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An Introduction to Party Brand: Lessons from Business-Marketing as Applied to the United States' Major Political Parties, 1976-2012

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An Introduction to Party Brand: Lessons from Business-Marketing as Applied to the
United States' Major Political Parties, 1976-2012

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Justine Gail Margarethe Ross

December 2018

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University of California, Riverside

For my mom, Carrie, and my mom's mom, Sherrill;
the latter of whom taught 'can't never did nothing', and the former of whom I would
have surely 'done nothing' without.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My path to graduate school began when a particularly opinionated undergraduate professor, very invested in his students' success and happiness, challenged me to explore a career outside of law. Work for an elected official, volunteer for an advocacy campaign, intern with a think tank – he didn't care, provided I considered an alternative to law school. Within one month, I was on a political campaign. Within six months I was completely besot with voter targeting, mobilization, and elite messaging and decided to forgo my decade-plus long interest in law for political science.

So, thank you to Mark Petracca for encouraging me to expand my horizons and planting the seed for my graduate career.

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Thank you to my parents, Christopher and Carrie, and to my sister, Olivia, who were very supportive throughout this process, patiently read drafts of conference papers and chapters, and who are likely nearly as happy as I am to submit this dissertation.

Finally, this is a project on the power of branding, written in Corporate America, on a campus surrounded by historic orange groves, so I would be remiss if I did not thank Sunkist Growers, Inc. whose diet orange soda (unknowingly) fueled this dissertation. The late nights, coding marathons, and frustrating rewrites would have been possible without the caffeine provided by (literally) thousands of cans of Diet Sunkist®. On a slightly

more serious note, Sunkist Growers, Inc. is included as an illustration of a concept central

to this project on page 47.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

An Introduction to Party Brand: Lessons from Business-Marketing as Applied to the
United States' Major Political Parties, 1976-2012

by

Justine Gail Margarethe Ross

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Political Science
University of California, Riverside, December 2018
Dr. John Cioffi, Co-Chairperson
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Political scientists frequently invoke the term "party brand" as relates to partisanship, party breakdown, and heuristic voting, but scant attention is dedicated to brand as a meaningful construct in and of itself. Of the more recent studies that do expressly incorporate party brand, most treat the concept as manifestly inherent or employ it as a means to an end.

This project joins business-marketing with the extant body of research on political parties and conceptualizes party brand as a standalone unit of inquiry that provides novel insight into long- and short-term processes behind strategic party decisions, while still allowing for analysis of the ultimate action. Party brand is a powerful explanatory concept, which links elite and mass stories and begets theoretical insight as to how and why parties develop overtime and which actors lead changes to the party's brand. As well, party brand complements existing narratives by systematically joining the study of parties-as-organizations, parties-in-government, and parties-in-electorate.

Chapter 2 reviews relevant business marketing literature before introducing the party brand framework. It is argued each party sub-group actor contributes to the creation, perpetuation, and evolution of the national party's brand through different means and to various effect. Specifically, the national party committee operates as the central governing body and is the repository of the party's core brand identity, while the party's elected officials operate as franchise extensions. Chapter 2 further elaborates this framework with an emphasis on the relationship between the national committee, its elected officials, and the voting age population.

Chapters 3 and 4 use machine-based learning to analyze party texts for the period of 1976-2012. Using various methods of computational text analysis a descriptive picture of both major parties' brand identities is presented, the evolution of both parties' brand identities across time and between actors are traced, and patterns emerge as to which actors lead changes to each party's brand.

Chapter 5 adds a layer of description through elite interviews, which allows for further analysis of the role of party leadership – the driver of brand identity – with respect to its franchise extensions (members) in Congress.

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1.1 The Rise & Fall of a Party Brand

With the nation still mourning the loss of their young, charismatic leader and

nearly a year to the day after President John F. Kennedy's assassination, Lyndon B.

Johnson was elected president – an office he had already held for a year. The election of

1964 was an opportunity for personal atonement and public legitimization; no longer was

LBJ the "accidental president" or to be dismissed as "Uncle Corn Pone". With all but six

states carried by the Democratic incumbent, the White House was decidedly President

Johnson's.

The election was to be publically remembered as an affirmation of LBJ's

presidency and policies – prior cast as the martyred actualization of JFK's agenda – and

as one of the greatest political landslides in United States history. Just as it was alleged

LBJ commanded a political mandate, Republican opponent Barry Goldwater's trouncing

at the ballot box suggested the American public's outright rejection of severe ideological

conservatism in favor, minimally, of moderation, if not progressivism. As time would

reveal, voters' – particularly Republican voters' – apparent antipathy toward conservative

extremism on November 3rd, 1964 was short lived. LBJ's triumph over Barry Goldwater

may have been the story of the day, but the Republican Party's brand's hard right turn –

beginning with Goldwater's contest – was to be the narrative of a generation of politics.

Though electorally anticlimactic, Barry Goldwater's candidacy marked the

beginning of the Republican Party's purposefully orchestrated, strategic appeal to racially

motivated, fervently ideological, white conservatives (Aistrup 2015; Miller and Schofield

1

2003; Schreiber 1971, etc.). Arguably, Goldwater could not predict the enduring effects of the "Southern Strategy" on the Grand Old Party; however, he, the Draft Goldwater Committee, and the Republican National Committee – chaired by William Miller who, non-coincidentally, was selected as Goldwater's running mate – were cognizant of the changes they were making to the Party's symbolic and substantive message and did so to capitalize on the hairline fracture in the Democrats' solid-South. Goldwater and the national campaign apparatus made a strategic decision to branch out from the GOP's core and pursue Southern voters, disillusioned by the Democratic Party's newfound integrationist agenda and without sufficient temporal memory of the Civil War to steadfastly reject the Republican Party as the Party of Lincoln (Black and Black 2002; Schreiber 1971; Wildavsky 1965).

What began under Goldwater as a coalition of southern whites, united by thinly veiled racial appeals under the guise of "states' rights", evolved into a more generalized laissez-faire stance across economic and racial issues during the tenure of President Nixon's and other key GOP leadership of the 1970's (Ip and Whitehouse 2006). With fiscal conservatives and racially motivated voters joined, President Reagan expanded on the Southern Strategy's coalition by championing an agenda with moralistic undertones, which appealed to the increasingly ardent evangelical population (i.e. the "Moral Majority") and augmented into the GOP's coalition (Simpson 1997; Guth 1996; Miller and Wattenberg 1984; Brudney and Copeland 1984). By the mid-1980's more Southerners self-identified as Republicans than Democrats, reversing nearly one hundred years of Democratic dominance (Miller 1991). In the twenty years after Reagan left

office, two Republican presidents and one candidate relied on the support of this new, socially conservative coalition, united by federal deference to the states and minimal government involvement in the economy and society.

The Southern Strategy is a powerful example of the process of branding. A brand is the collection of tangible assets (here, candidates and policies) and intangible mystique (here, symbols, affect, emotion, etc.) cultivated by an organization as a method of connecting with key constituencies. Markets have latent demands (here, Southern whites' desire to have racial hostilities reflected in national office and policy) and corporations (here, the GOP and Goldwater's campaign) create and seize opportunities to actualize and deliver on these demands through rebranding. To this end, party (re)branding, as demonstrated by the Southern Strategy, is a top-down exercise to modify the party's brand based on the Party's understanding of the needs and desires of existing and potential constituents. The Republican Party capitalized on preexisting racial cleavages during the 1964 presidential contest, which opened the door for the organization to strategically rebrand and reorient its position on the electoral market. In turn, the GOP was able to appeal to new constituencies, on new issues over the course of the next three decades.

The Southern Strategy also demonstrates "flanking" (Miller and Schofield 2003) and the creation of "flanker brands" (Baek et al. 2010; Vardarjan 2009; Kim and Low 2020). Political scientists Miller and Schofield (2003) use the term flanking to describe a party or candidate's appeal to disaffected voters who occupy the electoral margins without the cost of enthusiasm from traditional, core supporters. This approach is well

documented over the course of the Southern Strategy and is a similarly employed by

corporations wishing to expand their market reach while insulating their core brand

identity from attack.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "flanker brands" allow companies to pursue new

consumers without jeopardizing their core identity to the same extent they would if the

central brand adopted new characteristics or brought different products to market.

Flanking and flanker brands are typically employed when it is perceived the new appeal

(to voters or consumers) might isolate existing supporters. Applied here, the Southern

Strategy fostered incremental change and allowed the Republican Party to slowly "test

the waters" by pursuing disaffected voters, without isolating its base. Arguably, the

Republican Party would have been able to discard failed components of the Southern

Strategy without irreparably damaging its core brand and isolating its traditional base

prior to the strategy being fully realized.

With the Southern Strategy realized by the mid-1990's, the Republican Party

relied on the support of their base with minimal maintenance for the next decade (Aistrup

2015). "Country Club" Republicans, typically residing outside the South and for whom a

pro-business platform was most important, and hard-line social conservatives, more often

than not in the South, were able to live in relative harmony as politics and campaigns

became increasingly nationalized. Once every four years each wing of the Republican

Party coalesced to form the GOP's base constituency. Save for minor disagreements –

like when then-presidential candidate Bob Dole resisted a strongly worded pro-life line of

the party platform, but the Party, cognizant of the base's core concerns, insisted it remain

– the Republican Party faced little internal strife during this period and enjoyed great electoral success on the back of its base.

However, this period of relative harmony was short lived as the 2008 Presidential Election exposed a deep cleavage within the Republican Party. The Tea Party emerged in 2008 as an anti-government, anti-Obama, well-organized, and well-funded wing of the GOP, catalyzed by the election of the first African American president (Parker and Barreto 2014; Williamson et al. 2011, etc.). Two years later, Tea Party candidates helped flip the House of Representatives in the GOP's favor. After its success in Congress the Tea Party seemed to lose steam until the 2016 presidential contest when its grassroots organizations mobilized to support then-candidate Donald Trump (Skocpol and Williamson 2016). At the time of publication, mainstream Republicans and Tea Partiers-turned-Trumpians remain in the uncomfortable position of disagreeing on fundamental issues, like trade, but having to work together as wings of the governing party. As discussed in Chapter 2, this sort of intra-party disagreement has disastrous effects on a party's brand and, as is speculated based on brand theory, is likely a driver of the Republican Party's negative brand image and declining levels of membership.

1.2 Why Brand?

The study of party brand holds great promise and is particularly timely for three primary reasons, including: 1) the concept and theory's ability to bridge relevant political science literatures, 2) historically low levels of party favorability (the measure of party brand image), and 3) political parties' recognition of the importance of party brand and their incorporation and application of marketing principles.

First, brand, both as a concept and theory, holds great explanatory power in a manner that complements existing literatures while pushing toward a more well-rounded understanding of parties and the interplay between various elite actor groups and voters. Traditionally, party scholars either study a segment of the party apparatus (e.g. the national committee, congressional leadership, state parties, etc.) or study partisans-in-the-electorate. While these studies hold value, they have limited ability to explain parties as dynamic institutions with the capacity to actively shape and respond to national political discourse, issue saliency, and policy preferences.

Second, the current political climate – particularly the GOP's efforts to rehabilitate their negative brand image (e.g. Growth and Opportunity Project 2012, etc.) and its extensive intraparty disagreement – provides a compelling backdrop for the study of political parties as branded organizations and the relationship between party and voters. Favorability is the most generally employed measure of the strength of a company's brand-image (i.e. do consumers (voters) favorably perceive the brand the company (party) is currently proffering?) and Independents, moderate Republicans, and strong Republicans all view the Party less favorably today than at any other time the last seventeen years (SSRS 2017; Gallup 2017). The Democratic Party is also struggling in the eyes of the electorate, with favorability lower than the historical average (Gallup 2017).

Figure 1.1 plots the average difference between favorable and unfavorable evaluations of both parties for each of forty-two PEW public opinion polls administered between 1992 and 2012. The mass public has a volatile perception of both parties and

favorability has generally decreased during the twenty year span, highlighting the increasingly negative brand image of both parties.
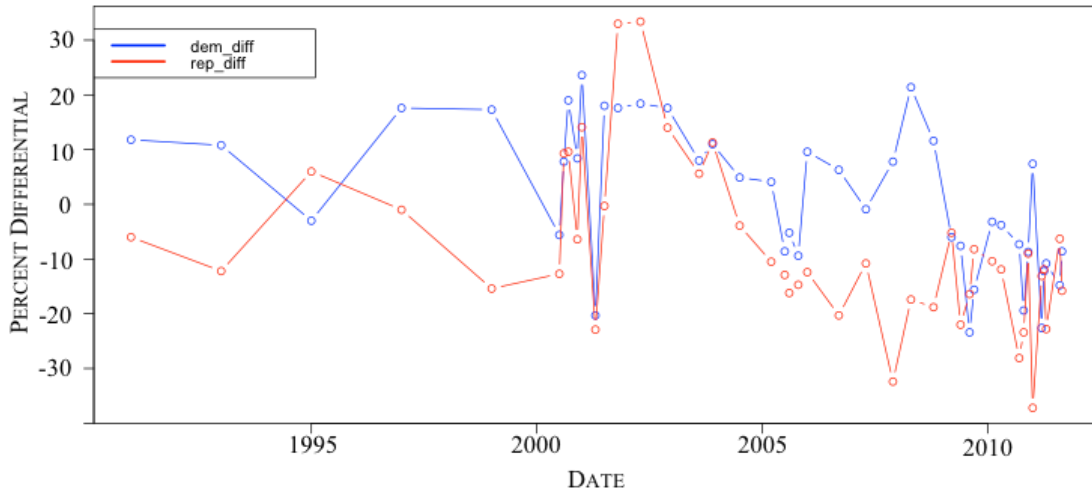
Figure 1.1 Democratic and Republican Party Favorability Less Unfavorability, 1992-2012

Both parties are currently failing to positively connect with their likely voters, regardless of the strength of the voter's partisanship, which signals both parties' brands are in crisis. The need to immediately address concerns as to Democratic and Republican party brand equity, integrity, and image promises a wealth of discussion and opportunities for research in the coming years.

Third, party leaders on both sides of the aisle and outside of the United States often discuss the primacy of developing and maintain a strong brand and positively held brand image. After an upsetting electoral performance, the Republican Party conducted an internal audit, which attempted to "unpack" what went wrong during the 2012 presidential election. The report, entitled *The Growth and Opportunity Project*, developed a common refrain – "instead of driving around in circles on an ideological cul-de-sac, we need a Party whose *brand* of conservatism invites and inspires new people to

visit us," (Growth and Opportunity Project 2012). A year prior to President Clinton's election, the Democratic Leadership Council voiced similar concerns regarding their need to revitalize their *image* – "America doesn't need…two establishment parties, or two parties from Washington, D.C.… Our party's challenge is to discard the orthodoxies of the past," (Cleveland Proclamation 1991). Fixation with brand and rebranding also extends past domestic borders, with party leaders in other democratic party-systems voicing similar concerns as to the value and meaning their brand identity conveys. Former Opposition Leader, Edward Milliband reflected on the impact of former Prime Minister Tony Blair's tenure, noting, "he trashed New Labour's *brand*".

There is intrinsic value to studying a unit of inquiry on its own terms. The party reforms of the 1960's and 1970's, rise of candidate-centered campaigns, and proliferation of mass media democratized American politics in that the party-voter relationship became more reflexive and the parties competed more intensely for votes. In this new space, parties adopted many of the strategies used to promote businesses – going so far as to hire the same consulting firms large corporations used to expand their consumer base and revamp their image. Today, political parties rely heavily on the same tactics and strategies employed by businesses to compete with one another and to curry favor with their target "consumer" market (the voting age population) (e.g. Needham 2006; Smith and French 2009; O'Cass and Voola 2011). The process of developing a strong, recognizable brand that inspires relevant associations and favorable views in the eye of the beholder is of critical importance in cultivating a successful business and, as relevant to this project, a winning party (French and Smith 2010).

This dissertation leverages conceptual and theoretical insights from business marketing against the discipline's understanding of parties to move toward a study of parties as brand manufacturers, which allows for the interplay between multiple actor groups to be studied with consideration of institutional constraints intrinsic to the organization. As the first study to develop a comprehensive theoretical model of the party brand relationship, three questions centrally motivate this project;

1) What is a party brand? (i.e. What does a party brand look like, both substantively and affectively?)
2) How is a party brand created/ and maintained?
3) Which actors/actor groups initiate changes to a party's brand?

The remaining portion of this chapter introduces foundationally relevant party politics literature, building to the minimal research that has been conducted on party brand-image to-date, while subsequent chapters address the questions outlined above and introduce and test a theory of party brand.

1.3.1 Getting to Brand: A Review of the Extant Literature

American parties are by no means an understudied unit of inquiry; however, party politics is frequently analyzed in a truncated fashion (e.g. if studying the party-in-office, the organization and voters are often neglected, if considered as relevant) and the discipline's institutional-behavioral divide has expanded the scholastic divide. In working toward a theory of brand, this dissertation builds upon a broad swath of the extant literature and, wherever possible, strives to find commonality to unify prior studies with the current project. Each of the subsections below serve to join prior works and establish key assumptions, supported by research, which underpin the theory of party brand as to be explained in the next chapter.

1.3.2 Getting to Brand: Party Motivations

The discipline widely accepts parties are electorally-minded – either as a mean of policy-making (e.g. Sundquist 1988), power-grabbing (Budge and Lauer 1986), or as an end in-and-of-itself (e.g. Downs 1957). While this project is compatible with this premise, it is argued parties are ultimately concerned with self-perpetuation, which largely comes through the winning of office.

If it is supposed political parties are motivated by self-perpetuation via electoral gain (Olson 1986), it logically follows that the party's brand – minimally, as a signaling mechanism – should evolve with the population whose support they require. Parties are cognizant their reputation and identity matter with respect to their electoral prospects and, in today's political environment, where citizens increasingly employ heuristics when voting (e.g. Schaffner and Streb 2002; Green et al. 2004), parties rely on their brand name and brand extensions to link party-to-individual in a way that allows new coalitions to be built and existing connections to be strengthened. Analysis of the American party system provides support for this claim (e.g. Sundquist,1983; Aldrich, 1995; Abramowitz and Saunders, 1998; etc.); however, the extant literature leaves party branding exercises and the effect of an evolving brand on individual perception of party (i.e. the brand-image) unexplored.

1.3.3 Getting to Brand: Parties as Organizations

This project also rests on Downs' (1957) definition of political parties as a, "team of men and women seeking to control the government apparatus by gaining office in duly contested elections," (Downs 1957, 9). His depiction establishes clear means, objectives,

and actors, is sufficiently broad to adapt to the changing role of parties across time, and is largely uncontested by scholars of party politics.

Moreover, political parties are organizations that represent coalitions of shifting interests (Cyert and March 1963; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and are comprised of actors with the shared motivation of gaining power through the winning of elections, who voluntarily unite to overcome issues of collective action and achieve shared goals, including; fielding competitive candidates, electing candidates, shaping governmental policy, and sustaining the organization (Lawson 1994). At their inception, a party's coalition is motivated by each actor's interest in accomplishing a shared objective (e.g. an ideological challenge to existing parties, etc.), but as the party is institutionalized and the primary objective becomes self-perpetuation (through the winning of office), actors' individual aims diversify – at times to incompatible ends (e.g. the 2018 Republican Party is attempting to self-perpetuate by mediating the competing individual interests of its actors, some of whom are pursuing populist, Trump-ian objectives while others are pursuing traditionally establishment aims).

Ultimately, the individuals who comprise this national-level organization are decision-makers; however, their actions are conditioned on institutional norms (e.g. Berman 2001), the incentive structure (e.g. Weingast 2002; Shepsle 1989), constrained by the decisions of those actors who came before them (e.g. Hay and Wincott 1998; Skocpol 1992; King 1995) and those who are currently acting within the same space. In this vein, political parties reflect "loose couplings" of actors, in which there can be attenuated links and discontinuity (March and Olsen 1976). Individual decision making

does not become formulaic, devoid of any behavioral stamp as individuals could make

conflicting decisions even if at the same position within the organization; however, it

does emphasize political parties, as organizations, have tremendous influence over the

opportunities afforded to the actors which they contain and thus reflexively shape the

trajectory of the organization as a brand conduit.

Complicating this decision-making structure, intra-party power is not hierarchical

and hegemonic, but as Schlesinger highlighted, "there is always implicit the question

'who is the 'real' leader'?" (Schlesinger 1965, 77). Moreover, even when the 'real'

leader is identifiable, their decisions and actions are so constrained and contingent on

negotiation it is difficult to determine their pure intent. Relying on new institutionalism

does not answer this question directly, it does provide a framework that allows for an

understanding beyond individual-level, elite behavior and subsequent analyses in Chapter

4 sheds light as to who the "real" leader is at different points in time.

While political parties are taken to subsume party officials, public officeholders,

supporters-in-the-electorate (Sorauf and Beck 1988), and have been identified by some

scholars as having no fewer than twenty sub-sets of actors (Lawson 1994), the actor and

actor groups of primary interest to this project are the national committees, congressional

leadership, presidents and presidential candidates, and the voting age population[1]. The

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[1] The selection of these five broad sets of actors is justified by Mildred Schwartz's (1994) network analysis of political parties. Having identified twenty-three distinct groups of party actors, Schwartz isolated cohesion and reciprocal relations between different party components and identified the five actors above as comprising the central, national organization.

specializations and core competencies of each of these groups, as materially relevant to the theory of party brand, is explained in detail in Chapter 2.

