life position, abortion policy is a constant policy issue in the back of Latino Evangelicals' minds. This issue can take a back seat to other issues, but policy makers must appeal to other aspects of their pro-life perspective. Policy makers need to pay close attention to the policy preferences of this growing demographic if they want to activate them politically.

Latino Evangelicals are not strong partisans because they do not feel like one party holds all of their policy priorities in one platform. The Republican party and the Democratic party have an opportunity to capture this in-between *nepantla* voter. If either the Democratic party or the Republican party wants to capture the Latino-Evangelical vote, they both must be willing to enter the in-between space where Latino Evangelicals reside. I understand asking parties to come to the middle is a request to reject the very definition of parties and their role in assuming opposing party platforms. However, this sample showed party polarization fatigue that if not addressed can lead to political apathy among a growing demographic, and that would have negative affect on our participative democracy.

Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Email

Hello, my name is Noemi Hernandez Alexander and I am a graduate student from the department of Politics and Government at Claremont Graduate University. I am working on a dissertation research project on Latino-Evangelicals. I have selected your church because your church holds services in Spanish and has a significant Latino population. I am calling to ask you for permission to approach your congregants to ask them if they'd like to be interviewed for this study.

The risks that participants run by taking part in this study are minimal. The risks include possible inconvenience of time and travel to and from agreed upon meeting place. If you allow me to recruit participants before and after services, I assure you I will be considerate of the services times and will not discuss my project during worship services. I can give you a copy of the questions I intend to ask during interviews. Congregant's answers to those questions are completely confidential and will not be shared with anyone. Additionally, any answers of participants give will not be linked to your church by name during the analysis.

Please email or contact me at xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx and (xxx) xxx-xxxx if I can answer any further questions.

Best,
Noemi H. Alexander

Appendix B: Field Note Journal

Post Interview Field Notes:

Post Interview Field Notes					
Participant #	**A-ha or Insight**	**Reflective Thinking Does it fit in my work?**	**Further Investigation or Action & Results**	**Patterns & Themes**	**Reflexivity & Bracketing**
1 MH F 50s 4th gen Sara	A). Issue that participant cared about was homelessness. This issue is different than the white evangelical policy priority of abortion. B). Participant is a leader in an evangelical church is a Democrat	A). It fits the assumption that I am working under, that Latinos are heterogeneous in policy preferences. B). Further shows that Latino-Evangelicals are heterogeneous	A). none at this time B). none at this time C). Participant was sent a copy of the transcript for member checking.	A). Homelessness as important policy issue B). L-E, church leader is Democrat	B). I am assuming most evangelicals are Republican.
2 EF M 30s 1st gen David	A). Seemed to regurgitate talking points of conservative agenda. Did not seem to have a personal conviction as to his position, rather, he seemed detached with what he was saying. Still, he was consistent on his conservative position on all points and is a Republican. B). Demographic: immigrant, foreign	A). In this instance, he is similar to white evangelical in positionally and policy preference. As well as Party preference. B). When I asked him about what the right way is and if his family immigrated that way… he responded with what the process is legally. He was detached from his own story and seemed to fit his family immigration experience	A). He will be considered most like W-E in comparison to policy preferences and party. B). POSSIBLY will need to write about what the immigration process was in the 1980s compared to 2000. IF enough participants talk about this process. C). Participant was sent a copy of the transcript for member checking.	A). Consistent with Wong and W-E literature B). Immigration is an important policy issue. Exclusive immigration not inclusive immigration	I was surprised to see that an immigrant, Latinos first generation… would hold such conservative ideas. It was an assumption on my part.

	born from Mexico. Stated immigration was most important policy issue.- The process of immigrating "the right way" was used often.	to the 'textbook' method of immigration. Did not state whether his family waited in Mexico or if someone came here undocumented first.			
Evermore visit	A). Embedded-ness in participatory research creates credibility and trust. Worship with and like the congregation, share communion with one another, pray with each other. B). Create a relationship with the **gate-keeper**. I tried approaching people without one. Received hesitation and rejection. Once gate-keeper introduced me, people were more receptive.	A). I participated in the worship service, broke bread, and had communion with the church. My talking to people and participating, lifting hands and worshiping as they worship, (I think) showed participants and possible participants that I am one of them. I will reiterate that when I sit down with them. It fits my work because I am insisting that My perspective, as an insider will be different than that of Janelle Wong and it will hopefully pull out more information beyond. B.)In sampling methodology, I learned that it is difficult to get people to want to talk to you if they do not know who you are. I approached people and they did not want to talk to me. Once I was introduced by the gate	A). I must connect this with researcher as participant methodology. B). Make and write connections found in the Native American Literature in TNDY 400. Just like the native Americans, Latinos-Evangelicals do not trust others easily.		