1.3.4 Getting to Brand: The Party Systems Literature

As has been reiterated, the driving assumption underlying this project – and the bulk of party politics literature - is that political parties are electorally concerned. Debate abounds as to whether political parties are vote-seeking, office-seeking, or policy-seeking; however, each of these theories is unified by a common denominator: elections are the mean through which parties accomplish their objective (Schattschneider 1942, 1960; Key 1966; Strom 1990). Ultimately, the distinction between various theories of party motivation is not of crucial importance to this project. However, understanding the party-individual link and the ability of parties to develop a brand to their electoral benefit, is inextricably linked with much of the party politics literature that is divided into the study of various party systems.

Political parties in the United States have long been recognized as multi-faceted entities; a supposedly loose alliance between three groups of actors – party-as-organization (PO), party-in-electorate (PIE), and party-in-government (PIG) (Key 1964). This conceptualization provides for the tidy analysis of American party politics within different spheres of activity; however, scant research explores the relationship between these spheres. Specifically, this project examines the relationship between party-as-organization, party-in-government, and party-in-electorate as distinct actors with overlapping objectives. Given the trajectory of American politics and the (relatively) recent transition to the era of candidate-centered campaigns, it is crucial to understand

this interplay, as many of the discipline's previous assumptions regarding the role of party-as-organization in relation to elections are minimally, incomplete if not incorrect.

Historically, POs – at the national, state, and local levels – cooperated during elections out of strategic necessity (Ostrogorski 1964; Schattschneider 1942). Ballot structures linked parties at each tier of government and electing partisans at each level allowed parties to maximize patronage and preferments. Additionally, the national organization controlled the necessary resources (i.e. financial and administrative) to coordinate an effective nationwide campaign (Bruce 1927; Kent 1923), while local parties delivered locals to the polls through grassroots, micro-targeting (Sorauf 1990; Merriam 1923). The national party provided benefits through economies of scale, but could not serve as an instrument at the citizen level (Arterton 1982). During this period POs wielded tremendous authority as they served as the definitive link between government and citizens.

In the mid-1900's the emergence of the direct primary, civil service regulations (Key 1958; Roseboom 1970), the shift in demographic characteristics (e.g. increased social mobility, declining immigration, etc.), and birth of a national identity redirected power away from "party bosses" and undermined the utility of a local party structure (Raney 1975; Kayden and Mahe 1985; McWilliams 1981). Furthermore, the advent of modern mass communication allowed the national party apparatus and their candidates to communicate directly with citizens, removing the reliance on local party infrastructure (Agranoff 1972; Sabato 1981). Cumulatively, these factors are (at least partially) responsible for the decrease in party identification since the early 1970's (Carmines,

Renten, and Stimson 1984; Beck 1984), a decrease in reliance on partisan referents and decision-making cues by citizens (Burnham 1970; Lad and Hadley 1975; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1979; Wattenberg 1984), and a decrease in party unity among elected officials (Deckard 1976; Clubb, Flanigan, and Zingale 1980).

While the process by which POs reorganized in the wake of their shifting relationship to voters certainly is related to brand construction, this project is more concerned with how parties have overcome these changes to the party system and developed new methods of communicating directly with citizens through national campaigns. The erosion in the local party-individual link made it ever more important for both parties to develop strong core identities as their brands became the primary method of communicating with the mass public on a national scale, while balancing various constituencies that had previously coexisted with minimal awareness of the other.

With this in mind, this dissertation rests upon the "greats" of American party politics literature (including Schattschneider and Key) in providing a baseline explanation of the link between POs and PIE. At its core, a political party is differentiated from alternative pressure groups by their desire to make a bid for power – which requires majority popular support – not just policy. During this initial bid and in attempting to maintain power;

> "The party must therefore do business with a great variety of people. The consistency and symmetry of programs must be bent, amended, and amputated to fit the cruel necessities of compromise on a multitude of fronts. To refuse to make concessions and to refuse to develop a many-sided program is simply to refuse to make a bid for power," (Schattschneider 1942, 62).

To this end, political parties are an intrinsically democratic exercise (Epstein 1983) and party organizations link, "ignorant people and experts," (Schattschneider 1960, 137). In today's market, with less personal or direct opportunities to join party and individual, the central contribution of POs to democracy is their simplification of alternatives in coordinated attempts to win elections (Key 1950, 1964; Schattschneider 1942; 1960).

New theories of the party system (e.g. party-as-broker (Herrson 1986), party-as-campaign (Frantzich 1986), party-as-PAC (Arterton 1982)) critique traditional party theory by emphasizing the growing divide between elite and mass partisans, but do little to explore this connection. Admittedly, PO and PIE are not joined in the way they were previously; whereas parties were once the lone connection between government and citizen there are now a multitude of linkages. However, analyzing how parties – and more specifically, their brand – act as a conduit between elite and mass levels comports with the general themes of traditional party theory, while providing an update as to the modern-day mechanism.

1.3.5 Getting to Brand: Analyzing Party Across Time

Additionally, this dissertation builds upon the broad body of party realignment, dealignment, and decomposition literature. At the most general level of abstraction, party image is studied by analyzing trends in individual favorability toward the major parties and attempting to isolate what prompts shifts and deviations. While this dissertation is not primarily concerned with refining the definition of party realignment, the correlation between shifting brand, brand-image and individual party identification are of material relevance to the introduced motivating questions.

Party realignment has been studied at length, but similarly to party image, is plagued by conceptual inconsistencies. The primary body of literature can be divided into two competing frameworks: one of which argues realignments are hallmarked by a reversal in party fortunes among the masses (e.g. Campbell, et al., 1960; Burnham 1970), the other which posits new issue cleavages redefine party systems. (e.g. Key, 1955; Schattschneider 1960; Sundquist 1983). While this distinction appears corrupt with endogeneity – one could easily assume changes along issue lines drive party fortunes and vice versa – each of the aforementioned authors have provided historical evidence for their position as independent from their counter-explanations. To this end, there is evidence that evolving issue cleavages lead party success and that shifting party favorability drives issue visibility/importance (Carmines and Stimson 1989).[2]

1.3.6 Getting to Brand: Parties in an Era of Dealigning Partisanship
A rational calculus of party affiliation and vote choice highlights the judicious individual should recognize the futility of participating in the political process (Downs 1957); given the near-impossibility a single person's actions will be of determinant importance, the overall focus among political scientists has shifted from explaining why people do not participate to why people do.

Historically, there was tremendous incentive for citizens to align themselves with a major party given the tangible benefits these organizations offered (DiGaetano 1988;

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[2] In addition to this conceptual divide there is also a series of sub-literature, which draws more nuanced distinctions in describing realignments. Among these are distinctions between "minor" and "major" realignments (Sundquist 1983), sub-realignments, adjustments (Burnham 1970), critical elections (1959) and shifts. While some of these concepts are presented as at odds with one another in the literature, (e.g. "critical elections" suggest rapid changed marked by punctuated equilibrium, while adjustments can occur slowly, over several elections) each serves only to clarify a different process or path that party systems take.

Campbell 2006; Sundquist 1973). At a minimum, parties proved to be the primary intermediary between citizens and their representatives, transmitting policy preferences, designating candidates, and educating voters; in major cities where deeply entrenched machines like Tammany Hall or Pendergast reigned supreme, partisan identification translated to employment, rent covered, medical bills paid, extralegal services provided, and a political advocate in government. Prior to the candidate-centered era, parties – as organizations – provided a set of tangible services unique to the party, which could not be procured through another outlet and embodied certain attributes that encouraged even the most electorally rational citizens to become members.

That is not to say political parties and, more specifically, party affiliation is without utilitarian benefit today. Partisan identification remains the strongest predictor of vote choice (e.g. Campbell, et al. 1960) and helps to simplify the electoral landscape (Downs 1957; Rahn 1993; Popkin 1994; etc.). Subsequently party leadership strives to develop this signaling mechanism to the mutual benefit of citizens and elected officials (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005; Aldrich 1995; Kiewit and McCubbins 1991). In more recent years, the intangible assets of party affiliation – including self-expressive value, identity, and loyalty – are emphasized as explaining partisan attachment despite the decline in party centrality (Green, et al. 2004, Goren, et al. 2009, Huddy 2001). It is of note that these intangible assets to partisans parallel that of the intangible assets of branded products to consumers as will be highlighted in the next chapter.

The rise of the candidate-centered era has minimized the centrality of political parties to voters' civic experiences and advocates of the party-in-decline model (e.g.

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Wattenberg 1986) argue electoral disaggregation is the result of a myriad of factors, which are ultimately reduced to, "a dissolution of the parties as action intermediaries in electoral choice and other politically relevant acts," (Burnham 1970). Although political parties are no longer the primary broker between the government and the governed, fifty-six percent of voting-age-Americans self-volunteer as Democratic or Republican (Gallup 2014) and partisan identification remains the single most accurate predictor of political participation and choice (Bartels 2000; Miller 1991).

Contrary to much of the dealignment and candidate-centered literatures, this projects argues that record rates of independents and loose partisanship should encourage the study of parties. Despite the attenuation of partisanship for many Americans, parties persist and remain central to the American political experience. In reassessing the discipline's focus, the party brand framework has great explanatory power as it is sufficiently flexible to allow for changes in party across time without diminishing our ability to explain intra-organizational, elected official-party, and party-citizen dynamics.

1.3.7 Getting to Brand: Party Brand To-Date
Party brand is frequently used synonymously with the term party label to designate the partisanship of a candidate or the legislative positioning of an elected official. To this end, theories of party brand as a simplifying mechanism (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Kiewet and McCubbins 1991; Snyder and Ting 2002) refute early political theory, which maintained voters with imperfect information were not capable of maintaining a strong electoral connection (e.g. Miller and Stokes (1962)).

Political parties are the producers of their own brand names and these labels provide the voter with information shortcuts or signals, which allow them to estimate the

policy positions of candidates and their representatives without being provided any information on the politician's actual policy stance (Woon and Pope 2008; Brady and Sniderman 1985; Lupia 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998). In the most general sense, party brands are developed as a signaling mechanism to bridge the gap between party and voter. While voters benefit from this "cost-saving device" (Aldrich, 1995: 49), political parties have a strong incentive to develop recognizable, trustable brands their candidates can use to their electoral advantage (Cox and McCubbins, 2005: 11). Despite the relative agreement that brands act as simplifying labels, there has been little systematic investigation as to how brands are constructed, what information they convey, and how they are manipulated.

One of the few attempts to formalize labels and brand names was undertaken by Snyder and Ting (2001) who developed a game theoretic model of party behavior and signaling in an attempt to formalize party labels and brand names. At the core of their argument, Snyder and Ting maintain that party labels convey meaning because the party restricts their membership to candidates who fit their ideology and constrains the behavior of their elected members. It is the party that defines the candidate, not the reverse, as parties are long-lived organizations, primarily concerned with assisting short-lived politicians implement party-amenable policies (Alesina and Spear, 1988; Harrington 1992). The strength of party brand over candidate label/brand is demonstrated through the analysis of ANES data, which highlights voters can distinguish a political party and their representative as conservative or liberal, but are not able to distinguish the

position of politicians within a single party. This variation in perception and identification are driven by inter-party differences (Snyder and Ting 2001).

Under this ideal-framework, parties manage their brand as it relates to individuals' perceptions by fostering homogeneity and maintaining discipline among members and making current policy positions salient and distinct from previous platforms (Snyder and Ting 2002). In this vein, brands can be a successful conduit between parties and citizens when; (1) individual beliefs about parties are sensitive to party unity levels (i.e. citizens can determine whether the party has the ability to regulate member behavior) and (2) when individuals are able to take past behavior into account to assess the credibility of commitments to current policy positions and platforms. Without meeting these requisite factors, party brand becomes an ineffective signal to voters.

Snyder and Ting provide a compelling intellectual exercise and theoretically appealing model; however, given the understanding of the American voter it is unreasonable to assume the average citizen possesses the cognitive recall, much less an understanding of party unity, as is allegedly necessary to discern the trustworthiness of a respective brand.

Additionally, one of the few studies that tackles the origins of party brands is by Woon and Pope (2008), who argue party leaders in Congress are pivotal to the development of a strong and recognizable party brand, and thus have an incentive to shape their brand through congressional activity. Playing into the stereotype literature, they further, "party brands are not immutable stereotypes, but have congressional origins," (Woon and Pope, 2008; 24). This model is overly simplistic as it fails to

recognize the significance of parties and party behavior in other facets of politics and –

similarly to Snyder and Ting – assumes individuals operate at a higher level of political

understanding than research indicates. For an individual to recognize a party brand that

has purely congressional origins, it would follow the individual also have knowledge of

recent legislative activity and how each party voted, which seems highly unlikely given

many Americans cannot correctly answer basic political knowledge questions (Delli

Carpini and Keeter, 1993).

Using these studies as a theoretical baseline, this dissertation pushes party brand

from an underspecified and idealized concept into the real world of politics, in which

parties are not homogenous entities and voters are not perfectly informed citizens.

1.3.8 Getting to Brand: Party Image To-Date

Party image has been studied somewhat sporadically since the mid-twentieth

century, beginning with Phillip Converse's party-centric studies of the 1960s, Richard

Trilling in the 1970's, Martin Wattenberg in the 1980's, and most recently revived by

Tasha Philpot in *Race, Republicans, and the Return of the Party of Lincoln* (2007).

Although each scholar acknowledges the work of their forbearers, the extant literature is

not unified in definition, theory, or explanation as to the significance of party image.

Until recently party image has not been studies as a meaningful concept in and of

itself, which may explain the disjointed explanations presented in the extant literature.

When party image was incorporated, it was generally to aid in the explanation of another

phenomenon. During the 1960's when the Michigan School rose to prominence, party

image was studied as an extension of party identification and a component of vote choice

(Campbell, et al., 1960; Sellers 1965). Throughout the 1970's and 1980's trends

indicating a decrease in the perception of party image were used to support the broader argument of partisan realignment and decomposition (Burnham, 1970; Trilling, 1975; 1976). Only Philpot's analysis of the role of racial imagery in affecting citizen perceptions isolates party image as a freestanding concept, which stands alone.

Despite a lack of unified academic study, a common understanding motivates each account – party image is, "a "mental picture" an individual has about a political party," (Trilling, 1975: 285). However, what this mental snapshot specifically captures and how it is altered is unclear. At the most general level, party image is said to be a collection of symbols an individual identifies with a political party (Philpot 2007; Sears and Funk, 1991) with each symbol being an, "affectively charged element in a political attitude object," (Sears, 2001; 15). Explanations as to how these perceptions are developed or acquired vary and range from socialization (Rahn 1993) to environmental factors (Fiske and Taylor 1984).

Party image is recognized as a stereotype, or schema, a "cognitive structure that organizes prior information and experience around a central value or idea, and guides the interpretation of new information and experience," (Zaller, 1992: 37; Brewer and Kramer, 1985; Duckitt and Wagner, 2002). To this end, party image allows us to respond to party-related stimuli and efficiently interpret new material within our expectations (Philpot 2007; Fiske and Taylor 1984; Rahn 1993). If party image stereotypes are simplifying mechanisms that allow boundedly rational individuals to navigate the complex political terrain (i.e. party image schema as similar to a satisficing strategy (Koeble, 1995; Krosnick, 1991), it follows that imagery that is nuanced or specific is

often "overridden" to neatly fit within the generalities of the existing schematic

framework[3] (Fiske and Taylor, 1984). That is, when an image is incongruous with an

individual's existing "mental picture", it is only adopted if it represents a major change in

the party or is made salient through messaging efforts (Philpot, 2007).

This project challenges this subsection of the literature, which maintains party

image is merely a simplifying schematic mechanism. While party image certainly guides

the use of party labels in elections (e.g. a voter with a negative image of the Republican

Party will likely have a negative perception of a Republican candidate when no further

information is available), it is overly reductive to allege party image serves only a

heuristic function.

Although current party images constitute the baseline from which future

evaluations are formed (Rapoport 1997), an individual is more likely to accept

confirming information and disregard partisan stimuli, which challenges their existing

schema (Lodge and Hamill, 1986; Taber and Lodge, 2006). Prior beliefs have, "an

anchoring effect" (Philpot, 2007) on how individuals update their party image and it

follows that those with "weaker" party image[4] are more susceptible to changes in party

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[3] Within psychology, individual tendency to disregard or discount competing information that challenges pre-existing expectancies is referred to as "fencing off" or "sub-typing" (Allport, 1954; Rothbart and John, 1985; Weber and Crocker, 1983). The motivation behind this behavior is two-fold; (1) because stereotypes justify social orders, provide a sense of self, and often justify individual behavior, individuals are reluctant to reform a cognitive framework, which could have far-reaching implications and (2) atypical group members are less likely to trigger the stereotype for the group they are associated with. Without recalling the stereotype it is unlikely the individual will amend their belief system (Kunda and Olseon, 1995; 1997).

[4] Just as there are strong and weak partisans, there is variation in the strength of an individual's party image. While socialization accounts for a substantial portion of an individual's party image strength, individuals with less information or who have made party image assessments using outdated or less-salient information are more susceptible to changes in party brand.

brand. In many ways, party image operates similarly to party identification in that while it is possible for an individual to "update" their perception of parties in the wake of new political factors, their perceptions are substantially influenced by yesterday's party platforms, messaging, and visibility (Fiorina, 1981).

One of the few studies, which attempts to analyze if, how, and when an individual will modify their partisan stereotypes, evaluates whether experimental participants incorporate the policy stance of a candidate into their electoral consideration if the respective position is incongruous with that of the party platform (Rahn 1993). Rahn's findings support the larger cognitive dissonance body of research, which maintains individuals are relatively fixed in their partisan ways and that voters, "neglect policy information in reaching evaluation; they use the label rather than policy attributes in reaching evaluation; and they are perceptually less responsive to inconsistent information," (Rahn, 1993; 492).

Similarly, voters are largely resistant to incorporating temporary, cosmetic changes (e.g. campaign messaging, "compassionate conservatism", etc.) into their perception of a party's brand. When evaluations are changed as a response to party "repackaging" any effect tends to be relatively fleeting and forgotten; superficial changes to brand may influence party image, but do not become embedded in the individual's partisan schemata (Philpot, 2003; 2007).

A second common acknowledgement among authors is that party image is distinct from party identification; however, these concepts are correlated and often discussed in the same breath. As with early party studies, which characterize partisanship as an

individual psychological attachment (Campbell, et al., 1960), party image is an individual's psychological perception of a political party (Trilling, 1976; Philpot, 2004; 2007; Wattenberg, 1982). Extending this comparison, an individual's party image is enduring and generally stable across an individual's lifetime.

In their seminal study of voting and partisanship in the Civil Rights era South, Matthews and Prothro explain, "while party image is not so deeply rooted or so stable as party identification, it is likely to be less ephemeral than voter attitudes toward the issues and candidates of specific campaigns," (Matthews and Prothro, 1963: 378). To this end, party image is most dramatically altered during periods of political upheaval when parties polarize around critical issues and the electorate realigns; however, more moderate changes can occur as the result of marginal adaptations in party platforms, the introduction or new candidates, and through altered party messaging (Burnham, 1970; Sellers, 1965; Trilling 1976; Wattenberg 1984; Philpot 2004; 2007). The extent to which scholars emphasize dramatic versus incremental changes in party image is largely contingent on whether they conceptualize party image as the result of long-term cognitive processes or short-term recall; another sub-question that has been under-studied.

The extant research indicates relative stability in party image across an individual's lifetime and acknowledges the difficulties parties face in influencing how they are perceived at the micro- level. To this end, there is minimal exploration as to how political parties and external forces are successful in manipulating their image, both in terms of individual, subjective perceptions and aggregate perceptions, similar to "market

segments". A conceptual/theoretical framework detailing the relationship between party and individual is requisite to our understanding of this area.

1.3.9 Getting to Brand: Bridging Brand and Image, To-Date

Rampant conceptual inconsistencies and under-specifications make it difficult to clearly link brand to image in the extant literature; however there have been few efforts to build a bridge between the two.

Figure 1 represents Trilling (1973) and Burham's (1970) contribution to the party image literature. Apart from being the first two authors who attempted to systematically trace the relationship between party and individual, their model is unique in that it distinguishes between long and short-term considerations of party image. In line with their respective theories, long-term factors (i.e. political philosophy and economic policy) contribute to stability in perceptions while issues and candidates drive minor fluctuations. Although "tidy" in the sense that the macro-component of party image is divided into two, easily distinguishable categories this model is problematic for two primary reasons.

First, it is assumed party image can be manipulated only at the margins and is otherwise constant, with general philosophy and economic policy being malleable only during periods of major realignment. This claim is challenged by the large number of scholars who argue on behalf of degrees of realignment, in which a party can alter its position on a fundamental issue or philosophical principle without a complete overhaul of the current party system (Sundquist 1983; Clubb, Flanigan, and Zingale, 1980; Campbell and Trilling 1980, 55).
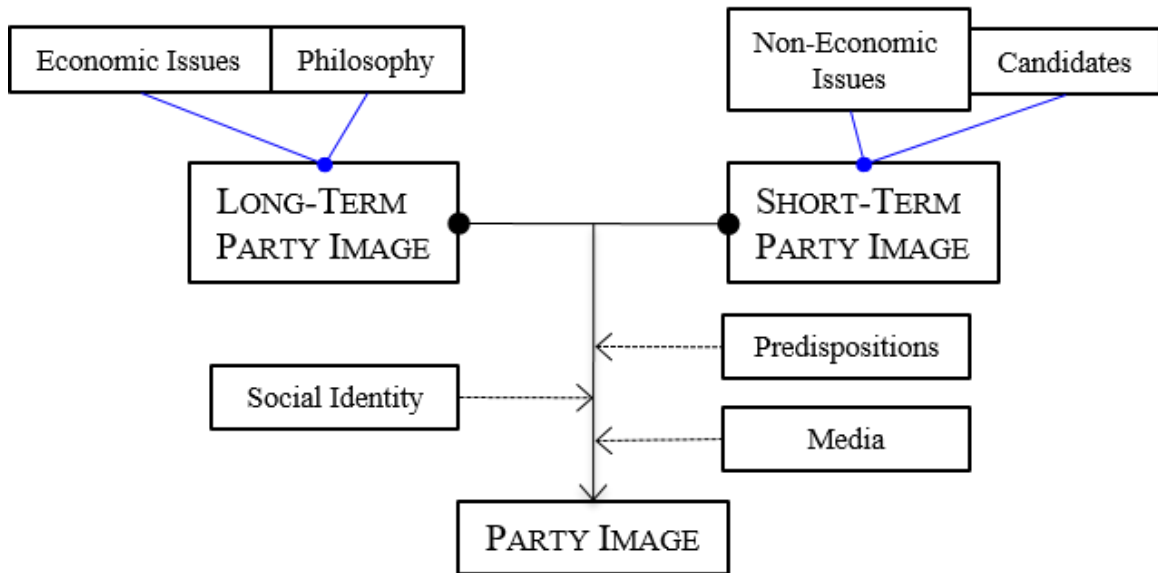
Figure 1.2 Combined Model of Party Image, Trilling (1973) and Burnham (1970)

Second, both Trilling and Burnham study party image trends from the early 1950's through the late 1960's; a period during which economic policy was critical in defining each party. It is plausible that, after the breakdown of the New Deal Coalition, fiscal policy proved to be less deterministic with regard to party image and that – from the mid-1960's forward – the Republican Party (beginning with Goldwater's campaign) capitalized on cleavages in the Democrat's Solid South (e.g. civil rights, etc.), in turn making non-economic policies salient and critical to image. Chapter 3 lends support for this supposition by highlighting both parties' brand positions, which are correlated with party image, have trended toward and away from economic concerns at different points in history.

The second and most compelling model of party-individual interaction to-date is offered by Tasha Philpot (2007) and presented in Figure 2. Philpot presents a "catch-all" model of party image in which all symbols – current and prior – candidates, platforms,

associated groups, and historical events are components of the party's projected image. This image is moderated by the individual's predispositions (e.g. partisanship, etc.), the image of the alternate party, and the media.
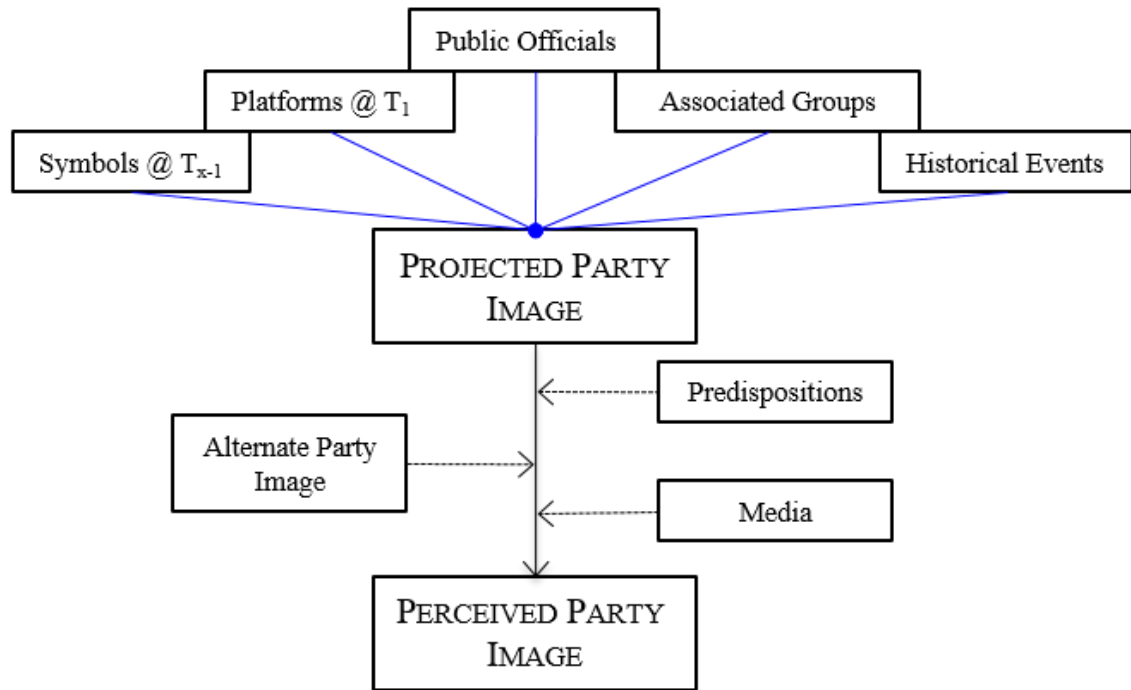
Figure 1.3 Model of Party Image, Philpot (2007)

Although Philpot's model is indisputably more complete than that of Trilling and Burnham, it falls short in explaining the party-individual interaction as it inherently deprives political parties of agency as pragmatic actors. While historical events and groups associated with a political party do impact the image surrounding the party, these are not components parties actively "project", implicit in Philpot's statement that parties "project" a specific image. The party brand framework presented in Chapter 2 disentangles much of what Philpot labels as "projected party image" into the party's total

brand identity, the party's brand position, and external noise that may moderate the impact of the party's actively projected brand position on the individual's brand image.

There is nothing inherently wrong with Philpot's theory – party image is a product of a myriad of factors, both within and outside the party's control – so much as her model does not provide political scientists any additional leverage in explaining how parties influence citizen perceptions and begs refinement.

The rhetoric used to describe party image and brand are very similar and most of the authors discussed use the concepts interchangeably. However, the few authors who have disconnected the macro- from the micro- have laid the foundation for the exploration of another dimension of party politics. Developing the link between brand and image will allow for a greater understanding of how parties can manipulate their brand or label to influence their image, and subsequent electoral prospects – an area of both academic and applied interest.

1.4 A (re)Introduction to Party Brand

Whether because the discipline shifted toward the *en vogue* behavioral paradigm or because party reforms upended a century's worth of institutional norms, seemingly transferring power toward the people and away from the parties, scholars of American Politics have neglected the continued centrality of parties to the American political experience for the last three decades. While the visibility of parties in individuals' daily lives has diminished, the power and role of parties behind the curtain has persisted.

Perhaps most impressive is that in the midst of their own chaos, parties are able to organize and simplify their layered complexity and deliver their message to potential voters. This process, by which the chaos becomes simple and the abstract becomes

tangible, is the singular most important function of parties as it allows them to bridge the elite-individual divide. It is through this mediation that parties translate their leadership, internal debates, priorities, and objectives into publicly claimed policies, platforms, symbols, and candidates, which can be peddled to citizens – acting as consumers – and exchanged for votes on the electoral market (Aldrich 1997).

The study of party brand – a natural extension of treating candidates, policies, and platforms as products and voters as consumers – provides unique leverage in understanding how political parties, as extralegal non-governmental political organizations, are shaped by the society, government, and politics in which they reside and vice versa. Similarly, it is vital to understand the relationship between various sub-group actors and how these relationships promote and constrain party behavior and decision-making.

The conceptualization, theorizing, and analysis of party brand offers the unique opportunity to engage multiple facets of party, to understand how these various components interact, and ultimately constrain or promote each other (and, at times, themselves) in the development of vital political equity: the party's brand. Though the named focus of this project is the development, maintenance, and power of party brand, there is a concurrent sub-focus guided by the new institutionalism, which provides insight as to how parties, as institutions, operate, exist, and are perpetuated.

The next five chapters integrate behavioral and institutional literatures through the lens of business-marketing literature and, in doing so, will reconnect PIE, PO, and PIG explanations of party by analyzing the centrality of a party's brand to their success, in-

the-electorate, in-government, and as-an-organization. The next chapter briefly

summarizes this project's foundational assumptions before moving to integrate business

marketing literature, highlight the relevance of brand (as a concept) to political parties,

and present the framework and theory of party brand. Chapters 3 and 4 use computational

text analysis to provide a descriptive picture of the Democratic and Republican parties'

brand positions between 1976 and 2012, providing insight as to what each respective

brand "looks like" and systematically isolate changes between party brand positions from

election cycle to cycle while determining which actor group initiated these changes.

Chapter 5 summarizes key insights from interviews conducted with former party

chairmen, presidential candidates, congressional party leadership, and their staffers, with

respect to the analyses and findings of Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 6 provides concluding

thoughts and acknowledges limitations in research design, in turn highlighting

opportunities for future research

CHAPTER 2
A (re)Introduction to Party Brand

2.1 Brand Power: An Introduction

Luxottica Group is involved – either by design, manufacture, distribution, or retail – with approximately eighty-percent of eyewear brands on the market today and no fewer than five hundred million people don the firm's frames, often unknowingly. A single pair of glasses costs an average of three-dollars for Luxottica to manufacture, yet the retail price ranges from eighty-dollars to upwards of five hundred. What drives a customer to purchase sunglasses at five times the price of a pair nearly equivalent in functionality, utility, and very often design?

Companies and their products carry intangible attributes – their brand – which drive consumer decision-making and loyalty (Aaker 1996). Consumers' purchases are laden with expressive value; by committing money to a product a customer is signaling they agree with or – quite literally – "buy into" what a brand stands for.[1] When a consumer opts to purchase a four-hundred-dollar pair of Armani, Chanel, or Bulgari frames over a one-hundred-dollar pair of Ray-Ban's or Oakley's – arguably of comparable quality and all produced or licensed by Luxottica – they are spending three-hundred-dollars to signal their identity, connect with, or experience their desired brand. Brands are powerful constructs, a combination of attributes (e.g. a concrete product, etc.)

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[1] The consumer may personally *connect* to the brand, use the brand to *signal* their own individual identity or cultural symbol, or *experience* the affective and sensory components of the brand (Schmitt 2012). The individual has an attachment to the brand that incorporates, but extends past the company's products' attributes, often involves their self-identity, self-presentation to others, and ultimately is an artifact of the corporation's conscious construction of their brand identity.

and intangible mystique (e.g. symbols, exclusivity, etc.), which direct consumer decision-making in highly competitive marketplaces.

Political parties also develop their own brands and, as argued here, they do so through much the same process and to similar effect of corporations. Political science widely acknowledges party brand as a concept relevant to the study of American politics, but until recently few have sought to engage brand as a meaningful construct in and of itself. Recent studies that do incorporate the concept as a central part of their inquiry tend to treat party brand as manifestly inherent or employ the concept as a means to an end. There is little discussion of what party brand is or how it comes to be; rather, the discipline's focus on brand is as relates to partisanship and party breakdown (e.g. Lupu 2011), messaging valence (e.g. Butler and Powell 2014), the branding of elected officials (e.g. Speed, et al. 2015), and political communication in the age of social media (e.g. Tumasjan et al. 2010; Enil and Skogerbo 2013). Political and business marketing literatures more directly engage with the concept (e.g. Smith and French 2010, 2009; Schneider 2004; White and Chernatony 2002; Schweiger and Adami 1999, etc.), but trend toward the consumer/voter perspective and do not bridge brand theory with the extant understanding of political parties.

Assuming political parties are concerned with self-perpetuation and amassing power by winning elections, there is an incentive to cultivate brand identity and position – a set of tangible and intangible benefits to attract supporters – much the same as companies consciously develop their products and surrounding brand to interest voters. The beauty of party brand – both theoretically and as a unit of observation – is that it

provides insight into long- and short-term processes behind party decisions, while still allowing for analysis of the ultimate action. As well, party brand complements existing narratives by systematically joining the study of parties-as-organizations, parties-as-elected officials, and parties-in-electorate.

This chapter begins by highlighting the motivating assumptions of this dissertation, paying specific attention to the gaps and blind spots left by behavioral narratives, and then moves to introduce and conceptualize party brand based on the synthesis of business-marketing and party politics literatures in a manner consistent with the discipline's current understanding of parties, but especially material to institutional narratives. In doing so, a powerful explanatory concept emerges, which links elite and mass stories and begets theoretical insight as to how and why parties develop overtime and which actors lead changes to the party's brand.

Section 2.2 emphasizes central assumptions that underpin this project, the importance of understanding parties as organizations, and traditional models of party organization before moving to introduce key party stakeholders. Section 2.3 summarizes key components of brand theory, then introduces the party brand framework and theory of political branding.

2.2.1 A (re)Turn to Parties as Institutions: Assumptions, Actors, & Models
This project is predicated on the assumptions parties are endogenous, immeasurably complicated, entrenched in American society, and a product of the electoral system in which they are nested. It is impossible to divorce party from society, from history, from politics or party from any one of its sub-group actors as all of these parts are inextricably braided and, in many instances, mutually constitutive. Each phase

of this project is conceived of with conscious attention paid to the blind spots and ambiguities inherent in party research. Moreover, electing to study the national strata of the American two-party system, is a conscious decision to (temporarily) put aside state and county arms in favor of a more complete audit of the national parties.

These gaps – some mindful, some accidental – are intrinsic to the exercise and, while imperfect, this project argues it is better to study a portion of the totality of the parties than to study the totality of a portion as is de rigueur in some scholarship. It is preferable to recognize the limitations in studying complex organizations and analyze units of inquiry as close to on their own terms as possible, rather than to impose arbitrary cut points (e.g. PIE, PO, PIG) to facilitate neat analysis.

Despite the early treatment of political parties as organizations (e.g. Weber, Duverger, Selznick, etc.) more recent party studies have trended toward behavioral models, which neglect the organization as the primary unit of inquiry in favor of individuals or partisans within the electorate. While this transition is largely an artifact of the discipline's shift toward behavioralism en masse, it is also partially driven by the practical restraints in studying parties with focus on their organizational core. Those studies that have focused on parties at the elite level typically focus on the role of parties with respect to elected officials and neglect to incorporate the party organization as an integral player in the broader partisan landscape (e.g. Cox and McCubbins 1993).

Apart from their inherent complexity, parties – as organizations – are loathe to grant researchers the breadth and depth of access required to sufficiently research and understand their internal dynamics. Thus, most accounts treat party behavior as the

aggregator of their leaders, interest group, and constituents' preferences, with the primary goal of maintaining power. Insofar as this literature discusses internal strife, it is often assumed disagreements are a function of different members having different (policy) interests. Incorporating behavioral and organizational literatures in the analysis here facilitates a more holistic picture of party behavior as organizations with layered objectives and bounded ability to actualize their goals.

To understand the role of the party and their dynamics, especially during a period of record polarization and strife, it is critical to understand the process by which parties are led to action. It is insufficient to treat parties as monoliths and draw blanket conclusions about what the party (or its partisans) represent solely on the ultimate action of the party in a given area. For example, the discipline's propensity for treating observable outcomes as intent would mean the observable outcome of the 2016 presidential contest (Trump's election) is evidence of the Republican Party's intent, which would ignore the half century long process that paved the way for the Trump presidency and the major infighting within the Party regarding Trump's nomination, election, and governance. Such myopic view – in which the decision demonstrates the intent – belies the complexity of the party and obscures the process, which is often more revealing than the outcome.

2.2.2 A (re)Turn to Parties as Institutions: Models of Party Systems

As elaborated in the subsequent discussion of actors and throughout this project, parties are best described in the extant literature through a natural systems model in which the organization responds to the needs and demands of relevant actors through a balancing of a range of desires – both intrinsic and extrinsic to the organization – and by

primarily adapting to – as opposed to strictly dominating – the environment in which the

party is embedded (Panebianco 1983). The natural systems framework is much less

hierarchical than the rational model, which assumes each actor group works within a

singular, clearly defined space to actualize a single objective. Such preoccupation with

action lends itself to excessive focus on decisions at the cost of unobservable actions and

intent. Whereas leaders in the rational model are charged with continually pushing

toward the institution's primary goal, leaders in the natural systems model function as

moderators who broker expectations of various actors, internal and external to the system.

Arguably, the rational and natural systems models are not incompatible; at their

inception, political parties – as coalitions of individuals – are developed to accomplish

specific ideological objectives, but as this coalition evolves overtime it is

institutionalized, and the organization trends towards self-perpetuation through the

winning of office. This transition is consistent with the theory of substitution of ends

(Michels 1927), whereby a party tends to drift away from their initial goal in favor of the

survival of the organization through the careful management of actors' (often competing)

individual aims. This collaborative model is expounded in the next section and chapter,

which discusses the cooperative relationship of various subgroup actors and the

importance of managing competing objectives of subgroup actors.

2.2.3 A (re)Turn to Parties as Institutions: Sub-groups within the Parties
The primacy of political parties as organizations is not meant to marginalize the

role of individuals there within. However, given the immense size of parties and their

diverse competencies, the role of individual actors is best understood when the sub-unit

of inquiry are those coalitions internal to the party as opposed to the individual itself.

Even in those instances when a clear leader can be identified (e.g. the chairman of the national organization, etc.) these individuals operate within formally and informally defined limits and reach decisions only after repeated, reciprocal interactions with other internal and external actors. That is not to say leaders and sub-group actors are deprived of freedom of action, it is to highlight the decision-options available to a party actor at any given point in time are constrained by prior decisions made by/within the institution, concern for divergent internal interests, and made with bounded knowledge of external – but relevant – actors' positions.

With this in mind, institutions act upon, distort, and transform actor preferences and thus the process by which a decision is made often tells us more about the party than the ultimate decision. Given the cumulative nature of decision-making, it is imperative we remain aware that what the party reveals through action is only a sliver of what exists. Sub-group actors within parties enjoy a degree of choice, but their ultimate decisions and, in turn, observable actions are not a pure reflection of the individual's intent.

Political parties are comprised of four categories of sub-group actors, including; office holders, resource holders, benefit seekers, and voters. Each category encompasses a coalition of individuals that has their own distinct core competencies and specializations with respect to one another. Each will be discussed in turn, with specific emphasis paid to the competencies of each coalition in relation to their role in the branding process. Table 2.1 (below) summarizes this information.

Office holders (somewhat obviously) are all individuals who either hold office or are actively pursuing elected office (Schlesinger 1975). At the national level, this

category is comprised of party sub-group actors including; congress, the president, and all candidates actively seeking those offices. As such, office holders are the most outward facing category of sub-groups actors and are uniquely equipped to broadcast the party's brand. Their core competencies as relate to party brand include; policy development and the publicity of the party's position. For these reasons, office holders directly contribute to the production and position of their party's brand.

Table 2.1 Contributors to/Sub-group Actors of the Political Party Branding Process

	Definition	Sub-group Actors	Core Competencies	Brand Relation
Office Holders	Those who seek and those who hold elected office (Schlesinger 1975)	Congress, President, Candidates	Policy development, Party publicity	Producer
Resource Holders	Those who centrally control critical resources, financial and informational	Party Organization	Fundraising, Data aggregation, Preference organization, Moderators, Strategic development, Policy influence	Producer
Benefit Seekers	Those who seek to influence politics and require the party's success to achieve their goal	Activists, Political Action Committees, Editorialists, etc.	Policy influence, Financial support, Information dissemination	Consumer/ Quasi-Producer
Voters	Likely voters	Committed supporters, passively loyal, and ticket switchers and splitters	Validation/Support	Consumer

In the American context, resource holders are those sub-group actors who control critical resources – financial and informational – requisite for the pursuit of elected office and who act as a central clearinghouse for the aggregation and dissemination of these resources. In line with this definition, the national party committees are thus the resource

holders and are responsible for fundraising, keeping a finger on the pulse of core

partisans and likely supporters, organizing the preferences of its supporters and elected

officials, moderating internal strife as necessary, and identifying opportunities for

strategic development of their party's brand based on the data they house. Taken together

and conveyed to their office holders, these responsibilities influence policy development.

Though less visible to the public, resource holders have a greater role in the

production of the party's brand because they anchor and constrain elected officials' brand

extensions, are more enduring in that they do not risk defeat during (re)election, are

central to the overall process, and are more stable than officials' brand extensions as they

are somewhat insulated from the ephemeral nature of public opinion and electoral cycles,

which produce time-horizon disparities. Moreover, the organization's core competencies

make it singularly prepared to foresee changes to or in the electorate, which necessitates

changes to the party brand to remain viable and self-perpetuate. For these reasons,

resource holders are the primary driver of change and maintenance to the party's core

brand.