		keeper, people immediately changed their perspective toward me.			
3 KR F 30s 2nd gen Myra	A). Participant is very aware of her positionally with her co-workers B). Views considered to be on the Liberal spectrum even though in leadership at an evan- church. C). Linked Fate very strong- "I am the one you fear." D). Nepantla - very strong. Did not feel like she belongs in U.S. Does not feel like she belongs in Mexico. At work, finds herself explaining and mediating Latino culture and white culture among evangelicals. E). Boundaries and sub-culture a big part of experience at church. F). High level pastoral position, but very willing to be critical of church.	A). Articulates all the feelings well B). Views counter Pantoja's findings C). This will show there is a level of linked fate. Particularly with the immigrants. negative rehtoric of 2016 Trump campaign activated her to self-identify as Latino even more so. D). This will fit in to theoretical framework portion- Nepantla	There is rich content here. This interview was rich with identity discussion, Nepantla, sub-culture and boundaries, C). Connect with Janelle's findings of Latinos caring about other people of color. FOLLOW UP RE: SNOWBALL SAMPLE: 35 Richard Valdez (spanish) Born in Tijuana. 25 Daniel Ortiz 23 yr old female.	C). Descriptive representation was a common theme	

4 MC F 40s 5th Gen Marcy	A). Consistent with EC Rhetoric and EC Culture B). Has experienced alienating moments because of race but still feels connected.	A). It fits Wong's findings	A). Make connections with broader EC literatuer	Abortion is #1 issue	
5 RV M 30s 1Gen Ricky	A). Acknowledges that family separations are sad but opines that immigration should be earned.	A).	A). Need to check my assumptions. I have carry the assumption that 1st generation immigrants will be more compassionate or positive in their view of immigration. However, 2 of the 2 first generation participants have insisted that people should immigrate the 'right way' This participant in particular, did not have to apply for a residency visa. He had one as a child since he was a trans-border consumer.		
Mag Ave. Spanish Ministry	Reflection: Bias is that I am familiar My familiarity and language also provided me an opportunity to connect and to be trusted.	Multi-status congregation English / Spanish church	You need to explain what a one church two languages church looks like and operates like.		

Participant #	A-ha or Insight	Reflective Thinking Does it fit in my work?	Further Investigation or Action & Results	Patterns & Themes	Reflexivity & Bracketing
6 TR M 40s 5th Gen Tommy	A). Pastor showed that congregants and families of mixed status are scared. Fear is ubiquitous and we provide education and information to equip and empower them. B). Belonging of all churches. He feels connected to the Christian church. Especially based on pro-life. C). Latino identity "Everything goes through the Latino filter" D). His being 5th Gen. Puerto Rican, he is able to empathize with the plight of the immigrant.	A). This pastor showed that churches are a good place for information. D). The immigration issue: opinion is not consistent.	A). Include a paragraph regarding the placement of church in solving community problems	A). Church safe place. Mixed status families. • Abortion is important • Families. The immigration issue is about family. • Fear, uncertainty • Families living in hiding D). What does waiting in line look like?	A). There is more to delve into. Try not to just connect .
7 SC F 50s 5th gen Stella	A). Definitely a pro-life person but not a single issue voter B). Felt the outside norm from Latinos and the assumption that Latinos are Catholic.	A) two participants feel this way. B). Heterogeneity C).	A). investigate B). Bring that home	B). non monolithic E). Deuteronomy quoted about the stranger quoted often when considering immigration policy.	I used the term us often. I realized I connected with her as a Latina and I felt connected with her. I am sure It influences. As a realty , my positionalty, my look, my id put this

	C). She pointed out that Latinos like to say that they came the 'right way' d). "why are we regulating giving birth, if we are not willing to take care of children life when they are here on this earth. " We should be fostering kids. The whole spectrum of life. hypocrisy. Believes that life starts at conception. Concerned because a lack of access to safe abortion only affect the poor. E). Deuteronomy about stranger. As an evangelical, this is where I land on immigration policy				person at ease. in this case it was positive.
8 PG F 30s 1st Gen Pati	Mostly Faith perspective. Non political person.				
9 SP F 40s 1st gen	A). Attend Spanish church because it feels like home. Reminds me of how my mom talks, sounds, etc…	A). Rationale as to why Latinos prefer to attend Spanish ministry instead of an English Church.	A). Can connect to sub-culture theory B). Link to Janelle's finding and connect with literature that says	B). Linked fate found in most of my participants. Does not feel represented by either party is a pattern.	For the first time I was able to track why a Latino would want to vote for a a Republican.

Sinai	Although still do fell at home. B). Q 7 Linked Fate very strong C). Q12 While Abortion is the primary policy issue of concern, it is because she is a mother, not because she is an evangelical D). Q18 Made a very interesting connection between the last time the U.S. offered an overall amnesty for immigrants.	B). Additional point is Linked fate. C). D). Something I never heard before	Linked fate is not strong among Latinos D). Lets look for something to connect with that. is there literature that supports.		
10 SO F 20s 2nd Gen Sofia	A).Used the term Nepantla in a discussion about no belonging (q 4B) Not fully accepted in the U.S. B). Empathetic because Latino also Empathetic because of the word of God C). She used the term Conservative in a negative way. Others had used it as important to be conservative even if not a Republican.	A). Tie it to Nepantla B). Show that Latinos are complicated and that in matters of human kindness, they acknowledge their Latino positionally but they also believe that is what they are called to do as Christians. C). Party divide and an ideological divide D). Does not feel represented	A). Theoretical framework fit B). Make Connections with other participants that felt the same way C). Party divide is problematic with ideological preferences of Latinos D). Make connections as to others not feeling represented (ie. Karla)	A). Nepntla is showing in the data B). Reference to Deuteronomy and welcoming the stranger C). People embracing the term conservative but not the term Republican D). Lack of representation is a pattern	She at first was nervous about making it political. I think that because she met me at church, she thought I was going to focus on matters of the church. When I directly asked her opinion of policies and politics it was then that she began to be very honest about her position.