Benefit seekers, including activists, political action committees, and editorialists

are those who seek to influence politics and require the support of office and/or resource

holders to do so. Though the core competencies of benefit seekers (e.g. fundraising,

policy influence) overlap with resource holders', they fundamentally differ from the latter

in that resource holders stand to benefit from the action or favor of resource and office

holders. The degree and kind of benefits sought vary dramatically within this actor class.

Because of this, benefit seekers are "brand influencers" – that is, they are able to apply

external pressure greater than that of the average citizen, without having determinative influence – but they are predominantly consumers because of the benefits they seek to receive.[2]

Voters, somewhat obviously, are comprised of committed supporters, the passively loyal, ticket switchers, and ticket splitters. They are those voting age citizens with the greatest likelihood of supporting the party and thus are the focus of much of the party's branding activities. Voters validate or invalidate the party's actions, policies, and candidates through voting and off-year political activities and inform the party's strategic decisions by participating in surveys and focus groups. As will be subsequently discussed, a citizen voting for a respective candidate is akin to a consumer purchasing a specific product, and thus voters are the core consumers whom the parties attempt to woo in the electoral marketplace.

The next section details the conceptual and theoretical model of party brand, which is inspired by business-marketing literatures, but is rooted in the party politics literatures discussed to this point.

2.3.1 A (re)Introduction to Party Brand: Identity, Extensions, Position, & Image
The party brand framework builds upon Aaker's (1996) seminal work, which outlines the relationship between corporation, product, and consumer and is heavily informed by related literatures on franchisor/franchisee branding, brand extensions, and

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[2] It is of note that by using this definition – in which a "consumer" stands to benefit from the party's actions – it could be argued that office and resource holders are also consumers, because they are beneficiaries of a strong party brand in that a strong brand allows for self-perpetuation. However, in this context consumers stand to gain something (e.g. favorable policy, etc.) outside of the benefits of a strong brand.

marketing strategies. It has been modified to reflect political science's understanding of party politics, candidate politics, congressional politics, issue ownership, realignment/dealignment, political psychology, and media influence. To this end, the framework presented is minimally specified to allow for generalized, flexible application across time. Additional brand attributes – particularly as relates to the core identity and variables the relationship between brand position and image – could be incorporated depending on the election cycle analyzed without undermining the explanatory power of the model.

The dissertation posits the relationship between the national party committee (brand producer), its elected officials (brand producer), and the voting age population (consumers) is best understood as the relationship between a corporation/franchisor, franchisees, and consumers. The relationship between franchisor and franchisee (elaborated in Section 2.3.3) is particularly important to this project, as it allows for analysis of the simultaneously hierarchical and reciprocal dynamic between national party organizations and their elected officials. Below, each actor group introduced in the previous section is designated as having a role in the brand system (e.g. national committee as franchisor, etc.) and the relationship between actor groups, as consumers and producers of party brand, is defined.

The party brand framework (Figure 2.1) is oriented around three primary brand dimensions that cumulatively comprise a system that allows the brand producer (i.e. office holders and resource holders) to develop useful relationships with potential consumers (voters and, to a lesser degree, benefit seekers). Identity is the origin and

repository of brand meaning, which functions as a value proposition or promise between the party and the citizen. This promise is conveyed to the citizen through brand position – the activated, and broadcasted portion of brand identity by the party – and the message, distorted through the lens of the recipient and a series of mediating variables, is the brand image. Each of these brand components is analyzed in turn.

2.3.2 A (re)Introduction to Party Brand: Components of the Core Brand Identity

The national organization operates as the governing, central apparatus of the party and, in many ways, brings their candidate to "market", via endorsement, just as a company introduces a new product under their brand name. However, for the national organization's endorsement to carry value – substantively or affectively – the party must have a strong, core identity. The national organization's core brand identity is the layered conglomeration of various symbols, issues, ideologies, platforms, and personality characteristics over which the party the party has ownership.[3]

Brand-as-issues, brand-as-platforms, and brand-as-ideology are rather self-explanatory and are a nod to the vital importance of issue ownership (Petrocik 1996), defined platforms, and a recognizable ideology in developing a strong, stable core identity. Issue ownership, which theorizes candidates and parties will emphasize those issues on which they are viewed more favorably than their opposition, complements theories of party brand as ownership is a brand component. Through repeated claiming of a policy domain, a party comes to "own" an issue as they are perceived as being more

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[3] Each of these brand components are referred to as "brand-as-x" in the business marketing literature and are referred to as such here for consistency.

competent in a given arena (e.g. Republicans and national security, etc.), which allows the party to incorporate that specific, publicly recognized expertise into their core brand.

In the corporate realm, brand-as-symbol is most commonly associated with logos and the associations such visuals conjure; however, the brand-as-symbol encompasses all marks, which represent or cue information about the party without explicitly referencing said information. Thus, brand-as-symbol is inclusive of all visuals, slogans, and historical referents that represent the broader party (or corporation) and call upon relevant associations, without explicitly saying so. As sound bites and "click bait" news stories becoming increasingly popular, the importance of symbolism increases in kind as it allows for the quick, cue-like transfers of information. Just as the flash of a donkey silhouette on the television screen conjures images of the Democratic Party, the phrase "Party of Lincoln" reminds citizens of the GOP's appealing ties to The Great Emancipator.

Brand-as-person (sometimes referred to as brand-as-personality) allows for the incorporation of key leadership figures and the ascription of personality characteristics, typically reserved for describing individuals, into the party's core identity. With few exceptions (e.g. Steve Jobs' forefront role with Apple), political parties have an edge over corporations with respect to the power of this brand attribute as their leadership – presidential candidates, congressional leadership, and committee leaders – are much more visible in the former than the latter. That is not to say that brand-as-person is inclusive of all highly visible current and former leadership, rather the party harnesses the charisma and/or legacy of key leaders who are positively associated with the organization by

incorporating their name into the core identity. Additionally, brand-as-person is inclusive of anthromorphic descriptors associated with the parties.

2.3.3 A (re)Introduction to Party Brand: Franchise Extensions and Core Brand Identity

The relationship between the national organization, as a franchisor, and their candidates/elected officials, as franchisees and products of the party, is more involved than the brand components discussed to this point. Candidates and elected officials occupy a liminal space in that they represent the party – the party endorses them, thus presenting them to the market of voters as products – but also have some flexibility with respect to how they portray themselves as a candidate. This relationship – in which the party brings a candidate to market as a sort of product, and then party and candidate must develop a synergy to beget a strong party brand – is rather complex, but can be unpacked using franchise extension and branding schemes literatures.

Corporations make strategic decisions as to what new products are developed and how closely these products should be held to the company's core brand. Before a product is brought to market, the corporation assesses what business they are in by considering who they are in competition with (Levitt 1986; 1960) and the type of product their company can reasonably and sincerely lend their name to (Tauber 1981). Once a new product is identified, the corporation must assess whether the product is entirely new to their company and whether it should be promoted using the core identity's brand name or an alternative, sub-brand name. As Table 2.1 demonstrates, if a product is new, but the brand name is preexisting the relationship between the company and offering is considered a franchise extension. It is the leveraging of an established brand to a new

product, which will carry its own unique attributes in addition to those inherently being

lent by the parent company.
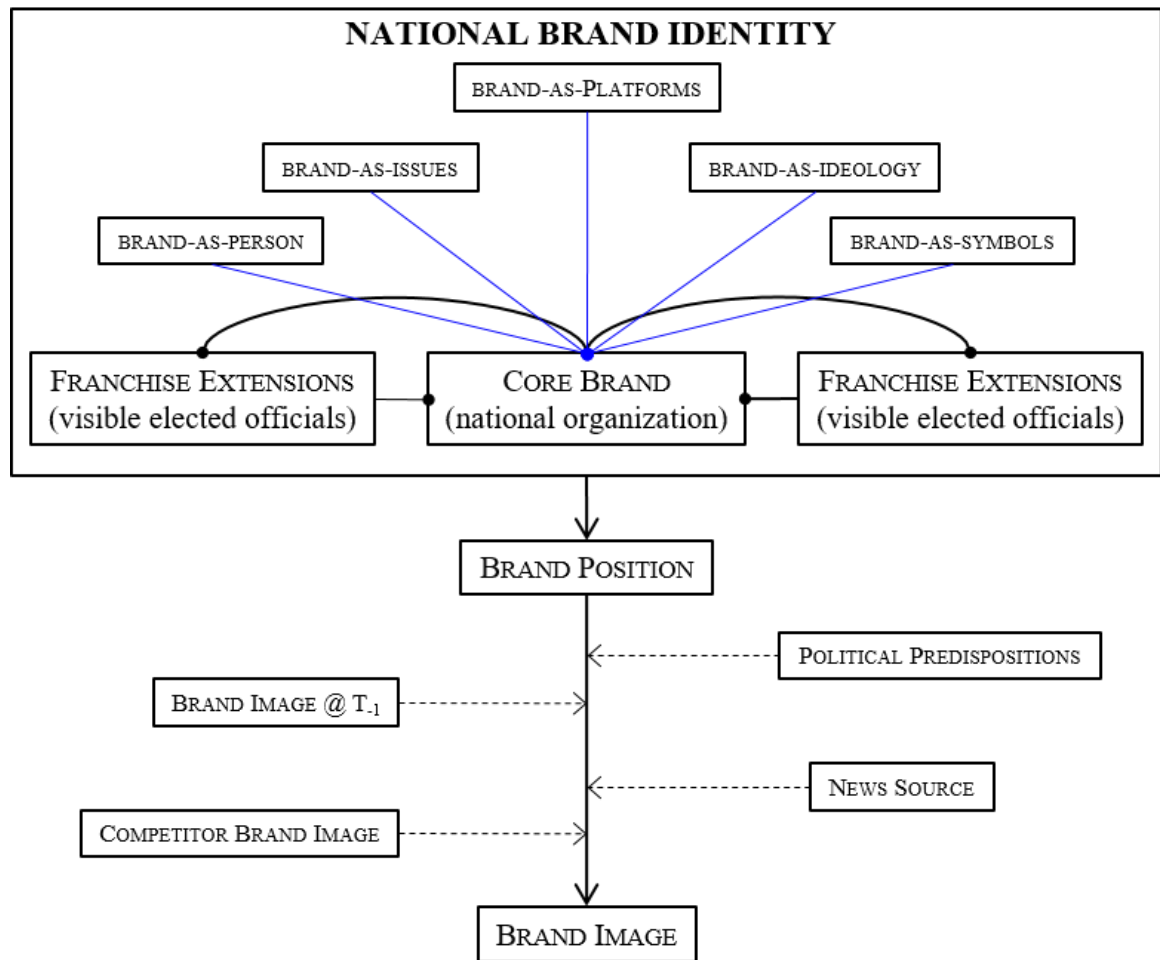
Figure 2.1 Party Brand Framework

For example, Sunkist Growers, Incorporated is an established citrus grower and

distribution corporation that attempted to spur growth by introducing new products, from

orange flavored fruit chews to diet orange soda. These are successful franchise extensions

in that each new product is true to the core brand identity – natural citrus flavors, from a trusted, known entity – while adding a new brand dimension or layer.[4]

Table 2.2 Types of Brand Extensions

Product Category			
NEW	EXISTING		
New Product	Flanker Brand	NEW	Brand Name
Franchise Extension*	Line Extension	EXISTING	

Franchise extensions allow companies to capitalize on their existing brand equity (discussed below), creating immediate consumer awareness and impressions about the product. Additionally, market entry costs for the new product are minimized as there is an existing distribution or promotional infrastructure. Moreover, a successful franchise extension can increase the corporation's recognizability, favorability, provide built in advertising for the company, and inspire growth.

When the new product in question is a person, as a candidate is for the party, all of the above hold. Before a party recruits and endorses a candidate, they consider their opposition for a given race[5] and consider whether the prospective candidate's policy

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[4] It is of note that Sunkist Growers has since transitioned from a franchise extension model to a licensing model, so the company now only lends its name to companies for use in other product categories (e.g. Dr. Pepper Snapple Group produces and distributes Sunkist sodas) under registered trademarks.

[5] A Democrat endorsed during a Senate in California will vary from a Democrat endorsed during a Senate race in Alabama, in large part due to the type of candidate the opposition will likely endorse.

perspectives and background are sufficiently aligned with that of the party's core brand to ensure the endorsement is believable and sincere[6] (Norris 1996; Schlesinger 1985). The latter is of great importance as discontinuity between an organization's core brand and that of their product is known to result in consumer (voter) dissatisfaction with both the franchisor (party) and the franchisee (candidate) (Anisimova 2010).

Once a decision to endorse has been reached, the two independent actors – party and candidate, franchisor and franchisee – establish an agreement, whereby the franchisor agrees to "lease" their name, likeness, associations, resources, and infrastructure to the franchisee in exchange for the franchisee's pursuit of office and policy in the name and image of the franchisor. In addition to the increased recognizability, favorability, advertising, and growth through election, this arrangement decreases the need for the candidate to have large capital outlays at the start of their career (with the party's endorsement comes donor lists and fundraisers) and, in many cases, the party provides the supplies and/or labor necessary to run a campaign (e.g. proprietary micro-targeting lists, local party employees and volunteers, etc.). (Miles Zachary et al. 2011; Tauber 1981; Oxenfeldt and Kelly 1969.) This dynamic is also consistent with those studies that find more experienced, higher-ranking politicians are less likely to tow the party line; overtime, the franchisee becomes less reliant on the benefits the franchisor provides and is able to risk additional leniencies (e.g. Ware 1996, etc.).

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[6] The GOP would (likely) not be able to reasonably endorse a pro-choice, pro-gun control, pro-LGBTQ candidate as their core brand is too much at odds with the candidate's extension, in turn diluting the power of the endorsement and potentially weakening the strength of the core brand.

Central to this relationship is the expectation there is agreement between the party and its candidates as to the terms and conditions of their relationship. Traditional franchisor/franchisee relationships are established with formal contracts, which specifically enumerate the behaviors and commitment expected from both parties and are dissolvable under certain conditions (e.g. one party fails to comply with the terms, etc.). Here political parties (franchisors) come to an agreement with their supported candidates and leadership (franchisees) of the party's brand, but lack corporations' mechanism of control and ability to terminate the franchise arrangement. When a candidate or elected officials strays from the original terms or takes liberties that are inconsistent with the party's core brand identity, the party may denounce the franchisee, withdraw endorsement and all resource support, attempt to compromise or work with the "rogue" franchisee, or allow the franchisee to continue with no consequence.

With an understanding of the relationship between the party organization (franchisor) and a single elected official (franchise extension) established, it is important to consider how the party governs or manages its relationship with all of their candidates and elected officials. In a system with strict party discipline, wherein elected officials are deprived of autonomy in policy votes, the party's core brand is also the brand of each elected officials. This emphasis on a single "master brand" is that of a "Branded House" scheme.[7] The current American party system embodies the House of Brands framework;

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[7] e.g. Apple has multiple unique product offerings, but there is near-complete emphasis on the corporation as the unifying, distinguishing point of reference; the characteristics of each individual product are not particularly important as the overriding weight is placed in Apple's core brand identity as "different", "minimalistic", "intuitive", etc., brand attributes that extend to every product.

parties publicly endorse candidates with whom they share ideology, values, or policy positions, but elected officials are afforded to a degree of freestanding brand development, with the party's core identity serving as an anchor.[8] Figure 2.2 provides an overview of both branding schemes.

House of Brands are typically considered more difficult to manage as there are more moving parts; each franchise extension carries the brand of the party, which is then complemented by their own brand identities. This scheme is even more complicated to manage in the political realm as parties do not have perfect control over the behavior and positions of their candidates and, if a candidate is off-brand, the party is not able to immediately remove the candidate, as a company is might remove a product from shelves due to backlash resulting from brand discontinuity. While there are mechanisms (e.g. promises of information, contributions, endorsements, etc.) through which parties heighten their influence and incentivize certain behavior from their candidates, the link is not quite as tight as it is in business. These exceptions do not undermine the use of the brand-image framework, but provide an opportunity to explore deviations from expected behavior that may provide greater insight as to when branding efforts are more or less successful.

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[8] Under the House of Brands scheme, there are varying degrees of distance between core brand identity and product identity. The corporation's brand may have minimal ties with its offering, as is the case for Lexus' parent company Toyota, which allows the product's brand identity to be at the forefront. The company may also act as a shadow firm, as Proctor & Gamble does with its offerings, and provide concrete benefits to the product, while allowing its products to develop wholly independent brand identities. As with Unilever, each product has a distinct brand identity (e.g. Dove, Ponds, Suave, etc.), but is consistent with the core brand identity and both brand names are prominently featured and well-known. This last model is most similar to the relationship between parties and candidates/elected officials.

It is of note that elected officials, as franchise extensions managed in a house of brands scheme, have the capacity to shape the party's core identity through policy introduction and/or highly visible acts, including presidential bids and media tours. While few elected officials rise to and sustain the prominence necessary to affect the party's identity, there are instances of this sort of feedback relationship in which the franchisee influences the franchisor's brand; this dynamic will be discussed during Chapter 4's consideration of which actors lead changes to party brand.

BRANDED HOUSE   **HOUSE OF BRANDS**

Product Brand		Product Brand
	Core Brand	
Product Brand		Product Brand
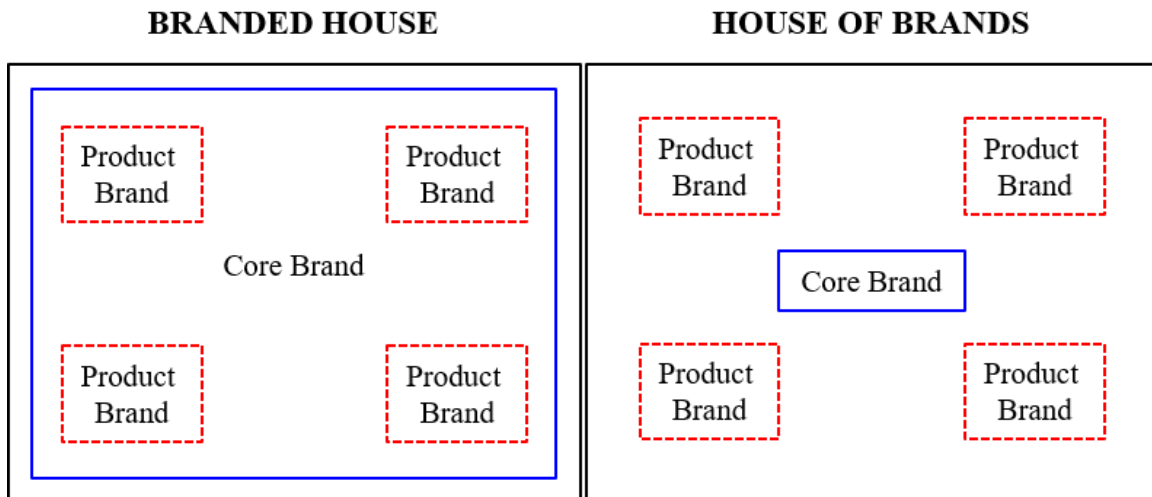
Figure 2.2 Branded House versus House of Brands Models

2.3.4 A (re)Introduction to Party Brand: Brand Position

Brand position is the subset of a party's brand identity that the party chooses to broadcast at a given point in time for strategic purposes; it is the part of their identity deemed most relevant in the eyes of citizens or within the context of an electoral cycle and, for these reasons, must be actively communicated with the populous. To this end, the elements that comprise brand position are a selection of those that comprise brand identity, but there is no difference that makes position a substantively unique brand element.

2.3.5 A (re)Introduction to Party Brand: Brand Image

Brand image is the mental snapshot the individual has of a political party at a given point in time. Image is in stasis with brand when the individual's perception of a party's brand identity aligns perfectly with the party's actual identity. However, the relationship between brand and image is never one-to-one or exactly mirrored. As the individual receives stimuli via the brand position, the information is mediated by a myriad of variables including; their political predispositions, brand image at T_{-1}, their information source, and competing party brands (Philpot 2008). Furthermore, image is incredibly difficult to change as individuals typically disregard information that does not comport with their existing brand image and will only update their perception when presented with a brand position or identity they view as substantially different (e.g. Philpot 2008; Zaller 1992, etc.).

Apart from identifying various brand components and the layered relationship between brand producers (national committee/franchisor and elected officials/franchisees) and consumers (voters and benefit seekers), the party brand framework highlights branding is a multifaceted, coordinated effort at the national level. The extant literature and this project highlight the importance of party labels as a heuristic and the party brand framework outlines the multifaceted, coordinated process by which a brand identity is cultivated, projected to the mass public to be used as a heuristic. However, while a powerful heuristic is a central benefit of developing a strong brand there are other assets – to the party and the voter – which encourage producers to participate in this process. The next section discusses these secondary benefits under the umbrella of brand equity.

2.4.1 What's in a Name: Equity, Awareness, Substance, and Associations

Strong brands yield high levels of brand equity, "a set of assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol, that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or that firm's customers," (Aaker 1991, 15). Equity is the non-monetary capital return brought to the company by creating a brand and the value a brand brings to the target-consumers. Translated to the political realm, a party's brand equity is the return (i.e. support) the party enjoys and the intangible benefits (e.g. collective identity value, coordination benefits, etc.) brought to potential supporters.

As with brand, equity is an abstract concept and does not lend itself to easy measurement. Within the corporate world, equity does not square with those assets that appear on a company's spreadsheet, but the value is often estimated in terms of price premiums, stock price movement, and the price it would cost to acquire the company on top of the cost of raw-materials, existing product stockpiles, distribution networks, and associated patents. For example, when Jaguar was sold to Ford in the 1990's for 2.8 billion dollars, the industry widely accepted Ford paid above and beyond the tangible value of Jaguar (e.g. materials, manufacturing plants, etc.), but did so because they were purchasing the brand equity carried by the name (Prokesch 1989). From the consumer's prospective, equity is measures in terms of favorability or likeability toward a given brand.

While a party's brand equity cannot be measured in terms of stock prices and raw material stockpiles, there are similar observable characteristics that allow for an approximation of the strength of the party's brand, including but not limited to the party's; vote share in presidential elections, share of each chamber, and national party

fundraising in a given period of time. Furthermore, nationally representative political surveys frequently include measures of favorability toward and likeability of each party; these measures are often used by the extant literature as a proxy of general support for the party and map neatly onto those used in business-marketing literature to measure brand image. These and other factors will be elaborated and analyzed as a demonstration of a party's brand equity in Chapter 4.

Brand equity is created and sustained through branding efforts and is measured along four primary dimensions; (1) name awareness, (2) brand loyalty, (3) brandsubstance, and (4) brand associations (Aaker 2009). The relationship between these four components, the political party, and the individual, is visually summarized in Figure

2.4.2 What's in a Name?: Brand Name Awareness

Brand awareness in the corporate world – the manner in which consumers are cognizant of a brand's position on the market and its key attributes – is described quite similarly to Zaller's (1991) 'Receive-Accept-Sample' model of public opinion. A consumer or citizen's "mental box" is filled with the names and functions of different brands and their product offerings; as this box is filled through exposure to advertisements, direct marketing, and inadvertent contact, those brands with greater recognition – more consumers who have heard of the brand name – and recall – more consumers who understand what the brand stands for – sit higher within the box and are more likely to be retrieved by the consumer.
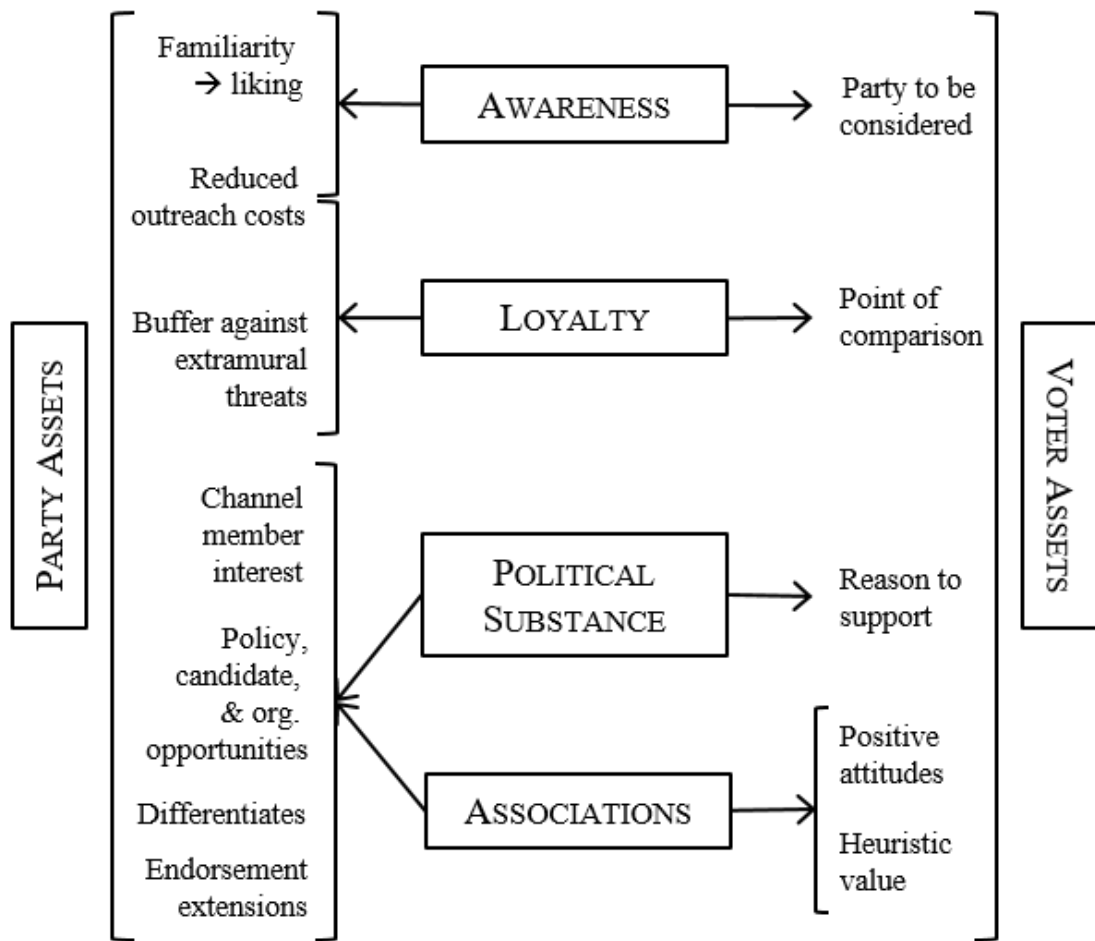
Figure 2.3 Brand Equity and Party/Voter Assets

Brand strategists and political scientists note the importance of recognition in establishing familiarity, which is tied to 'liking' (Levitt and Wolfram 1997; Gelman and King 1990; Cover 1977); however, recall is the primary determinant of decision-making and thus it behooves organizations to develop a brand strategy that does more than just provide name exposure. Ideally, brands which strive to appeal to a wide-base of consumers or citizens will enjoy high levels of recognition and recall. If both are achieved, the branding process continues to avoid falling into "the graveyard"- a scenario

in which recognition is high, recall is low, and consumers are not receptive to messaging as they assume they already know what the brand represents. It is argued this partially accounts for the lag between changes in party brand identity and brand image.

2.4.3 What's in a Name?: Political Parties and Brand Loyalty
The accessibility and use of micro-level data has skyrocketed in recent political campaigns, with many – on both sides of the aisle – praising President Obama's 2012 voter-driven electoral strategy (Nielsen 2012; Semiatin 2012). While micro-targeting only just attracted national attention during the 2012 presidential election, political parties have long maintained extensive databases of their members, their turnout history, and demographic information. Cataloguing this type of data allows parties to divide the electoral market along their historic loyalties as is demonstrated in Figure 2.4; this compartmentalization along party loyalty lines permits strategic mobilization and maximizes the return on the party's investment (Katz and Mair 1995; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1992). Parties have demonstrated the fantastic amount of resources dedicated to wooing and mobilizing ticket-splitters and party-switchers through direct-mail campaigns, face-to-face contact, phone-banking, and party sponsored events. Given our understanding of electoral capture and the relative stability of partisan identification across the individual's lifetime, this seems – at first glance – a reasonable decision on the party's behalf.

However, a brand is only as valuable as the sum of its loyal followers and its potential to generate new customer interest; forgoing the former group in the constant chase to tie-down the latter, parties overlook the associative and channel benefits their most loyal constituents can provide (Chauduri and Holbrook 2001; Jacoby and Kyner

1973). Those who are loyal may not need to be targeted to assure their support, but they

should be targeted to energize their interest regarding the election; those supporters who

are 'activated' are more likely to turnout and more likely to discuss politics with their

peers. It is foolish for parties to overlook their most loyal given the success of peer-to-

peer persuasion when compared to party-to-citizen outreach efforts (Green and Gerber

2008).

LEAST ←	LOYALTY		→ MOST
NON-SUPPORTERS Citizens loyal to another party or not member of electoral market	SWITCHERS & SPLITTERS Citizens committed to more than one party; typically swayed by issue or ideology	PASSIVELY LOYAL Citizens supportive out of habit; likely to have high level of recognition and low level of recall	COMMITTED SUPPORTERS Citizens consistently loyal to party

Figure 2.4 Party Brand Loyalty Segmentation

2.4.4 What's in a Name?: Party Brand Substance

Perceived brand quality – individual perception of brand features – is the only

asset category that independently drives market performance in the consumer world and

has a spillover effect, which is typically is correlated with improvements in other asset

associations and brand image (Janiszewski and Van Osselaer 2000). The parallel in the

political realm is the set of policy positions, values, endorsements, and ideologies a party

embodies, which this project labels brand substance.

Brand substance is a relatively straightforward concept as compared with other

asset categories; however, *perceived* and *actual* brand substance are often incongruous.

Individuals cling to long-held perceptions or stereotypes of party positions and reject

disconfirming information that would update their mental image of the party to correctly

reflect reality (Zaller 1991; Aaker 1991). Correcting discordant brand substance is difficult, as the party must redefine or highlight their misunderstood quality on a dimension citizens will recognize and in a way that permits them to accept the message, regardless of whether it undermines their existing brand image.

Arguably, brand substance is the most important asset category to actively manage as it implicates the three primary brand categories – identity, position, and image – and is most likely to drive turnout and vote-decision. Chapter Four will explore the difficulties the Republican and Democratic parties have encountered in their attempts to decrease asymmetry between perceived and actual substance since 1976.

2.4.4 What's in a Name?: Party Brand Associations

Political brand associations and political brand substance overlap substantially conceptually and with regard to the benefits provided to the party and citizens. As opposed to brand substance, which is (ideally) rooted in the tangible components of party, brand associations are the feelings, people, causes, and symbols the individual affiliates with the brand. As individuals increasingly rely on cues to recall information and make vote decisions, it becomes progressively more important for parties to actively manage their associations to indirectly target potential supporters. Although parties lack control over what citizens think, they have considerable influence over how they think; actively governing brand identity to impel desirable party connections is one way of preserving this control.

2.4.5 What's in a Name?: The Benefits of Brand Equity

Taken cumulatively, political party brand awareness, loyalty, substance, and associations provide negative or positive equity to both the party and citizens. Assuming

each asset class is favorable – meaning each component in Figure 2.3 produces the benefits outlined – brand equity provides value to both the party and the citizen. Political parties with high levels of brand equity enjoy efficient and effective position signaling and marketing efforts (on behalf of a party elite or the organization), voter loyalty with the possibility of spillover effects to-less loyal or non-loyal citizens, and valuable associations; collectively, these foster the party's competitive advantage over their opposition. Party-supporters garner brand equity benefits through eased information processing (i.e. the function of a traditional heuristic), satisfaction in membership, and affirmation of their vote-choice or partisan identification.

Given political parties are inherently endogenous institutions (Aldrich 1995) it follows that the relationship between value-to-party and value-to-supporter are two points on a self-reinforcing feedback loop; as the party's assets increase, so does the benefit conferred to citizens and vice versa. While resource and energy intensive, it befits parties to define, cultivate, and evolve their brand because of the potential – and very likely – return on investment. In an era during which parties are defined by the intangible, it is more important than ever for the organization and elected leadership to take an active, sustained interest in their brand as a mean of attracting citizen interest, providing meaningful service to their supporters, and perpetuating their own power and sustainability.

To this point, emphasis has been placed on merging political science and business marketing literatures to develop a model of party branding and to underscore the benefits of a strong brand to producers and consumers. However, given the layered nature of the

party brand framework and the degree of coordination and resource devotion required to meet the ideal-typical model, the next section will accentuate the institutional hurdles to successful party brand development before introducing the hypotheses to be tested in subsequent chapters.

2.5.1 Constraints and Hurdles to Party Branding

Both political scientists and party elites, (organizational leadership, party leadership, and elected officials) have made the case that branding is an important exercise, so perhaps the more revealing way to approach this question is why shouldn't parties care? Are there certain conditions under which branding should be, or is neglected?

The emphasis to this point has been placed on the role brands play in fostering relationships between producer and consumer, party and citizen; however, brand building is primarily a top-down exercise, which is often thwarted by organizational dynamics and constraints before any branding efforts take hold, and reliant on information flow from the bottom up. Such hurdles are not uncommon and are intrinsic to the nature of organizations.

From an external vantage, the benefits of creating a strong, appealing brand appear glaring and indisputable; if parties are to remain viable and are no longer able to rely on functional benefits to attract supporters, it logically follows they must invest in developing a new set of assets. Yet organizations, from corporations to political parties, are typically resistant to advancing their brand for three primary reasons.

First, organizations and the actors whom they encompass are path dependent. In evolving, political parties are constrained by existing alliances, yesteryear's brand, and

previous alliances/coalitions among other factors, which, "allow the hand of the past to exert a continuing influence upon the shape of the present," (David 1994). Moreover, preference for perpetuating the status quo permeates all aspects of organizational decision-making and change is often necessitated by a strong catalyst, which highlights declining performance and leaves the organization little choice but to deviate from the norm. For instance, the Republican Party experienced a subtle decline in overall membership and favorability measures between 1996 and 2008, but the national organization did not call for a conscious rebranding effort until two presidential elections were lost and there was a sharp decline in favorability among all Americans, party members included (Pew Research 2014).

Second, brand is an incredibly abstract concept, particularly when compared with typical offerings (e.g. products or policies, etc.). A corporation is often more comfortable developing new products and a party is more comfortable recruiting candidates, providing campaign support, and developing a policy agenda because there is a clear return on the organization's investment (Aaker 1996; 2000; 2009). When a branding effort is outlined and executed by an organization the full benefit is typically not realized until years after the campaign has completed, the return is rarely tangible, and – even when it is – it is difficult to assign concrete value to the results.

In this same vein, the third and final reason active brand maintenance and re-branding efforts are met with resistance is that political parties are preoccupied with short-term gains and strategies. Frequent national elections encourage parties to operate in two- and four-year cycles, which subsequently places emphasis on short-term fixes at

the expense of creating and implementing long-term solutions. Corporations struggle

with a similar situation given their fixation with the quarterly-profit framework. Branding

efforts that take years to develop, years to implement, and years to yield results do not

square with the timetable parties operate within.

Parties continually strive to maintain and, when necessary, redevelop their brand

despite the ample hurdles faced in doing so. Organizational action in the face of obstacles

underscores the importance of party brand as a mechanism of self-perpetuation. A strong

brand connects party and citizen and, if viewed favorably, translates to votes won.

2.5.2 Constraints and Hurdles to Party Branding: Periods of Intraparty Disagreement, the Trump Presidency

Apart from the constraints internal to the organization, periods of intraparty

disagreement – particularly instances involving highly visibility agents – make it

increasingly difficult for the party to coordinate their message and cultivate a strong,

unified brand. Chapter 1 highlights the trajectory of the Republican Party through a

period of major rebranding (i.e. the Southern Strategy) and describes the rise of the Tea

Party and Donald Trump's election as beginning a period of intraparty brand

disagreement. For reasons outlined below, this project analyzes only the period from

1972 to 2012; however, it is possible to provide speculative insight as to the effect

Donald Trump's election and presidency will have on the Republican Party's brand.

Moreover, informally considering the period from 2012-2018 underscores the

adaptability of party brand as a theoretical construct able to explain phenomena during

periods of harmony and tumult.

As extensively discussed in chapters three and four, the bulk of this project uses computational text analysis and machine-based learning to present a descriptive picture of both parties' brands, isolate moments of critical change in party brand, and determine which actors most commonly instigate changes to party brand across time. Because this analysis uses text as data and is interested in party brand change over time, it is critical to compare like sources for the period of interest. Chapter 3 fully elaborates the data selection criteria, but it is important to state here that there was no feasible way to include the 2012-2018 period as part of this research.

Apart from more obvious limitations (e.g. data archived at presidential libraries not available after 2008, etc.), increasing reliance on web platforms, including social media, transformed the political communications landscape. Websites – particularly social media platforms – revolutionized how parties and their candidates communicate with likely voters. Campaigns made the first earnest effort to integrate social media during the 2006 midterm elections, but it was not until the 2014 midterms that use of the medium came it to its own and was used to disseminate content distinct from that of other, more traditional channels (Dimitrova et al. 2014; Williams and Gulati 2003). To this end, it would be remiss to exclude social media from any analysis of the 2012-2016 election cycle, but it would be impossible to incorporate social media and treat it as other texts for the 1972-2012 period.

As well, Donald Trump's election galvanized attention to the cleavage within the Republican Party. However, the tension between mainstream and hardline conservative Republicans predates Trump's election and the analyses in the next two chapters trace the

disagreement between these wings beginning in 2000 and accelerating for the period of 2008 to 2012. This twelve year period tests party brand's ability to explain party dynamics during periods of intraparty conflict and offers preliminary support for the continued relevance of party brand, as a concept and as a theory, for the 2012-2018 period.

Without being able to systematically evaluate the Republican Party's brand for 2012-2018 it is possible to speculate as to how Trump's election fits into the longer term trend of growing intraparty brand disagreement within the Republican Party.

Most obviously, Trump did not enjoy widespread endorsement from high profile Republicans. Both living Republican former presidents refused to endorse Trump, with George H.W. Bush going so far as to publicly admit his personal support for Hillary Clinton and five of the Republican candidates for president – including, Jeb Bush, Carly Fiorina, Lindsey Graham, John Kasich, and George Pataki – rescinded their pledge to support the GOP's nominee once Trump was nominated. Ultimately, nearly 200 high profile Republicans not only refused to endorse Trump, but went so far as to oppose his candidacy (Yourish et al. 2016).

Disagreement between the party establishment and Trump's campaign also leaked after the 2016 Republican National Convention. The debate surrounding party platform negotiations rarely receive media coverage as disagreements are hammered out behind closed doors. However, Trump's proxies' insistence the GOP dial back the severity of its language with regard to Russia's occupation of the Crimea Peninsula made headlines (Rogin 2016; Meyer 2017, etc.), likely because it was another instance of disagreement

between the mainstream GOP and Trump and because it fits into the broader, on-going Trump / Russia narrative.

Moreover, Trump's legislative agenda is frequently at-odds with Congressional Republicans'. Going into the 2016 election, the Trump campaign's positions on social security (save the program without cuts; GOP has long argued for reform), abortion (pro-life, but inconsistent statements regarding Planned Parenthood; GOP is adamantly opposed to funding), financial regulations (reinstate Glass-Steagall Act; GOP has long opposed), the United States' military presence (calls upon U.S. to decrease the cost of its military support for European allies; military support as a mechanism of ensuring American security is a long-held cornerstone of GOP foreign policy), and trade (anti-globalist; GOP prides itself on being the party of free trade) (Bierman 2016) were inconsistent with the GOP's positions. Since his inauguration, Trump has received the most blowback from the Republican Party on the issue of trade with a majority of congressional Republicans fundamentally opposing the anti-globalist approach they fear could spark a trade war to disastrous effects on the nation's economy (Hohmann 2018; Werner 2018; Tankersley 2018). Notably, even with opposition from congressional Republicans, the Party is careful in criticizing Trump; as is frequently reiterated by Trump's opposition, any bill passed to counter his policies would require his signature, which is unlikely (e.g. Stolberg 2018).

There is ample evidence of disagreement between elite Republican actors during Trump's presidency, but there is no reason to suspect this undermines party brand as a theoretical construct. As chapters three and four discuss, the Republican Party's brand

position has become increasingly "noisy" since 2000 and, while Trump's election exacerbated this division and made the chasm very public, there is no reason to suspect the trends observed for the 2000-2012 period would not continue for 2012-2018.

Trump is acting as a franchise extension of the Republican Party's core brand identity and, without a mechanism of total control, the party establishment's ability to distance itself from Trump is severely constrained. Moreover, Trump's extension of the Republican Party brand resonates with a large segment of the American public and, insofar as branding is informed by an understanding of the market's interests, desires, and needs, there is reason for the party to listen to their likely voters and adapt their brand identity to grow their electoral market share. The dynamics of each actor group and the role of various franchise extensions in modifying the overall brand are discussed in Chapter 4, but brand theory and trends from the 1972-2012 period suggest that changes to the Republican Party's overall brand will be initiated by franchise extensions (e.g. elected officials with greater flexibility in representing newer interests), but anchored by the corporate identity (e.g. the national committee). Speculatively, the Republican Party's overall brand identity will shift during Trump's presidency, with franchise extensions in Congress having the greatest impact on the overall brand, but not at a rate significantly accelerated when compared to the 2008-2012 period. Trump's bombastic nature suggests he is revolutionizing the Party; however, Trump does not represent a watershed change to the Republican Party's brand, but is a public representation of a two decade shift in the party's brand position.

2.6 Looking Forward

Political party brand names provide specific benefit to the party and potential supporters through the creation of brand equity. Positive brand equity is the intangible result of coordinated branding efforts, which are initiated and sustained by different actors along varying brand dimensions. A well-managed House of Brands framework allows for the creation of a responsive identity system, in which office holders play an active role in adding completeness and texture to the core identity as franchise extensions. In a vacuum, political parties' branding efforts would be kept in perfect equilibrium with the supporters' brand image; if the Republican or Democratic parties shifted their position on immigration reform and activated the change as part of their brand position, we would expect all citizens to immediately realize and update their perception of the party. However, this mirrored relationship will remain but a dream of party politics scholars who yearn for the tidy analysis of a topic that is anything but.