	D). Does not feel aligned by the Democratic party because of Abortion. But does not feel aligned with the Republican party because they seem angry.				
11					
12					

Appendix C: Consent Form

Claremont Graduate University

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEWS FOR DISSERTATION RESEARCH: *Latino Evangelicals: How Do Their Multiple Identities inform their Politics?*

You are invited to be interviewed for a research project. While volunteering will probably not benefit you directly you will be helping to examine if and how race and religion inform the politics of Latino-evangelicals. If you decide to volunteer, you will fill out a demographic survey and participate in an in-person interview with Noemi H. Alexander which would require about 90 minutes of your time. Volunteering for this study does not involve risk beyond what a typical person would experience on an ordinary day. Since your involvement is entirely voluntary, you may withdraw at any time for any reason. Please continue reading for more information about the study.

STUDY LEADERSHIP: This dissertation research project is led by Noemi Hernandez Alexander a doctoral student of Political Science at Claremont Graduate University and supervised by Dr. Melissa Rogers, Associate Professor of International Studies at Claremont Graduate University.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to learn more about how Latino-Evangelicals choose their partisanship and how they make policy preferences.

ELIGIBILITY: To be in this study, you must be both a self-identified Latino and a self-identified Evangelical. You must be at least 18 years of age and eligible to register to vote in the State of California.

PARTICIPATION: During the study, you will be asked to: complete a questionnaire that will take about 10 minutes, asking about your education, race, ethnicity, income, age and gender. You will also participate in a face-to-face interview with Ms. Alexander where you will be asked to answer a series of open-ended questions like, "Does your identity ever factor into your political decisions, and if so how?" The interview should take no more than one hour of your time. Once the interview is transcribed, you will be asked to review it for accuracy of your answers.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION: The risks that you run by taking part in this study are minimal. The risks include possible inconvenience of time and travel to and from agreed upon meeting space. Because I am asking you to be candid and honest about your politics, you might run the risk of someone disagreeing with you if they over-hear our conversation. To account for this, you and Ms. Alexander will agree to meet in a location where passers-by cannot easily hear the conversation.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION: I do not expect the study to benefit you personally. This study will benefit me by providing me with the information I need to for my dissertation project and complete my doctorate.

COMPENSATION: You will be directly compensated a $10.00 Target Gift Card at the end of the interview for participating in this study.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop or withdraw from the study at any time without it being held against you. Your decision whether to participate will have no effect on your current or future connection with anyone at CGU, or at the church you currently attend.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

1. Fill out a demographic survey
2. Coordinate with Ms. Alexander the best time and location to conduct an hour-long interview.
3. Agree to be audio recorded during the interview for the purpose of transcription and data analysis by, Ms. Alexander
4. Answer a series of open-ended questions, and follow up questions for clarification.
5. You will receive a copy of your interview transcription. Please verify your answers and clarify anything you think was misinterpreted.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your individual privacy will be protected in all papers, books, talks, posts, or stories resulting from this study. After you fill out the initial questionnaire, each participant will be assigned an ID code with their demographic survey and you will be referred to by your assigned number instead of your name. To protect the confidentiality of your responses, identifiable information on the demographic questionnaire will be collected by me and stored in a locked file cabinet located in my office at 10370 Hemet Street in Riverside, California. When the study is finished, all surveys and notes will be shredded and discarded.

Information that can identify you individually will not be released to anyone outside this study. The information that is gathered will be used only by Ms. Alexander for the purposes of dissertation research and future publications related to the topic of Latino-Evangelicals. This data will not be shared with anyone outside of this research team. Any publications citing the interviews conducted here will be assigned a pseudonym and the church affiliation of the interviewee will not be disclosed.

Your confidentiality will be maintained by disconnecting your personal information with the interview answers. During the recorded interview, your ID code will be used at the start of the recording and your name will never be used during the recording. After the interview has been transcribed and coded, the audio files will be erased from Ms. Alexander's computer. Information that can identify you individually will not be released to anyone outside the study and will not be published in the final analysis.

SPONSORSHIP
This dissertation is not being sponsored.

FURTHER INFORMATION: If you have any questions or would like additional information about this study, please contact Noemi H. Alexander at xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx, (xxx) xxx-xxxx, 150 E. 10th Street Claremont CA, 91711 or you may also contact my advisor Dr. Melissa Rogers xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx, (xxx) xxx-xxxx, 150 E. 10th Street Claremont CA, 91711.
The CGU Institutional Review Board has approved this project. If you have any ethical concerns about this project or about your rights as a human subject in research, you may contact the CGU IRB at (909) 607-9406 or at irb@cgu.edu. A copy of this form will be given to you if you wish to keep it.

CONSENT: Your signature below means that you understand the information on this form, that someone has answered any and all questions you may have about this study, and you voluntarily agree to participate in it.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Participant _____

The undersigned researcher has reviewed the information in this consent form with the participant and answered any of his or her questions about the study.

Signature of Researcher _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Researcher _____

[Claremont Graduate University

ACUERDO PARA PARTICIPAR EN ENTREVISTAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN DE DISERTACIÓN: Evangélicos latinos: ¿Cómo sus múltiples identidades afectan a sus políticas?

Usted ha sido invitado a ser entrevistado para un proyecto de investigación. Ya que es un acto de voluntariado, probablemente no lo beneficiará directamente, pero estará ayudando a examinar si la raza y la religión afectan la política de los latinos-evangélicos y cómo. Si decide ser voluntario, completará una encuesta demográfica y participará en una entrevista en persona con Noemi H. Alexander, que requeriría aproximadamente 90 minutos de su tiempo. El voluntariado para este estudio no implica riesgos más allá de lo que una persona típica experimentaría en un día normal. Dado que su participación es completamente voluntaria, puede retirarse en cualquier momento por cualquier motivo. Por favor continúe leyendo para más información sobre el estudio.

LIDERAZGO DEL ESTUDIO: este proyecto de investigación de tesis está dirigido por Noemi Hernandez Alexander, estudiante de doctorado en Ciencias Políticas en Claremont Graduate University y supervisada por la Dra. Melissa Rogers, Profesora Asociada de Estudios Internacionales en Claremont Graduate University.

PROPÓSITO: El propósito de este estudio es aprender más acerca de cómo los Latino-Evangélicos eligen su partidismo y cómo hacen sus preferencias políticas.

ELEGIBILIDAD: Para participar en este estudio, debe ser autoidentificado como latino y como evangélico. Debe tener al menos 18 años de edad y ser elegible para registrarse para votar en el Estado de California.

PARTICIPACIÓN: Durante el estudio, se le pedirá que complete un cuestionario que durará aproximadamente 10 minutos y le preguntará sobre su educación, raza, origen étnico, ingresos, edad y género. También participará en una entrevista cara a cara con la Sra. Alexander, donde se le pedirá que responda a una serie de preguntas abiertas como, "¿Toma en cuenta su identidad para sus decisiones políticas? Si es así, ¿cómo?" La entrevista no debe tomar más de una hora de su tiempo. Una vez que se haya transcrito la entrevista, se le pedirá que la revise para verificar la exactitud de sus respuestas.

RIESGOS DE PARTICIPACIÓN: Los riesgos que corre al participar en este estudio son mínimos. Los riesgos incluyen posibles inconvenientes de tiempo y viajes hacia y desde el espacio de reunión acordado. Debido a que le estoy pidiendo que sea sincero y honesto acerca de su política, puede correr el riesgo de que alguien no esté de acuerdo con usted si escucha nuestra conversación. Para disminuir este riesgo, usted y la Sra. Alexander acordarán reunirse en un lugar donde los transeúntes no puedan escuchar fácilmente la conversación.

BENEFICIOS DE LA PARTICIPACIÓN: No espero que el estudio lo beneficie personalmente. Este estudio me beneficiará al brindarme la información que necesito para mi proyecto de tesis y completar mi doctorado.

COMPENSACIÓN: Al final de la entrevista se le pagará directamente con una tarjeta de regalo de Target de $10.00 por participar en este estudio.

PARTICIPACIÓN VOLUNTARIA: Su participación en este estudio es completamente voluntaria. Puede interrumpir o retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento sin consecuencias. Su decisión de participar no tendrá ningún efecto en su conexión actual o futura con nadie en CGU, o en la iglesia a la que asiste actualmente.

Si se ofrece como voluntario para participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que haga lo siguiente:

1. Llenar una encuesta demográfica.
2. Coordinar con la Sra. Alexander la mejor hora y lugar para realizar una Entrevista de 60 minutos.
3. Aceptar que se grabará en audio durante la entrevista para fines de transcripción y análisis de datos por la Sra. Alexander
4. Responder una serie de preguntas abiertas y hacer un seguimiento de las preguntas para aclaración.
5. Recibirá una copia de su transcripción de la entrevista. Por favor verifique tus respuestas y aclare cualquier cosa que crea que fue malinterpretada.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD: Su privacidad individual estará protegida en todos los documentos, libros, charlas, publicaciones o historias que resulten de este estudio. Después de completar el cuestionario inicial, a cada participante se le asignará un código de identificación con su encuesta demográfica y su número asignado lo identificará en lugar de su nombre. Para proteger la confidencialidad de sus respuestas, la información identificable en el cuestionario demográfico será recopilada por mí y almacenada en un archivador cerrado con llave ubicado en mi oficina en 10370 Hemet Street en Riverside, California. Cuando finalice el estudio, todas las encuestas y notas se triturarán y se descartarán.