In the subsequent chapters the strength of party brand as a concept that provides us greater leverage in understanding how party organizations evolve over time will be tested and the hypotheses in the prior section will be tested. This dissertation argues that, like companies, a party is most likely to modify their brand after a shock to the marketplace or in the face of mounting discontent from their consumers. Moreover, it is argued the national organization (akin to the corporation) maintains a central role in governing the party's brand by moderating internal debates, initiating changes to party brand, and using their wealth of resources to incentivize office holders' brand-consistent behaviors.

CHAPTER 3
What's in a Name?

Political parties are central to the American political system, but are proverbial icebergs in that voters are only aware of a small sliver of their activities. Day-to-day operations, interactions between party leaders and decisions as to issue stances and strategic positioning are largely obscured from public view. While those decisions made behind closed doors are important to the holistic study of party brand, a great deal of information about parties can be gleaned from what the party actively reveals to the public about its organization, candidates, issue positions, and ideology. The party's brand position – the "activated" or broadcasted sub-component of the total brand identity – reflects internal dynamics, strife, and path dependencies as only select party leaders are entrusted as gatekeepers of the party's brand. Voters cannot bear witness to the infighting between party leaders or the parameters placed on actors' behavior, but they observe the fruits of these interactions as broadcast by key leadership charged with bringing the message to market.

This chapter identifies and summarizes the content of both parties' brand positions. To this end, it descriptive in nature, allowing for the identification of and shifts in patterns over time, across actors, and between parties.

3.1 Why Brand Position?

The party brand system has three distinct components – the brand identity, position, and image. The identity is the totality of all substantive and affective attributes of the party (central governing organization) and its elected officials (franchise extensions), strategically cultivated over time. The brand position is the subset of the

party's overall identity that is activated or broadcast by key party actors at a given point in time to strategic end. Finally, the party's image is the individual's perception of the party as informed by the projection of the party's brand position (mediated by a host of variables, including prior beliefs and the opposition's brand position).

The central unit of inquiry throughout this project is party brand position. The decision to limit analysis to a single brand element is justified both practically and conceptually.

Access to data that allows for the analysis of brand position is, by nature, publicly available as the brand position is broadcast to the mass public. This makes the study of the brand position more appealing as a starting point than the study of the brand identity, which is inherently private to the party (though, there is some discussion of identity in Chapter 5). Data that can be used to unpack brand position is not readily available or prepackaged, but it can be reliably accessed for the period of interest to this project. That being said, data availability was not of determinative importance in selecting which brand component to study as there is ample micro-level survey data on perceptions of party (brand image). However, the discipline has already extensively grappled with image in behavioral literatures and, while there is room for improvement, brand position is less chartered territory.

Second, brand position is the link between party and individual and, as discussed at length in Chapters 1 and 2, the discipline has not fully explored the dynamic between competing and complementary party actors (i.e. the national committee, candidates, and

elected officials) and the mass public. Moreover, brand position connects party brand

identity with party brand image, and thus is the bridge of the party brand framework.

With an established focus on brand position, the scope of inquiry is limited to the

national party system. There is a legitimate argument to be made regarding the role of

state party committees with respect to a party's brand; however, information and

resources flow from the national party to the states and then to the counties, so it is

intuitive to begin with the repository. Furthermore, whereas a state's brand (as a line

extension[1] of the national party's) is projected only within state lines, all Americans are

exposed the national brand position of both parties. In turn, this project provides insight

that can help inform the lived political experience of the United States' entire voting age

population from 1976 to 2012.

Because brand position is actively communicated by national party leadership to

voters, it logically follows that the dataset be comprised of information publicly

broadcast by the national party, including but not limited to, campaign commercials,

editorials, and platforms. Because parties predominantly rely on the written and spoken

word in communicating their brand position, computational text analysis – used to

descriptive and empirical ends – is the most appropriate method to answer this

dissertation's motivating questions. The next section outlines the data selection criteria

for this project and provides an overview of the methods used to analyze the collected

data in this chapter.

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[1] State parties operate as line extensions of the national party in that they are a variation of an existing
product category (the national party), offered under the same brand name.

3.2.1 Data: Establishing the Universe & Collection

Sound computational text analysis requires systematic data selection and clearly defined methodological parameters, consistent with researcher expectations yet capable of flexibly testing the theory at hand. The party brand framework and extant literature on political parties guided the creation of a list of possible data sources and the universe of texts. Table 3.1 summarizes the methods national parties were likely to have used to communicate their brand position between 1976 and 2012. The universe of texts is divided by actor group and texts with an asterisk indicate a data source included in the ultimate analysis.

From this universe, the first selection criterion is availability. If a text is not available –through archival research, internet research, or as part of a digital archive – or is only available for less than half of the period of interest, it is excluded from all analyses. For example, direct mailers from the national committee are excluded from analysis because there is no way to procure all materials the party sent to likely voters for the specified period. As well, direct party mailers are often disseminated by the state parties, but contain information supplied by the national party, which further complicates the possibility of data retrieval. Furthermore, websites are a critical source of information today, no actor group actively populated their website prior to 1992 (the halfway point of analysis), thus data scraped from websites are excluded.

The second selection criterion is reliability of availability. It is important to only include data from sources reliably archived between 1976 and 2012 to ensure data across years is comparable. For instance, transcripts from television interviews with major news networks are reliably archived beginning in 2000, but most interviews are haphazardly

transcribed between 1976 and 1999. It is unclear why certain television interviews conducted prior to 2000 are available online while others are not, so this source is excluded as its inclusion has the potential to systematically bias the results of text analysis.[2]

Table 3.1 Universe of Available Texts

NATIONAL COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP	PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES	CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP
Newspapers* (editorials, invited columns, etc.)	Newspapers* (editorials, invited columns, etc.)	Newspapers* (editorials, invited columns, etc.)
Magazines / Monthlies*	Magazines / Monthlies*	Magazines / Monthlies*
Television* (interviews, etc.)	Television* (interviews, etc.)	Television* (interviews, etc.)
Direct Mailers	Television* Campaign Commercials	Television Campaign Commercials
Party Platforms*	Television* Election Debates	Television Election Debates
Speeches* Party Conventions	Speeches* Party Conventions	Speeches* Party Conventions
Speeches Radio Addresses	Speeches Radio Addresses	Speeches Radio Addresses
Direct Emails	Direct Emails	Direct Emails
Websites	Websites	Websites
	Candidate Platforms*	

The final selection criterion is based on the speaker/author and the audience: is the party leader disseminating information in their capacity as an actor of the party? A party chairman delivering an address in public is clearly speaking in his capacity as party chairman; however, the line is not as clear for other actors. If the Senate Majority Leader participates in an election debate in their home state, they are most likely speaking in

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[2] Meet the Press, which has its own transcription archive for every airing since the first episode in 1959, is an exception among television interviews with respect to reliability and, for that reason, interviews with Meet the Press are included.

their capacity as a Senator representing their constituents, not as a leader of the party. For this reason, a text is only included if the audience is reasonably assumed to be national, thus indicating the actor in question is communicating to more than just their constituents. (e.g. An op-ed by Harry Reid published in the New York Times can reasonably be assumed to be authored by Harry Reid in his capacity as the Democrat's Senate leadership, but an op-ed published in the Reno Gazette-Journal would be excluded as it is authored by Harry Reid in his capacity as a senator representing Nevada's interests.)

3.2.2 Data: Collection

With the universe defined, documents are searched for by speaker and/or writer and include the following party leadership positions between 1976 and 2012; (1) the party chairman, (2) the Speaker of the House (when of the party-in-power), (3) House Majority Leader, (4) House Majority Whip, (5) House Minority Leader, (6) House Minority Whip, (7) Senate Majority Leader, (8) Assistant Senate Majority Leader (Whip), (9) Senate Minority Leader, (10) Assistant Senate Minority Leader (Whip), and (11) presidential candidates.

An "author search" of digital archives ProQuest Newspapers, LexisNexis Academic, Access World News, Meet the Press, and CQ Weekly yielded party data in the form of: (1) newspaper articles[3], (2) magazine articles, (3) convention transcripts, (4) primary and general election debate transcripts, (5) presidential campaign commercial

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[3] Consistent with this project's expectations that the national party will attempt to broadcast its party brand to the entire nation, over 99% of newspaper articles were collected from large newspapers with national readership including, but not limited to: the New York Times, the Washington Post, USA Today, and the Los Angeles Times.

transcripts, and (6) television interviews. A general internet search yielded (6) party

platforms and (7) presidential candidate platforms. Together, these searches generated a

corpus of over 10,000 individual party documents. A breakdown of the number of

documents per party, per decade is included in Table 3.2.

3.2 Number of Party Documents per Party per Decade

NUMBER OF PARTY DOCUMENTS PER DECADE					
	1970's	1980's	1990's	2000's	2010's
Democratic	84	340	1,644	2,393	501
Republican	59	400	1,918	2,862	466

The dramatic increase in the number of documents available from the 1980's to

the 1990's is the product of data availability (i.e. articles published more recently are

more likely to be electronically accessible) and transcription of party conventions.

Transcripts are available for every speaker during the four-day conferences beginning

with the 1992 conventions; prior to the 1992 convention, the only transcripts are for

major speakers. Subsequent content analysis is conducted with the data as-is and also

weighted by year, actor type, and communication mode to correct for the biasing effects

of data availability due to technological advances.

3.3.1 Methods: An Overview of Computational Text Analysis

Within the humanities and social sciences content analysis is traditionally used to

tabulate responses to survey questions, identify common concepts across interview

responses, and core themes of large bodies of text. However, business and market

researchers have long used content analysis to assess patterns of organizational activity,

gauge the extent to which these activities map onto the organization's stated objectives,

and to describe the substantive and affective meanings of an organization's brand

(Neuendorf 2016; Bo and Lee 2008; Nasukawa and Yi 2003; Kassarjian 1977). In many ways, the social sciences have treated content analysis as a mean to a given research end (e.g. the tidy aggregation of responses to open-ended survey questions allows for said responses to be coded and later integrated into statistical models) as opposed to a research end in itself, but there is great value in using computational text analysis to isolate the central meaning and themes of a group of texts, while allowing for the identification of patterns and differences across time and between actor groups.

This chapter provides description of the Democratic and Republican parties' brands between 1976 and 2012, so emphasis is placed on isolating recurring concepts, identifying common phrases, and determining the affect frame. Chapter 4 employs more sophisticated modeling to determine the relative distance (i.e. similarity) between different corpuses, while isolating which actors are most active in the projection of brand position and which actors are most likely to initiate changes to the brand position.

3.3.2 Methods: Preparing the Texts

A document classification system is developed to group like texts together, into a single corpus.[4] To this end, party texts are first divided by party, then by election cycle (e.g. Day After Election of Year x to Election Day of Year x+4), then by speaker (e.g. House minority whip or House majority whip, depending on which party is in power, etc.), then by media type (e.g. newspaper editorial versus television interview, etc.). A "party x election x speaker x media" corpus is the smallest unit of analysis. For example, the Republican x 1976-1980 x Party Chairman x Newspaper corpus contains only two

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[4] Typically, a corpus is a collection of written texts; however, in the context of this dissertation a corpus is a grouping of one or more written or transcribed texts.

unique party texts, but the Republican x 1976-1980 corpus contains twenty-eight texts, and the Republican corpus contains 5,705 texts. Subsequent analyses specifically identify the corpus prior to the presentation of findings.

The data is also pre-processed using the cleaning and stemming features of R's Text Mining package (*tm*) (Feldman and Sanger 2007; Meyer et al. 2008). Cleaning deletes non-content bearing language components (e.g. white space, punctuation, English stop words, etc.) and stemming strips words to their related morpheme[5] (Haddi, Liu, and Shi 2013; Stolcke et al. 2000). Together, these modifications do not substantively distort the meaning of text and are consistent with the existing standard for non-substantive data alterations (Popping 2000).

3.3.3 Methods: Raw Counts and Thematic Clusters

As implied by the name, raw counts describe the text document (corpus) by tallying the number of times a specific root word appears in each corpus. Raw counts are an important step in processing text and provide a baseline understanding of key words for each party and election cycle, but the output does not provide tremendous insight in and of itself. More involved methods of text analysis, like clustering, must be applied after this initial treatment to unpack meaningful patterns and themes.

Clustering is the grouping together of like data points (i.e. words, also referred to as tokens) by established criteria through an iterative algorithm. Most commonly, tokens are grouped based on their similarity to the average/center of a predetermined number of

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[5] Stemming facilitates efficient analysis by consolidating words that would otherwise be counted as distinct despite having shared meaning; for example, when pre-processed "presidential" becomes "president", "responsibilities", "responsibility", and "responsible" become "responsibl", etc.

clusters or based on their similarity in relation to the probability they belong to a given corpus. While both methods create clusters of similar tokens/words, they require *a priori* assumptions to be made about the corpus to determine how the tokens/words should be grouped.

Connectivity clustering also groups tokens based on their similarity, but does so based on their spatial proximity to one another in a document of a given corpus. As opposed to just being a raw count of a single word, clustering allows for the extraction of frequently repeated general phrases and/or words that are repeatedly used closed to, but not necessarily next to, each other. Because a given topic is rarely discussed verbatim, clustering allows for pairs to be extracted in a manner consistent with those variations inherent in speech/writing on a single topic. This is especially important with respect to political texts, which tend to be heavily framed or finessed as party leaders communicate strategically, not straightforwardly.

For example, in more recent election cycles the Republican Party script often includes mentions of English as the nation's *de facto* national language and emphasizes the importance of immigrants learning English upon their arrival. However, between November 2nd, 2004 and November 4th, 2008, key party leaders never said or wrote "immigrants" and "English" in succession, (which makes sense as the phrase "immigrants English" is nonsensical). Leaders also did not make longer, but still tidy statements like, "immigrants must learn English". Instead, these discussions are delicately framed and "immigrant" and "English" are separated by many words, if not complete sentences.

For example, the Republican Party's 2008 platform reads:

In our multi-ethnic nation, everyone — **immigrants** and native-born alike — must embrace our core values of liberty, equality, meritocracy, and respect for human dignity and the rights of women. One sign of our unity is our **English** language. For newcomers, it has always been the fastest route to prosperity in America. **English** empowers. We support **English** as the official language in our nation, while welcoming the ethnic diversity in the United States and the territories, including language. **Immigrants** should be encouraged to learn **English**. **English** is the accepted language of business, commerce, and legal proceedings, and it is essential as a unifying cultural force. (Republican Party Platform 2008, 4)

If clusters were created based on the frequency of word pairings or consecutive short phrases, "immigrants English" would not emerge from this subset of text, let alone as one of the top ten most frequent themes of 2008. Connectivity clustering allow more latent or heavily framed concepts to be drawn from a greater body of text than traditional raw counts of words and phrases.

To identify key concepts using connectivity clustering each token within a corpus is treated as a vector and the Euclidean distance between each individual data point is measured, in turn allowing for frequently grouped concepts to be identified and extracted. To facilitate this analysis the corpus is "cut" into subsets based on a predetermined number of words and these bounds are shifted with each subsequent iteration of the model (e.g. $Vector_1$ to $Vector_{100}$, then $Vector_2$ to $Vector_{101,}$ etc.). The process of shifting the bounds of analysis until the entire document has been processed is referred to as fuzzy clustering. As opposed to hard clustering, fuzzy clustering does not impose a single preset boundary and only analyze data within that frame (e.g. $Vector_1$ to $Vector_{100}$,

Vector$_{101}$ to Vector$_{200}$, etc.). Fuzzy clustering is more flexible and better suited to analyzing the type of data central to this dissertation's analysis.

For example, the text excerpt from the 2008 Republican Party Platform (above) begins at the 2,157th word and ends at the 2,260th word (103 words total). If hard clustering were employed, one subset of connectivity analysis would begin at Vector$_{2101}$, end at Vector$_{2200}$ and the next would begin at Vector$_{2201}$ and end at Vector$_{2300}$, which would effectively truncate the passage just after its middle point (i.e. in the third sentence, between "been" and "the"); the first and second half of the passage would not be analyzed together, in turn obscuring the party's repeated emphasis on "immigrants" and "English".

Connectivity clustering is a crucial tool in establishing recurring substantive themes of large bodies of text. The findings from this project's cluster analysis are presented in subsequent sections.

3.3.4 Methods: Ideological and Sentiment Analysis

Political Science has not embraced the analytical benefit of computational text analysis to the extent of other disciplines, but did lead the charge in developing a reliable method of sentiment scaling (also referred to as affective, valence, and tonal scaling). As opposed to raw counts and clustering, which center on tangible (or explicitly readable) content, sentiment scaling measures implied or latent meaning and tone. The most common form of affective measurement is ideological scaling (Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003), which estimates the ideological position of a given text along an *a priori* dimension. For this model to accurately perform, the ideological position of the reference text (which provides the *a priori* dimension as a point of comparison), must be well-

defined, known, or uncontroversial (Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003, 313). With the *a priori* dimension established, the virgin text is then compared to the reference text and, through word scores and related manipulations, the ideological position of the virgin text is identified. Several variations of this method – wherein words are treated as data – have been developed (e.g. Martin and Vanberg 2007, Beauchamp 2012, Slapin and Proksch 2008, etc.) to marginally different ends; however, the method, especially the reliance on a reference text, remains largely unchanged.

Ideological scaling via computational text analysis is tremendously helpful and quite reliable if the *a priori* dimension is clearly established. However, the nature of this project, particularly the exploration of parties' brand position as evolving over time and the integration of different document sources, does not allow for a single text to be designated as a reference. Comparing the Democratic Party's 1976 platform with the Democrat's 1980 presidential candidate's interview on Meet the Press would be comparing apples to oranges; neither text would be an appropriate reference for the other with respect to determining ideological position. Moreover, various literatures have extensively documented the relative ideological positions of both parties in Congress over the years and, even if ideological scaling were a possibility here, there would be little to add to the extant literature's understanding in this area.

Accounting for this limitation, I pursue other forms of sentiment analysis that allow each corpus to be scaled with respect to affect (positive / negative), leadership, and temporal focus, among other variables by using R's *tm* (Text Mining), *Quanteda*, and *LIWCalike* packages and the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) software's

proprietary "clout" and "analytical" functions.[6] Apart from measuring sentiment, not

ideology, the analytical process underlying these packages is similar that of ideological

scaling; however, here the *a priori* dimension is LIWC's 2007 dictionary[7], which

includes upwards of 4,500 words[8]. Most of these words are scored for various affects

much the way individual words in an ideological reference text are scored for policy

position. Together, *tm* and *LIWCalike* facilitate tabular reports of raw counts, clusters,

and percentages, while *Quanteda* allows for more complex text processes, including

sentiment analysis. Findings from these manipulations are presented in section 3.4.

3.4.1 Raw Counts and Clusters: Brand Position and Issue Ownership
Raw counts tally the number of times stemmed words appear in each corpus,

which allows frequencies and ranks to be assigned to each word. Frequencies are helpful

in establishing recurring single-word concepts and providing a quick snapshot of what the

parties (and their actors) were broadcasting at a given point in time

For example, the Democratic Party's 1984 corpus of texts (inclusive of all party

documents from November 5th 1980-November 6th, 1984) mentions "Reagan" 293 times,

"world" 134 times, and "children" 121 times. Outside of providing concrete information

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[6] Various text processing functions in Quanteda and LIWCalike are similar to those offered by LIWC software; however, R allows for much greater flexibility with respect to manipulating the text (establishing cut points, etc.), so this project uses LIWC's software only twice (to measure "clout" and "analytical") because there is no comparable method of analysis offered by R packages.

[7] LIWC's dictionaries are the gold standard in sentiment analysis as the decision to include each affectively charged word is done so based on scientific research, typically by psychologists and linguists. LIWC's dictionaries are proprietary and their 2015 dictionary is not disseminated; however, the 2007 dictionary is included if a license for their software is purchased. LIWC compared both dictionaries, using their own software, for 100,000 files inclusive of upwards of 200 million words and the difference in output was statistically negligible. In this vein, this dissertation's reliance on the 2007 dictionary does not undercut its validity given the introduction of the 2015 dictionary.

[8] Over 85% of the words in each corpus were also in the 2007 LIWC dictionary, which is consistent with LIWC's assessment of the dictionary's coverage across 100,000 text samples and 250 million words.

as to the frequency each of these words are used, speculative information can be reasonably inferred from the counts. The frequent use of "children" suggests the Party likely dedicated substantial time to discussing issues concretely relevant to children (e.g. education, etc.) and/or aspirationally spoke of the future generation (e.g. "a better tomorrow for our children"). "World" does the same by signaling the Party was speaking to issues of international impact and/or positioning the Party's ideas as ultimately bettering the world. President Reagan's likely served as a foil against which Democrats defined their brand position.[9]

Figure 3.1 250 Most Frequently Used Words, 1984 Democratic Overall Corpus

Raw counts are a helpful starting point for analysis and are often used for visual representation (see Figure 3.1; Reagan, world, and children are underlined), but are not

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[9] The opposition candidate is not typically among the top fifty or so most frequently mentioned words (here Reagan was the fifth most common word, after "will", "Democrat", "must", and "American"), so the fact that Reagan was so oft discussed does reveal a bit more about the Democrats' 1984 brand position than other raw counts (like those for "world" and "children"), which merely suggest the content focus of the party's brand position

particularly elucidating in and of themselves as the words are without context. To this end, this project conducted raw counts to establish a rudimentary baseline understanding of the party's brand position, before moving to more complicated descriptive analyses.