La información que pueda identificarlo individualmente no se divulgará a nadie fuera de este estudio. La información que se recopila será utilizada solo por la Sra. Alexander para fines de investigación de tesis y futuras publicaciones relacionadas con el tema de los latinos-evangélicos. Estos datos no se compartirán con nadie fuera de este equipo de investigación. A cualquier publicación que cite las entrevistas realizadas se le asignará un seudónimo y la afiliación a la iglesia del entrevistado no se divulgará.

Se mantendrá su confidencialidad desvinculando su información personal con las respuestas de la entrevista. Durante la entrevista grabada, su código de identificación se usará al comienzo

de la grabación y su nombre nunca se usará durante la grabación. Después de que la entrevista haya sido transcrita y codificada, los archivos de audio se borrarán de la computadora de la Sra. Alexander. La información que puede identificarlo individualmente no se divulgará a nadie fuera del estudio y no se publicará en el análisis final.

PATROCINIO: Esta disertación no está siendo patrocinada.

INFORMACIÓN ADICIONAL: Si tiene alguna pregunta o desea obtener información adicional sobre este estudio, comuníquese con Noemi H. Alexander al xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx , (xxx) xxx-xxxx, 150 E. 10th Street Claremont CA, 91711 o usted también puede comunicarse con mi asesora, la Dra. Melissa Rogers xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx, (xxx) xxx-xxxx, 150 E. 10th Street, Claremont, CA, 91711.
La Junta de Revisión Institucional de la CGU ha aprobado este proyecto. Si tiene inquietudes éticas sobre este proyecto o sobre sus derechos como sujeto humano en la investigación, puede comunicarse con la Junta de la CGU al (909) 607-9406 o en irb@cgu.edu. Se le entregará una copia de este formulario si desea conservarlo.

CONSENTIMIENTO: Su firma a continuación significa que entiende la información en este formulario, que alguien ha respondido todas las preguntas que pueda tener sobre este estudio y que voluntariamente acepta participar en él.

Firma del participante _____ Fecha _____
Nombre impreso del participante _____

El investigador abajo firmante ha revisado la información en este formulario de consentimiento con el participante y ha respondido cualquiera de sus preguntas sobre el estudio.

Firma del investigador _____ Fecha _____
Nombre impreso del investigador _____

Appendix D: Demographic Survey

Participant Number ☐

Name of participant: _____

Best Contact: _____ Email _____

Thank you for participating in this survey. All your answers are completely confidential and will only be viewed by Noemi H. Alexander for the purpose of this study. Please answer every question as truthfully as possible.

1. Gender
___Female
___Male
___Decline to respond

2. Are you Eligible to vote in California?
___yes
___no

3. How old are you?_____

4. Preferred Language
_____

5. Were you born in the United States or another Country?
___United States
___Other
Country_____

6. How do you self-identify your Race/ Ethnicity? (*check all that apply*)
___White
___Hispanic
___Latino
___Black
___Black
___Native /Indigenous
___Multi-racial, Multi-ethnic

7. Do you self-identify as an Evangelical-Christian?
___ Yes ___No

8. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements: *(Circle One)*

The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.

strongly disagree
somewhat disagree
neutral
somewhat agree
strongly agree

It is important for me to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.

strongly disagree
somewhat disagree
neutral
somewhat agree
strongly agree

Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.

strongly disagree
somewhat disagree
neutral
somewhat agree
strongly agree

Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

strongly disagree
somewhat disagree
neutral
somewhat agree
strongly agree

9. What is your generational status?

___1st Generation (Foreign-born but live in the U.S.)
___2nd Generation (U.S. born with at least one foreign-born parent)
___3rd Generation or more (no foreign-born parents)

10. Hispanic /Latinos have their roots in many different countries in Latin America. To what country do you or your family trace your ancestry?
Example). El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Mexico

_____

11. What is the highest level of education YOU completed?
___Grades 1-8
___Some High School
___High School graduate or GED
___Some College or 2-year degree
___License or certificate training school
___4 Year college graduate
___Post-graduate education12. What is the highest level of education YOUR PARENT(S) completed?

___Grades 1-8
___Some High School
___High School graduate or GED
___Some College or 2-year degree
___License or certificate training school
___4 Year college graduate
___Post-graduate education

13. What is your total combined household's income before taxes. This question is completely confidential and just used to help classify the responses, but it is very important to the research.

Circle one:

less than$20,000	$20,000-$29,999
$30,000-$39,999	40,000-$49,999
$50,000-$59,999	$60,000-$69,999
$70,000-$79,999	$80,000-89,999
$90,000-$99,999	$100,000+150,000
$151,000+More	
Decline to respond	

Encuesta Demográfica

Número de participante ☐

Nombre del participante: _____

Mejor contacto: _____ Correo electrónico _____

Gracias por participar en esta encuesta. Todas las respuestas son completamente confidenciales y solo Noemi H. Alexander las verá para los fines de este estudio. Por favor responda a cada pregunta lo más sinceramente posible.

1. Género
___Mujer
___Hombre
___Declino responder

2. ¿Es elegible para votar en California?
___Sí
___No

3. ¿Cuántos años tiene? _____

4. Idioma preferido

5. ¿Nació en los Estados Unidos o en otro país?
___Estados Unidos
___Otro país_____

6. ¿Cómo identifica su raza/etnicidad? (*Marque <u>todo</u> lo que corresponda*)
___Blanco
___Hispano
___Latino
___Negro
___Negro
___Nativo/Indígena
___Multirracial, Multiétnica

7. ¿Se identifica como un evangélico-cristiano?
___ Sí ___No

8. ¿Cuánto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con lo siguiente?: *(encierre en circulo una opción)*

La Biblia es la máxima autoridad en lo que creo.

Totalmente en desacuerdo
Algo en desacuerdo
Neutral
Parcialmente de acuerdo
Totalmente de acuerdo

Es importante para mí alentar a los no cristianos a confiar en Jesucristo como su Salvador.

Totalmente en desacuerdo
Algo en desacuerdo
Neutral
Parcialmente de acuerdo
Totalmente de acuerdo

La muerte de Jesucristo en la cruz es el único sacrificio que podría eliminar la pena de mi pecado.

Totalmente en desacuerdo

Algo en desacuerdo

Neutral

Parcialmente de acuerdo

Totalmente de acuerdo

Solo aquellos que confían solo en Jesucristo como su Salvador reciben el regalo gratuito de Dios de la salvación eterna.

Totalmente en desacuerdo

Algo en desacuerdo

Neutral

Parcialmente de acuerdo

Totalmente de acuerdo

9. ¿Cuál es su estado generacional?

___1ra generación (nacido en el extranjero pero vivo en los EE.UU.)
___2da generación (nacido en los EE.UU. con al menos un padre nacido en el extranjero)
___3ra generación o más (padres no nacidos en el extranjero)

10. Los hispanos/latinos tienen sus raíces en muchos países diferentes de América Latina. ¿A qué país traza usted o su familia su ascendencia?
Ejemplo). El Salvador, Puerto Rico, México
_____

11. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que USTED ha completado?
___Grados 1 al 8
___Algo de educación secundaria
___Graduado de secundaria o GED
___Algunos estudios universitarios o de 2 años
___Escuela de licencia o certificado
___graduado universitario de 4 años
___Educación de posgrado

12. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que SUS PADRES han completado?
___Grados 1 al 8
___Algo de educación secundaria
___ Graduado de secundaria o GED
___Algunos estudios universitarios o de 2 años
___Escuela de licencia o certificado
___graduado universitario de 4 años
___Educación de posgrado

13. ¿Cuál fue el ingreso total de su hogar combinado antes de impuestos? Esta pregunta es completamente confidencial y solo se utiliza para ayudar a clasificar las respuestas, pero es muy importante para la investigación.
Encierre una opción en un circulo:

Menos de $25,000	$20,000-$29,999
$30,000-$39,999	40,000-$49,999
$50,000-$59,999	$60,000-$69,999
$70,000-$79,999	$80,000-89,999
$90,000-$99,999	$100,000+150,000

$ 151,000 + más
Declino responder

Appendix E: Codebook

Codebook

Diss. Data Latino Evangelical.mx18

2/1/20

Code System

Categories	Frequency
11 Belonging	0
11.1 No Belong- Evan Church	3
11.2 Yes Belong-Evan Church	4
11.3 No Belong- US	4
11.4 Yes Belong- US	2
11.5 No Belong-Church	3

11.6 Yes Belong-Church	4
11.6.1 community	2
11.7 Linked Fate	20
11.7.1 proud	2
11.7.2 Stereotypes	8
11.7.3 We are them, and they are us.	2
11.8 Yes Belong-Latino	4
11.9 Not belonging-Latino	4
12 Sub-Cultural ID Theory	6
12.1 outside of church boundaries	5
13 SOC. ID Theory	0
13.1 Belonging	5
13.2 Boundaries	8
14 NEPANTLA:Conflict/Tension	25
14.1 middle zone	4
14.2 In between	5
14.3 On Party	9
14.4 On Policy	16
14.5 Bi-Culture	10
15 Party	2
15.1 libertarian	1
15.2 Swing Voter	5
15.3 On Social Issues	8
15.4 pushed out by Republican party	3
15.5 Positive Trump	2
15.5.1 Given Credit for state policy wins	1
15.5.2 policy needs of evangelicals	0
15.6 Negative: Trump	8
15.7 Evan influence on	11
15.8 Latino influence on	1
15.9 Neither Party	6
15.10 Yes Democrat	5
15.11 Yes Republican	11
15.11.1 Republican Amnesty	1
15.11.2 Conservatives are Target	1
15.11.3 Bluffing: Republicans	4
16 moderate	2
17 Representation	2
17.1 Governments role to rep. Marginalized	1
17.2 Not Represented E.V.	9
17.3 No Party	9
17.4 Yes Party	2
17.5 Yes E.V.	1
18 Identity	4