Table 3.3 Ten Most Common Connectivity Clusters, Democratic and Republican Overall Corpus 1976-2012

DEMOCRATIC

Rank	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
1	administration nixon	oil trade	foreign governments†	soviet leaders†	forgotten middle*	health insurance*	global threats†	alqaeda target†	crisis fiscal	typical family*
2	elderly incomes*	arms control†*	middle class*	peace process*	failed healthcare*	income middle*	retirement security*	mass destruction†	education gap*	homes afford
3	agriculture expand*	defense soviets†	income tax†	welfare bill*	policy foreign†	medicare medicaid†	cutting poverty*	defense homeland†	climate change*	independent energy
4	equal school*	credit tax†	military cost	nuclear testing†	read lips	reduce nuclear*	pay college*	middle class*	middle class*	fuel efficiency
5	protection land*	disabled elderly*	decent education*	inclusion politics*	labor policy†	credit college*	moral center†	lower income*	stop war*	closing loopholes
6	poverty living*	minimum wage*	hungry homeless*	social security*	poverty millions*	tax cut†	strengthen medicare*	seniors medicare*	security seniors*	start head*
7	pricing gas	teacher training*	rainbow coalition*	city students*	racial responsibilities*	felons fugitives†	schools results*	prevent korea†	alqaeda iraq†	low income*
8	health care*	social security*	blacks women*	union choice*	decent schools*	defense missle*	safety gun	diversity competition*	alternative tax†	natural gas
9	discrimination sex*	achieving students*	moral values†	equal access*	drug treatment†	crime rate†	supreme court	soldier reservists†	students kids*	college students*
10	barriers trade	misery index	steel workers	sound environmental*	head start*	finance reform	gays lesbians	crime violence†	reform immigration	live poverty*

REPUBLICAN

Rank	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
1	war veterans*	defense national*	cut taxes*	tax cuts*	persian gulf*	health care†	emerging threats*	9/11 attack*	east middle*	partisan judges
2	national defense*	soviet union*	deparment dense*	proposal tax*	eastern europe*	create jobs*	low taxation*	mass destruction*	common sense	borders homeland*
3	budget balanced	hostages iran*	reagonomics cut*	security national†	military superpower*	middle class†	middle class†	terror operations*	world arab*	faith discrimination
4	home taxes*	cut tax*	arms nuclear*	unemployment lines†	politically correct	border agents*	violent crimes*	counterterrorism policy*	judicial nominee	freedom religious
5	illegal crime*	families dignity*	east middle*	military aid*	soviet union*	criminal aliens*	medical savings	saddam hussein*	fiscal accountability	marriage traditional
6	preventing drugs*	natural gas	secure peace*	soviets chance*	upper middle	social security†	teacher training†	medicare taxes*	limited taxes*	medicaid medicare†
7	farm exports†	stimulate jobs	abortion question	drug dealers*	personal dependency	juvenile violence*	drug illegal*	borders prevent	immigrants english	english immigrants
8	health insurance†	earned taxpayer*	moral values*	traditions family*	wrong taxes*	responsibility personal	promote marriage	law enforcement*	illegal immigration	society entitlement
9	industry oil	conservation desireable†	local busing†	social religious*	family values*	reclaim neighborhoods	faith charitable	uninsured patient†	savings health†	charter school†
10	israel threatened*	moral white*	god constitution	urban housing†	school choice†	public housing†	rural underserved	north korea*	religious liberty	illegal aliens

Connectivity clustering excels in those areas raw counts are weak and provides great leverage in assessing the most common themes for both parties in each election cycle. Table 3.3 presents the top ten most frequent clusters for both parties, during each election cycle. It is notable that each party's brand position near-universally communicates more information on those issues they are perceived as owning than those the opposition is perceived as owning. This is consistent both with business marketing and political science literatures as it is expected a party in control of its brand position would choose to draw attention to those areas and trade upon those issues for which it is favorably perceived and uniquely associated with.

For the purposes of this dissertation, issue ownership is measured as it commonly is in the extant literature (e.g. Petrocik 1996; Petrocik, Benoit and Hansen 2003; Van der Brug 2004; Damore 2004; etc.). A party is viewed as having ownership over a given issue if the population views the respective party as being better equipped to handle the issue. Because there are fluctuations in issue ownership over time, ANES time series data was used to determine ownership. Between 1976 and 2010, the ANES asked, "which party do you think can better handle [X]?" over fifty times for the environment, health, taxes, the middle class, agriculture, foreign affairs, the military, crime, and social equality. (ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File 2010).[10] If a question was not

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[10] Issue ownership is also an artifact of recognizability, a dimension some scholars emphasize more than others in their treatment of the concept. This dissertation affirms the centrality of recognizability – both in establishing ownership over an issue and in strategic branding more generally – by using data collected via a survey instrument, which allowed for "do not know" and similar non-responses. By allowing for non-responses, it is reasonable to assume respondents are providing answers based on their *recognition* of which party is more competent in handling issues related to [X] as opposed to answering without recognition of either party's performance, solely because they are required to provide an opinion.

included in a presidential election year, the next closest survey date that included the question/issue was used to proxy issue ownership during the election year. If a party was viewed as 10% more competent than their competition on a given issue, they were flagged as having ownership during that election cycle. Democrats are consistently viewed as owning the issues of equality, peace keeping, healthcare, and education. Republicans are routinely viewed as better equipped to handle foreign affairs, issues related to the military, crime, and taxes.[11]

Cells colored yellow and denoted with an asterisk indicate the cluster is a topic over which the party is perceived as having ownership, whereas a green cell with a dagger indicates the party is referencing a topic over which the opposition party has ownership. Cells with no color fill indicate a topic over which neither party has ownership.

Overall, the Democratic Party's most frequent clusters for each cycle between 1972 and 2012 include fifty-seven issues over which they are viewed as having ownership, twenty-three issues over which the Republican Party has ownership, and twenty issues that are not perceived as owned by either party. Democrats average 5.7 owned issues, 2.3 opposition-owned issues, and 2 neutral issues per cycle, with the most party-owned issues being in 1988's cycle (eight issues), the least in 2004 (four issues), and the most neutral in 2012 (four issues). Of the 100 clusters for Republicans, fifty-four

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[11] Agriculture was the major aberration from what are largely steadfast patterns as Democrats were viewed as having ownership over agriculture until the mid-1990's, when citizen perception began to alternate by small margins between the two parties. Thus, agriculture is only coded as an issue owned by Democrats prior to 1996.

were of issues over which they are perceived as having ownership, seventeen are for those Democrat's over which have ownership, and twenty-nine are neutral. Republicans averaged 5.4 owned, 1.7 opposition owned, and 2.9 neutral issues per election cycle, with the most party-owned issues tied in 1988 and 2004 (eight owned issues), the least in 2012 (one issue), and the most neutral also in 2012 (seven issues).

The only notable exceptions occur in 2004, when Democrats' top clusters included six opposition-owned issues, and 1996 and 2012, when Republicans' top clusters included four and two opposition-owned issues. Thus, in 85% of elections, the parties' brand positions promoted those issues on which the party was viewed favorably more than those issues on which the party was not.

However, the exceptions to this overall trend are interesting and worth discussing – albeit somewhat anecdotally – in greater detail. In 1996, Republicans ran Senator Bob Dole as their presidential candidate and, as is well-documented and affirmed in an interview with Senator Dole conducted as part of this dissertation project, there was some disagreement as to where the party organization and candidate stood on social issues, most notably abortion. The 1996 Republican Party encouraged and ultimately assured the adoption of a strongly worded, pro-life provision to the party platform, which Dole's campaign resisted in favor of a more neutral position framed as a deference to states' rights. To this end, perhaps the 1996 Republican Party lacked unity across relevant actor groups, which segmented the message and resulted in the party's lack of unified control of its brand position.

In the wake of 9/11 the Democratic Party was in the unenviable position of being forced to run on those issues they are not viewed as exceptionally competent – national security, defense, and the military. Of the six opposition-owned clusters to comprise the Democratic brand position in 2004, five were directly tied to 9/11 and the United States' heightened international presence (e.g. "alqaeda target", "mass destruction", "defense homeland", "prevent korea", and "soldier reservist"). Comparatively, 2004 was a boon for the Republican Party, in which six of the eight party-owned issue clusters seem to be the product of fallout from 9/11 (e.g. "9/11 attack", "mass destruction", "terror operations", "counterterrorism policy", "saddam hussein", "north korea").

The 2012 Republican Party's brand position is distinct in that it is a particularly weak showing with respect to issues it owns (e.g. "borders homeland") and those which the opposition owns (e.g. "medicaid medicare" and "charter school"). Instead of offensively focusing on those issues over which the Republican Party is viewed favorably or defensively responding to those issues Democrats focused on, the Republican brand position is a jumble of issues over which neither party is traditionally viewed as having ownership. The Republican brand position appears to fully embody issues previously associated with its Tea Party candidates and hardline social conservatives (e.g. "partisan judges", "faith discrimination", "freedom religious", "marriage traditional", "english immigrants", "society entitlement", and "illegal aliens"). This hard right turn off the traditional messaging of either party is not entirely unexpected; in 2008 the brand position included neutral "immigrants English", "illegal immigration", and "religious liberty", in 2000 "promote marriage" and "faith charitable" rounded out the top ten, and

in 1992 and 1996 euphemisms that mask racial hostilities (e.g. "politically correct", "personal dependency", "responsibility personal", and "reclaim neighborhoods") reared their heads. The Republican Party's brand position's deviation away from decades' old issues is traced in the next chapter.

Apart from these deviations, the ranked order of the clusters for each election cycle shed help to assess how issue ownership contributes to party brand as the frequency of discussion is an area over which party leaders have greater control. While forces exogenous to the system have the capacity of dictating what is talked about (e.g. 2004's presidential election was clearly skewed by 9/11 and the nation's concerns in the aftermath), the parties have much more control over how frequently they engage the issues of the day. Typically, those issues over which the party is perceived as having ownership are top-loaded in the rankings, meaning the party more frequently raises the issue as a point of discussion. This is especially true for the Republican Party, where forty-one of their total fifty-four issue owned clusters have a ranked frequency between one and five. The Democratic brand position demonstrates a similar, though slightly weaker, pattern with thirty-five of its fifty-seven issue owned clusters ranking in their top five.

This pattern minimally highlights a correlation between those issues the party is favorably associated with and the frequency with which party leadership discusses said issues. Pressed further, this correlation suggests party leadership makes a strategic decision to frequently engage with those issues over which they have ownership, while shirking those issues over which the opposition has ownership when possible. Taken

together the content and ranked order of the connectivity clusters for both parties highlights a persistent correlation between issues owned by the party and their prominent incorporation into the party's brand position.

It is also notable that, of the ten election cycles analyzed, seven of the presidential contests were won by the party that had an advantage with respect to brand position and issue ownership (e.g. the Democratic party's brand position included five owned issued in 2012, compared to the GOP's one owned issue). Two of the contests (1988 and 1992) were tied with respect to ownership, one of which was won by the Republican candidate and one of which was won by the Democratic candidate. The only instance in which a party's brand position had an ownership advantage, but lost the election was in 2000 (Democrat's had five owned issues, compared to Republicans' four); however, given the special circumstances surrounding Vice President Al Gore's defeat, it is difficult to treat this election as true evidence of the party with a more favorably held brand position (with respect to issue ownership) losing an election. To this end, the data indicate a strong correlation between electoral success at the presidential level and the extent to which the party's brand position effectively incorporates and makes prominent issues over which they have ownership.

This relationship is logical as issue ownership is closely linked to citizen perception of the party and favorability. Recall, favorability is the extant literature's measure of party image (e.g. Philpot 2008; Trilling 1976; Karpowitz et al. 2013; etc.). The extant literatures consistently find "favorability" is tied to "liking", which is tied to electoral support and, as is relevant to business marketing, consumer choice (Schnittka,

Sattler, and Zenker 2012; Wang and Yang 2010; Brown and Dacin 1997; Pitta and Prevel Katsanis 1995; Keller 1993), so it reasonably follows a party brand position focused on issues salient in the eyes of the public and on which the party is viewed favorably will likely be correlated with electoral success. Moreover, parties do not operate in a vacuum (see: Democrat's brand position in 2004) and, as institutions, they are subject to pressures imposed by the system in which they are nested and, at times exogenous forces. To this end, it would be unreasonable to presuppose a party would speak only to those issues on which they are viewed favorably. Instead, parties must respond to a broad agenda inclusive of issues of the day and their opposition's position while being constrained by institutional factors (i.e. path dependency, rule-based behaviors, etc.). However, it is reasonable to posit that, despite these barriers there is a correlation between a party's electoral prospects and the extent to which they can stay on message.[12]

3.5.1 Sentiment Analysis: An Introduction

As the methods section of this chapter explains, sentiment analysis is conducted by comparing the similarity between a reference document and the corpus of interest along key affective dimensions. The LIWC 2007 dictionary provides the anchoring

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[12] There is potential for a self-reinforcing feedback loop based on the dynamic described here. It is feasible that external pressures, including the electoral system in which party organizations are nested, shape the political landscape and constrain actors' behaviors in a manner that sets the agenda, allowing the favored party to capitalize on their strengths while the opposition is left in a defensive position, in turn biasing the electoral agenda in favor of the offensive party in subsequent years. While the presence of such feedback loop is likely, it does not fully subvert each party's ability to determine what issues are discussed and with what frequency. Moreover, it is not necessarily important to this project who sets the national agenda – though there is certainly rich discussion of who influences the party's brand position in the next chapter – but how they respond. If the connectivity clusters for Democrats and Republicans mirrored one another, it would be reasonable to assume the agenda is either preset or created based on both parties' contributions; however, the clusters do not and it is rare for both parties to have the same issues/themes as the focal point of their brand position (2004 being the aberration when both parties focused on 9/11), which suggests party organizations/actors are not merely responding to the system in which they are embedded, but also shape the system through their strategic decision to engage a given issue.

dimension against which all subsequent texts are compared in an effort to determine: 1) whether the party's brand position is retrospective, present, or prospective, 2) the extent to which party leadership's appeals to the mass public are affectively positive and/or negative, 3) to what extent the speaker attempts to unify the party (by using phrases like, "we", "our", etc.), distinguish themselves as a leader (by speaking in the first person), and/or compare themselves to the opposition (through "othering"), 4) the extent to which the speaker uses language that cues confidence, power, and hierarchy (all a proxy for projected leadership, e.g. Fairhurst and Sarr 1996; Pondy 1989, etc.) and 5) the extent which the actor makes linear arguments, as opposed to emotionally or anecdotally driven appeals. The former three analyses were conducted in R using the *tm*, *Quanteda*, and *LIWCalike* packages (among others), whereas the latter was conducted using LIWC's standalone software as the algorithms for determining "clout" (proxy for leadership) and "analytic" (proxy for linear argument) are proprietary.

All findings in the tables below, except for the leadership and analytical scores, are presented as a percent of the overall text. The leadership and analytical scores are developed against a scale of one to one-hundred, with one designating little/no clout or linear argument.[13] Subsequent sections explore the results of the sentiment analysis.

3.5.2 Sentiment Analysis: Specialization and Franchise Extension Leniencies

As the previous section highlights, there is typically variation between the substantive content of the parties' brand position, but is there variation in how that

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[13] As a point of reference, LIWC's proprietary analyses ("clout" and "analytic") were applied to the complete texts of F. Scott Fitzegerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. *The Great Gatsby* scored a 54.25 on clout and 48.92 on analytic measurements, while *To Kill a Mockingbird* scored a 51.34 and 54.77. These scores are significantly lower than that of the political documents assessed in subsequent sections.

content is affectively framed? By engaging institutional and business marketing

literatures this section grapples with how individual agency is transformed and actualized

within an institutionalized organization and broader structural environment.

As outlined in Chapter 2, parties are comprised of four primary actor groups.

Each actor group is listed as having a set of specializations (e.g. the national committee is

a resource holder, uniquely equipped to keep a finger on the pulse of the people and able

to provide this information to the candidates whom the party supports, etc.), which

contribute to the perpetuation of the greater party system.

Office holders' core competencies include policy development and party publicity

as they are, quite literally, the face of the organization; however, within this category

there are more specific responsibilities and participatory expectations assigned to key

leadership by the national party apparatus. This division of labor is particularly

observable when comparing the role of congressional whips to their congressional leader

counterparts. Whips' primary service is to curry favor for the party's policies, positions,

and ideals – first among their partisans in Congress, but also among their partisans in the

electorate[14]. This is in stark contrast to congressional party leaders (e.g. Senate

Majority/Minority Leader, etc.), who function as figureheads of the party. While

congressional leaders certainly have the capacity to build support for the party, it is a

secondary benefit to their leadership responsibilities.

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[14] Congressional whips in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle are as likely to engage in brand
position promotion as their counterparts who are traditionally thought to be more visible (e.g. Minority
Leader of the House, etc.); however, the content of their communications are distinct in that they are nearly
always tied to a specific policy or party position, whereas other leaders often engage in more general
discussions and party promotion.

Assuming the official aim of both parties is self-perpetuation (through the winning of office), there is variation with respect to the secondary aims of actors within the party. With respect to the party brand framework, whips are franchise extensions that are more closely held to the party's core brand identity than other congressional leaders and presidents, as their party-assigned role is inherently more partisan. When a franchise extension is afforded leniencies, they are still required to "ride for the brand", but may exhibit a degree of individuality. Regardless of how closely held an elected official (franchise extension) is, there is a script which dictates the appropriateness of behaviors for specific party positions and thus there should be an observable difference between tightly- and loosely-held franchise extensions.

Organizational context inherently favors certain strategies and actions. Through the process of strategic learning, actors are familiarized with those norms and rules, which govern the behavior of those internal to the organization. Actors learn and revise their understanding of what is expected of them in their party-assigned role and what is feasible, desirable, and legitimate as individual actors within the party through repeated interactions, institutional memory, and path dependency. Taken together, these factors establish rules for behavior, a series of normative and cognitive considerations, which allows each actor to identify acceptable behavior given their role.

Rules, like the logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen 2004), justify and prescribe certain behaviors for a given role, within a given organization, within a greater institutional context. This development of a script that actors can adhere to fosters predictability, both with respect to the behavior of actors in their party-assigned role and

in their role as individual agents. There are rules that apply to all actors equally and rules specific to each actor category. For example, while all elected officials operate as franchise extensions of the party, some extensions – like congressional whips – are governed by rules that ensure they more closely align with the core identity because their role inherently serves the party by reinforcing said identity.

Building on the notion of appropriate "scripts" as informed by rules of behavior internal to the organization, there should be less flexibility and room for interpretation in the prescribed action of congressional whips than for presidential candidates and congressional leaders. These differences should be observable both in the way different actor groups affectively communicate and the extent to which there is variance between whips, presidential candidates, and congressional leaders from year to year.

Table 3.4 summarizes the results from the sentiment analysis as applied to all documents in each presidential candidate's corpus. Before moving to compare these figures with that of more restrained (e.g. whips) party actors, it is of note that Democratic candidates are, on average, marginally both more positive and negative than Republican candidates (3.52 and 2.79 compared to 3.10 and 2.51), though Republican candidates do average higher in their use of language that stokes anxiety and fear (1.53 to 1.03). Though this is a marginal difference, it is likely an artifact of Republican's (typically) scoring higher on LIWC's "analytical" measure, which evaluates whether a given text makes a linear argument or incorporates anecdotes; arguments that include anecdotes for demonstrative effect are more likely to include positively and negatively affected language as part of the frame.