18.1 Threat (Trump)Latino ID strengthened by	3
18.2 Mexican	2
18.3 Racialized Experience	5
18.4 Latino Linked Fate	2
18.5 Evangelical Primacy	9
18.6 Female	2
18.7 Latino Primacy	3
18.8 Evangelical	2
18.9 Latino	9
19 Policy/Social Issues	11
19.1 Sexism	2
19.2 Prison Reform	2
19.3 NOT 1 Issue voter	2
19.4 shooting	2
19.5 legalizing gay marriages	2
19.6 liberal	2
19.7 conservative	5
19.8 Conservatives under attack	3
19.9 But being a woman	4
19.10 defend the poor	11
19.11 Racial Reconciliation	4
19.12 Gun control	4
19.13 Racism	7
19.14 Church: Problem solver	11
19.15 LGBTQ	4
19.16 Incorporating Gays into church	5
19.17 Israel	2
19.17.1 As a Defense strategy	1
19.18 poor women	4
19.19 Pro Life Spectrum	6
19.20 Foster Children	3
19.21 CA Sentence Reductions	3
19.22 Healthcare	2
19.23 Descriptive Representation	2
19.24 Evan Influence On	10
19.25 Latino Influence on	16
19.26 Hate Rhetoric	3
19.27 Abortion	17
19.27.1 Double Victimization of non-abortion	2
19.27.2 Abortion not issue	5
19.28 Homelessness	3
19.29 Education	3
19.29.1 DACA / DREAMERS	1
19.30 Immigration	18

19.30.1 abiding by the law	2
19.30.2 cut through the line	2
19.30.3 separation	3
19.30.4 rule of law	3
19.30.5 detention centers	5
19.30.6 right channels	2
19.30.7 Immigration sponsor process	2
19.30.8 Fear/ scary	8
19.30.9 Deportations	7
19.30.10 Undocumented church members	7
19.30.11 undocumented	1
19.30.12 least of these	10
19.30.13 Talking about it is painful	5
19.30.14 Families	9
19.30.15 Deuteronomy about stranger	7

1 Socialization

2 RED

3 Other Codes

3.1 Other Codes\patriarchal culture

3.2 Other Codes\social location

3.3 Other Codes\disconnect

3.4 Other Codes\emotional and mental

3.5 Other Codes\freedom of speech is important as an Evangelical

3.6 Other Codes\White Evan: Allies

Outlier: White evangelicals modeled compassion and mercy toward Latinos. Gave permission to

Appendix F: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Participant Number

"Thank you for participating in this survey. All your answers are completely confidential. I will be recording this interview for transcription and analysis purposes only. I will refer to you by the assigned number on your demographic survey, so that your name is not mentioned on the recordings. Are you comfortable with proceeding to the interview and with me recording it?"

Religiosity /Faith

Religious Identity

1 You stated in the demographic survey that you self-identify as an Evangelical Christian. In what ways (if at all) does being a Christian form your identity?

2A. As an Evangelical-Christian how do you practice your faith? Follow-up: What does it look like in your everyday life?

2B. Do you participate in church related activities outside of Sunday services?

Belonging to Church

3 At your church, do you feel like you belong and are accepted by your church congregation?
[if in a sub-ministry] Do you feel like you are embraced by the whole [church name] or just the Spanish Ministry? - Can you tell me why you feel that way?

3B. Is there ever a time where you don't feel like you belong? If yes, can you share a story of

when you felt excluded?

4 Do you feel like you are somehow connected to other Christian-Evangelicals in the U.S.?

4B Do you feel accepted as a full member of the United States?

Ethnicity

Latino Identity

5 You stated in the demographic survey that you self-identify as a Latino [term preferred]. In what ways (if at all) does being a Latino part of your identity?

- Do you prefer another term such as Mexican, Hispanic or something else?

6 Can you think of any instances when being a Latino influenced the decisions you made or the opinions you hold about your public life or your community?

Belonging

7. Do you feel like you, as a [term used]-Evangelical are connected with all other Latinos living in the U.S.?

- If Yes, what do you feel you share in common? Can you give me some examples?

- If No, in what ways are you different? Can you give me some examples?

Policies

8. What are some of the political and social issues that you care about in the U.S.?

9. (rotate) Are there any policies or laws that matter to you because you are a Latino?

10 (rotate) Are there any policies or laws that matter to you because you are an Evan-Christian?

10B. As you may know, there are political interest groups that lobby the government on behalf of evangelicals in the U.S. Do you feel like those groups represent your policy interests?

11. As a [insert term] and an evangelical, do you ever feel tension/conflict between your multiple-identities and the political/ social issues you care about? If yes, can you describe when those feelings emerge?

12 Is there ever a time where one identity (Latino or Evangelical) has had a higher influence or primacy, over the other, when you considered which policies or issues you care about?

Partisanship

13. How does being a Latino influence the political party you choose?

- Can you tell me how it influences you? OR Can you tell me why not?

14. Does being an Evangelical influence the political party you choose?

If yes: Can you tell me how it influences you?

- Follow up if no: Can you tell me why it does not?

15. As a member of both a racial/ethnic community and a religious community, do you ever feel a conflict or tension between your identity(s) and your political party affiliation?

- Follow up If yes: can you describe when these feelings of conflict emerge?

16. Is there ever a time where one identity (Latino or Evangelical) has had a higher influence or primacy, over the other, when you considered which Political Party you choose?

17. [ ] Do you generally consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an independent or something else?

- Follow up: Can you tell me how you came to the decision to become a [ ] ?

17 B. In what ways do you think that the [ ] represents your politics? In ways do you feel like the [ ] does not represent you?

Preguntas Para la Entrevista

Numero del Participante

"Gracias por participar en esta encuesta. Todas sus respuestas son completamente confidenciales. La entrevista unicamente sera grabada con propósitos de transcripción y análisis. Me referiré a usted utilizando el numero asignado en su encuesta demográfica, para que su nombre no sea mencionado en la grabación. ¿Se siente cómodo procediendo con la entrevista grabada?"

Religiosidad/Fe

Identidad Religiosa

1 En la encuesta demográfica indicó que se auto-identifica como un Cristiano Evangélico. ¿De qué manera (si la hay) siente que ser Cristiano forma parte de su identidad?

2 Como Cristiano-Evangélico, ¿cómo practica su fe?

- Seguimiento: ¿Cómo es su vida diaria?

2B. ¿Participa en otras actividades relacionadas a la iglesia, aparte de los Servicios Dominicales?

Pertenecer a la Iglesia

3 En su iglesia, ¿siente que pertenece y que es aceptado por la congregación? [si es en el sub-ministerio] ¿Siente que es aceptado por todo [la iglesia] o solo el Ministerio en Español?

3B. Hay momentos en que usted se siente como no pertenece? Si es así, ¿puede compartir una anécdota en la que se sintió excluido?

4 ¿Siente que de alguna manera esta conectado con el movimiento Evangélico en los EEUU?

- ¿Puede contarme por qué se siente de esa manera?

4B Se siente ser parte, y aceptada por la comunidad estadunidense? Si o no, porque?

Etnia

Identidad Latina

5 En la encuesta demográfica indicó que se auto-identifica como un [termino preferido] Latino. ¿De qué manera (si la hay) siente que ser Latino forma parte de su identidad?

6 ¿Ha vido ocasiones en que el hecho de ser Latino ha influenciado su decisión o su opinión sobre algo en su vida o en su comunidad?

Pertenecer (linked Fate)

7. ¿Siente que usted, como un [termino usado]-Evangélico está conectado con todos los otros Latinos viviendo en los EEUU?

- Si es asi, ¿qué siente en común con ellos? ¿Me puede dar unos ejemplos?
- Si No, ¿de qué manera se siente diferente? ¿Me puede dar unos ejemplos?

Políticas

8. ¿Cuáles son algunos de los problemas políticos y sociales en los EEUU que le interesan?

9. (**rotate**) ¿Hay alguna plisa política o ley que le interesa por el hecho de ser Latino?

10 (**rotate**) ¿Hay alguna política o ley que le interesa por el hecho de ser Cristiano?

10B. Como sabra, hay grupos de interés político que cabildean o abogan al gobierno en nombre de los evangélicos en los EE.UU. Siente usted, que esos grupos representan sus intereses políticos? En que manera?

11. Como Latino y evangélico, ¿siente alguna tensión entre sus identidades y los problemas políticos/sociales que le importan? ¿Por qué o por qué no? Cuénteme más.

12 ¿Ha habido algún momento en el que una de sus identidades (Latino o Evangélico) ha tenido una mayor influencia o importancia sobre la otra, al considerar las políticas o los problemas que le importan?

Partidismo

13. (rotate). ¿Acaso ser Latino influencia el partido político que elige? Sí: ¿Puede contarme cómo lo influencia? Si No: ¿Puede contarme por qué no?

14. (rotate) ¿Acaso ser Evangélico influencia el partido político que usted elije?

- Si Sí: ¿Puede contarme cómo lo influencia?
- Si No: ¿Puede contarme por qué no?

15. Como miembro de una comunidad racial/étnica y una comunidad religiosa, ¿hay momentos que siente que hay conflictos entre sus identidades y su partido político de preferencia?

- Si Sí: ¿Puede describir cuando sobresalen estos sentimientos conflictivos?

16. ¿Ha habido algún momento en el que una de sus identidades (Latino o Evangélica) ha tenido una mayor influencia o importancia sobre la otra, al considerar que Partido Político elegir?

17. [ ] ¿Generalmente se considera un Republicano, un Demócrata, un Independiente, u otro?

- ¿Puede contarme como decidió volverse un [ ] ?

17B. En cual manera(s), usted siente que el partido [ ] lo/la representa?
En cual manera /maneras usted siente que el partido [ ] no la representa?

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