Table 3.4 Sentiment Analysis Results, Republican and Democratic Presidential Candidates 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
Carter	1976	4.46	12.12	0.80	3.20	1.07	0.26	3.20	2.86	1.80	83.62	59.56
Carter	1980	1.93	8.67	0.61	3.59	1.75	1.23	2.89	1.23	0.26	63.03	84.85
Dukakis	1984	2.03	8.12	1.43	2.77	2.17	0.92	2.31	2.21	0.74	76.69	81.80
Mondale	1988	2.03	8.12	1.43	2.77	2.17	0.92	2.31	2.21	0.74	76.69	81.80
Clinton	1992	3.80	11.07	1.60	2.87	3.14	0.47	2.20	3.00	0.60	77.64	74.69
Clinton	1996	1.01	6.00	2.73	2.49	4.99	1.71	0.55	1.95	0.00	87.56	76.42
Gore	2000	2.76	6.80	0.86	3.70	2.67	1.63	0.69	1.81	0.52	83.91	73.44
Kerry	2004	3.84	9.70	1.35	4.01	3.84	2.24	3.33	2.15	0.59	82.34	67.42
Obama	2008	2.77	9.00	1.55	5.56	3.98	0.66	2.34	3.46	0.46	86.11	75.48
Obama	2012	1.21	10.31	2.03	4.20	2.09	0.26	3.08	3.87	0.27	89.70	78.62
	Avg.	2.58	8.99	1.44	3.52	2.79	1.03	2.29	2.48	0.60	80.73	75.41
Ford	1976	3.43	12.66	1.19	2.69	2.81	1.04	4.83	2.10	0.35	68.52	70.21
Reagan	1980	3.02	10.73	1.77	2.99	2.42	0.42	1.77	1.98	0.94	69.89	69.22
Reagan	1984	3.76	10.34	1.57	3.22	1.25	1.07	0.52	2.82	1.04	85.92	74.97
Bush (41)	1988	3.06	8.40	1.42	3.87	2.50	0.72	1.64	1.85	0.14	76.62	84.30
Bush (41)	1992	2.34	9.60	1.61	2.52	1.69	1.63	1.86	0.48	0.48	78.32	84.63
Dole	1996	3.17	7.45	1.54	3.32	2.11	0.74	1.11	1.88	0.68	87.96	78.76
Bush (43)	2000	0.83	6.71	2.76	3.51	2.21	2.53	1.65	1.38	0.28	66.06	86.93
Bush (43)	2004	2.86	6.49	0.84	3.04	3.45	2.02	2.75	1.25	0.59	66.34	76.77
McCain	2008	2.66	8.28	1.54	2.87	3.77	3.12	2.60	2.44	0.80	75.51	70.51
Romney	2012	2.07	8.77	0.79	3.01	2.90	2.01	2.75	1.04	1.87	78.38	82.69
	Avg.	2.72	8.94	1.50	3.10	2.51	1.53	2.15	1.72	0.72	75.35	77.90

Figure 3.2 visually represents leadership scores for Senate Democratic and Republican leadership between 1976 and 2012. The Assistant Majority/Minority Leaders (whip) on both sides of the aisle are significantly less likely than their party's Majority/Minority leader to use language that cues leadership and hierarchy in their communications and are much less likely to speak in the first person. Moreover, both Democratic and Republican whips score higher in analytical assessments of their speech pattern (i.e. preference for making straightforward, linear appeals) when compared with their Senate Leader counterpart.
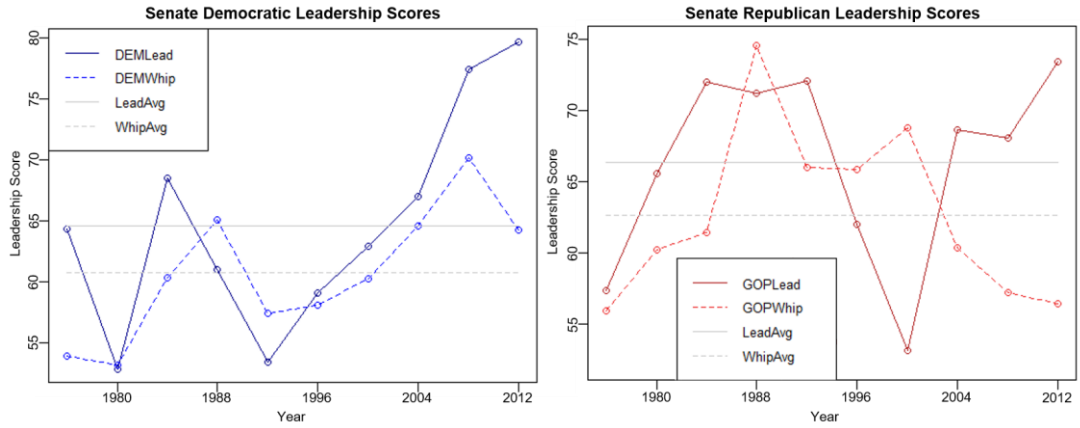
Figure 3.2 Democratic and Republican Senate Leadership Scores, 1976-2012
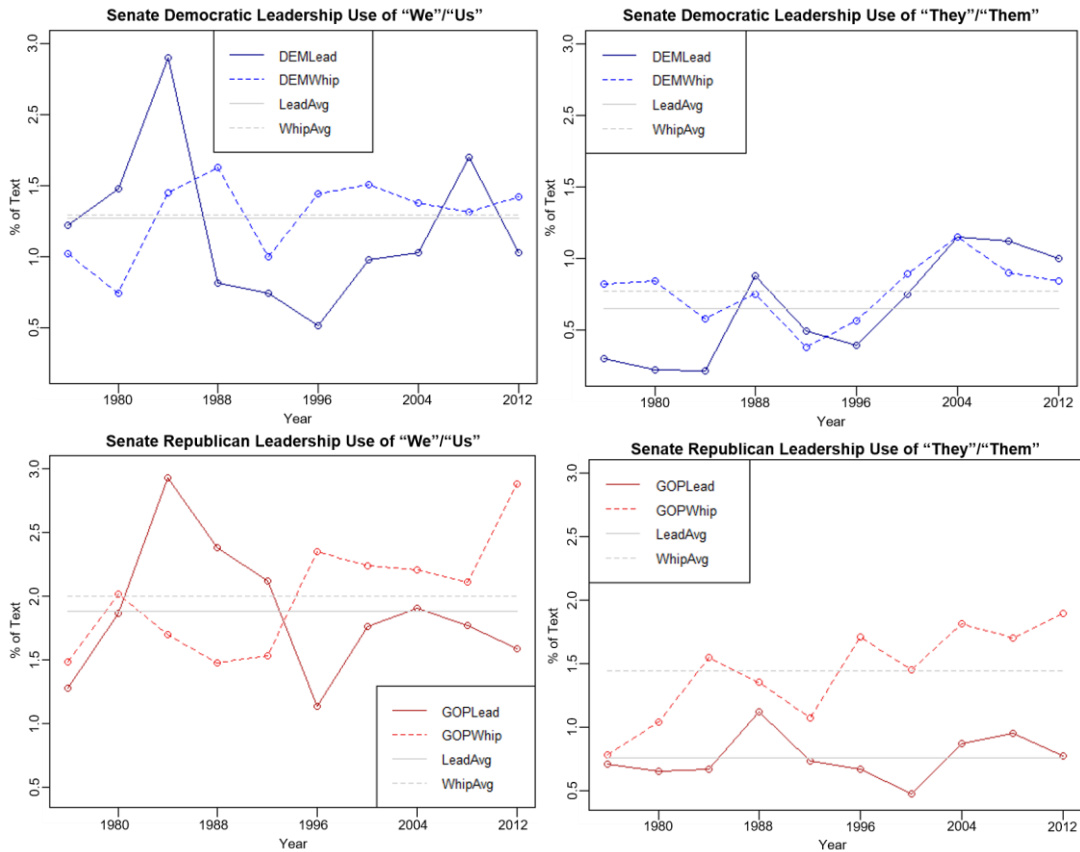
Figure 3.3 Collective versus Othering Speech, Democratic and Republican Senate Leadership 1976-2012

Whips also have a demonstrated pattern of using collective phrasing (e.g. "we", etc.) and are much more likely to use "othering" language (e.g. "they", "them") (see Figure 3.3), as opposed to framing an idea as being spoken on their behalf (e.g. "I"). The whips' use of the we/us and they/them frame, as a substitute for I/me, highlights the unique institutionalized role they occupy and their reliance on a script, which cultivates party support from the vantage of "us" versus "them".
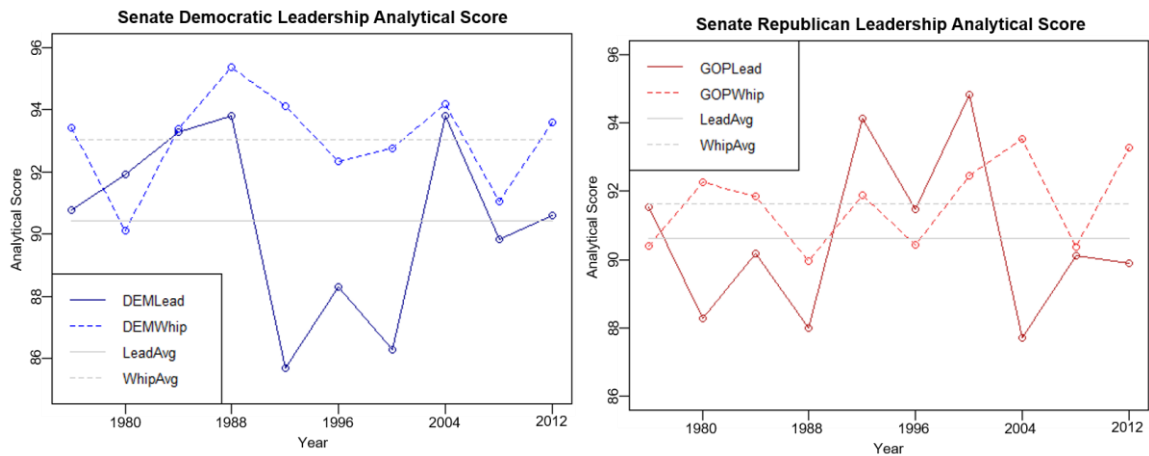
Figure 3.4 Analytical Speech, Democratic and Republican Senate Leadership 1976-2012

Whips on both sides of the aisle are also typically more analytical in their speech and writing pattern than congressional leadership. Figure 3.4 demonstrates that whips are nearly always more straightforward and less likely to make abstract appeals, filled with anecdotes and opinions, than their senate leader. This difference is particularly pronounced within the Democratic Party, which is generally less analytical than Republicans; for the period of 1976 to 2012, Democratic and Republican Senate whips demonstrated near-identical levels of analytical speech (averaging 93.03 and 91.63 across all whips) irrespective of whether their party was in power, whereas there is great variation for senate leaders, both within and between the parties.

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Particularly interesting is the Republican Party's upward trend in othering

language and frames since 1992, especially when compared with the Democratic Party.

This buttresses the discipline's growing consensus that the GOP increasingly exploits

identity cleavages to mobilize their base (Rosino and Hughey 2016; Hughey and Parks

2014; Barretto el al. 2011; etc.).

These affective differences in framing are particularly well-demonstrated by

comparing two newspaper articles – written during a period of Democratic majority

(101st and 102nd Congresses) – by Democratic Senate Leader George Mitchell and the

Democratic Assistant Senate Leader (whip) Alan Cranston. Both senators published on

the topic of the United States' positioning with respect to Asia, with specific emphasis on

the nation's relationship with China.

Both articles begin by orienting their opinions with respect to President Bush's

agenda and move to discuss a variety of related topics, including trade policy, human

rights, the relationship between China and Cambodia, and American interests.

Substantive areas of overlap are each highlighted (once per topic) and numbered in

Figures 3.5 and 3.6. Similarities and differences are discussed in turn, below.

Both Senators begin by introducing their piece in relation to President George

H.W. Bush's position (Topic 1) on U.S./Asia/China relations, with Majority Leader

George Mitchell stating in no uncertain terms that he, "respectfully, but strongly

disagree[s]," with the President's handling of China, before moving to a highlight the

primacy of American interests (Topic 2). There is fleeting discussion of nuclear

deterrence (Topic 3) in both pieces and a more protracted discussion of trade issues

(Topic 4), with specific emphasis placed on America's trade deficit with China (Topic 6) and the importance of reciprocity in trade agreements (Topic 8). Senator Mitchell's piece extensively indicts China's handling and alleged lack of respect for human rights, while Senator Cranston acknowledges the issue in passing (Topic 9). Both pieces propose a concrete policy end (Topic 7), but Senator Mitchell's discussion is much shorter and vague with respect to details, whereas Senator Cranston thoroughly outlines a three-pronged initiative.

Dawn of Pacific Century Finds U.S. Sitting on Its Status
Cranston, Alan
Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File); Feb 15, 1989;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times (1881-1990)
pg. A7

Dawn of Pacific Century Finds U.S. Sitting on Its Status

By ALAN CRANSTON

❶ When President Bush leaves next week on his journey to Asia, he will be establishing important priorities for American diplomacy in the years ahead. By responding imaginatively to the economic and security challenges ❷ confronting American interests in Asia, Washington policy-makers can do much to advance our interests in the coming Pacific Century.

The challenge for the generation ahead seems clear. ❸ As progress is made on stabilizing U.S.-Soviet nuclear deterrence at lower levels of force, the relative economic strength of nations will emerge as a fundamental determinant of national power. Yet we are stumbling in our efforts to keep up with our friends and former adversaries in the Pacific. We are falling behind at the dawn of an era in ❹ which trade issues and military deployments are likely to prove even more divisive. To avoid such pitfalls and to realize our extraordinary opportunities on the Pacific Rim, we need new initiatives.

The region is undergoing a radical transformation. Soviet diplomacy is aggressively pursuing new openings—not just in Beijing, where the first Sino-Soviet summit in a generation will be held this May—but throughout East Asia. A new generation of Korean leaders is questioning the lessons of history and expanding economic relations ❺ with former enemies. China is struggling forward with economic change that promises to double its gross national product in less than one decade. Japan is awash in capital, working hard to assume new security and diplomatic responsibilities while trying to remain sensitive to neighbors' concerns about its expanding military prowess. Virtually throughout East Asia an unparalleled economic boom is bringing prosperity unimaginable a generation ago.

But this is also straining relations with the United States as many of our businesses and workers suffer from the ❻ enormous trade deficit.
❼ A set of priorities needs to be established for our Pacific agenda:

Diplomatic initiatives. The United States should take the lead in establishing a Pacific Basin Forum to pursue cooperation on regional economic and security concerns. This proposal should include the establishment of annual summit-level meetings styled after those currently held by key presidents and prime ministers within the Atlantic alliance. The forum should also make a deliberate effort to reach out to the Soviets and their allies, Vietnam and North Korea, to encourage participation in a dialogue about such common concerns as free trade, economic development and security confidence-building.

Trade and investment policy. While rejecting sweeping protectionist measures, we need to ensure that we're not unilaterally disarming in trade competition. We should ❽ commit to taking swift and certain retaliation when foreign trading partners refuse to provide reciprocal treatment for U.S. agricultural products, manufactured goods and financial services.

To create new export opportunities, we also need a major new commitment to educating our work force about foreign markets and foreign languages. George Bush pledged to be "the education President." He can fulfill that commitment by joining Congress in a war on ignorance—shaping new efforts to improve American training in mathematics, geography, science and foreign languages.

To enhance trade competitiveness, we also need new initiatives to curb defense spending and cut capital-gains taxes (the U.S. rate is 33%, compared with 5% in Japan). That's how we can free up public and private resources for investment in the production of commercial goods.

Security policy. There are five clear imperatives for the shapers of American military policy in the Pacific:

—Pursue negotiations with Manila for at least a 10-year renewal of the lease on our vital facilities at Subic Bay and Clark Air Base. Failure could result in a $10-billion relocation cost and a sharp setback for Philippine-U.S. ties.

—Press the Japanese to pay more of the on-the-ground costs for the American forces in Japan that enhance regional security. But discourage Japan from assuming ever broader military missions. Japan has already "re-armed," and is now making substantial contributions to regional security and economic development.

—Continue to provide selected defensive arms to both China and the authorities on Taiwan, sales that can help to reduce the possibility of a rash military confrontation.

—Oppose pressures for premature U.S. troop withdrawals from South Korea, an action that must await progress in direct north-south talks.

—Continue in all our diplomatic and military efforts to ❾ champion human rights and the rule of the law. Experience clearly demonstrates that this is not simply a moral obligation but a strategic imperative as well. Democratic allies are more stable, more prosperous and more reliable than dictatorships.

The successful implementation of each of these initiatives could enhance American interests in the Pacific for generations to come. But if we fail, if we sit back and become a status quo power ignoring the sweeping changes taking place throughout the region, we will have only ourselves to blame.

Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Asia subcommittee.

Figure 3.5 Newspaper Article, Assistant Senate Majority Whip Alan Cranston

Though the articles are substantively similar, the style in which they are presented varies greatly and highlights the differences in the stylized scripts various party leaders follow, as demonstrated in the analyses above. Most noticeably, Senator Mitchell's article is framed as an indictment of China and President Bush's handling of issues related to China from his perspective. Senator Cranston's piece is very much motivated by the

collective, with frequent returns to "we"-based appeals. Moreover, Senator Cranston's article is incredibly linear; he introduces the problem and then advocates on behalf of a series of actions to ameliorate the issue. Senator Mitchell's writing is also somewhat linear as he works toward a policy end; however, his article is much more affectively charged and bounces from abstract discussions of American ideals, to criticizing China for Tiananmen Square, to problematizing President Bush's response to China in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square, to discussing China's involvement in Cambodia and related human rights abuse, and to a discussion of trade relations with the United States before repeating this cycle and finally introducing a policy solution.

No. China Hasn't Earned It
Mitchell, George J
The Washington Post (1974-Current file); Jun 4, 1991;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Washington Post
pg. A23
George J. Mitchell

No. China Hasn't Earned It.

Two years ago, the Communist tyrants who control China directed the massacre at Tiananmen Square. Today President Bush wants to extend to China, without conditions, most favored nation trade status. I respectfully but strongly disagree.

On Memorial Day, the President said American foreign policy is "more than simply an expression of American interests. It's an extension of American ideals." Our foreign policy *should be* an extension of American ideals. But the president's proposal is not an extension of American ideals. It's a contradiction of those ideals.

If American ideals are not violated by the massacre in Tiananmen Square, by the imprisonment and execution of persons for peaceful dissent, by the forced political indoctrination of students and the arbitrary refusal of emigration rights, then how are those ideals defined?

On Memorial Day, the president also said, "the Chinese play a central role in working to resolve the conflict in Cambodia." They do. The problem is what they're doing is wrong. They're arming the Khmer Rouge, the party responsible for the deaths within the past 15 years of a quarter of the Cambodian population. That is not the way to resolve the conflict in that tortured country.

By no reasonable standard does the Chinese government's treatment of its own people or the people of Tibet reflect even the most minimal respect for basic human rights.

The Chinese government has not honored commitments it made to act responsibly in controlling the proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons technologies.

China has not become a better, fairer or more open trading partner. American interests, as well as American ideals, are served by a peaceful world with open trade. But even in this respect, the actions of the Chinese government have not earned favored trade treatment.

The government of China gives no protection to U.S. intellectual property rights, a failure that leads to the proliferation of bootlegged software and other properties inside China and exported from China. American exporters don't get the same unrestricted and fair access to Chinese markets that President Bush proposes to give to Chinese exports in our market.

Last year, President Bush urged renewal of China's MFN trade status because of the economic importance of the relationship. Yet a year later, China's exports to this country rose almost 30 percent to $15 billion; our exports to China fell by almost 20 percent to $4.8 billion. It's an economically important trade relationship all right, but it's obviously more important and advantageous to China than to the United States.

Our best opportunity to influence the Chinese regime's calculations is to make clear that there's a price to be paid for following a policy of repression instead of a policy of democratic tolerance.

That is precisely what President Bush has not done. The Chinese government has paid no price whatever for its brutal massacre of peaceful dissidents in Tiananmen Square. It has paid no price for its continued disregard of world arms control efforts. It has paid no price for its repression in Tibet.

Continued pressure from Congress was needed to force the president to give proper asylum to the Chinese students seeking safety on our shores in the year of the Tiananmen Massacre. The president's ill-advised action, less than six months after the massacre, in authorizing a high-level delegation to visit that country while claiming the opposite policy, was the wrong response at the wrong time.

It's time to acknowledge that the president's policy hasn't worked. Repression inside China and in Tibet continues. Arms sales proliferate. Arms technology exports continue unabated. And the only response to U.S. protests is contemptuous Chinese dismissal and spurious indignation.

The president's policy has been given a fair chance to succeed. It has failed. It's time to change that policy.

That's what I propose in legislation to condition MFN status on improvements in the Chinese government's conduct at home and abroad. That's a policy change that may get the attention of the Chinese leadership in a way that the president's policy has failed to do. That's a policy change consistent with American ideals and American interests.

And it's a policy change that has at least a chance of serving as a building block for a genuine new world order, based on respect for human rights, without which our world will not achieve stability and lasting peace.

The writer, a Democratic senator from Maine, is Senate majority leader.

Figure 3.6 Newspaper Article, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell

Sentiment analysis of each article is consistent with the patterns discussed above. Senator Mitchell's article makes much greater use of "I"- than "we"-based language (1.97 and .62, compared with Senator Cranston's .07 and 3.02), while Senator Cranston

relies much more heavily on linear argument (96.44 to Senator Mitchell's 87.21). Senator Mitchell's article also scores much higher on the leadership scale than Senator Cranston's (78.79 to 60.14).

These correlational findings hold across other elite actor groups' texts. The tables for each party, actor group, and year can be found in the appendix. Overwhelming, those actors who are assigned a leadership role by the party (e.g. Senate leaders, House leaders, Speaker of the House, presidential candidates, etc.) are more likely to use language that demonstrates leadership and to speak in the first person as their own agent, in addition to being an agent of the party. Those actors whose party prescribed roles are inherently partisan (e.g. whips and Chairmen) are more likely to employ an "us versus them" frame, and are more likely to make analytical arguments.

Most relevant to the party brand framework, there is considerably less variation in each of these measures between and within the parties for whips and Chairmen, who are more closely held to the party's core identity. The script for these actors on both sides of the aisle appears much more rigid than the script of appropriate behavior for other leaders, whose affect, leadership, and analytical styles vary substantially from year to year. As discussed in Chapter 4, those party leaders whose party-assigned role inherently affords greater leniencies are more likely to differ from the scaled position of the party's core identity, than whips and chairmen.

3.6. Looking Toward Party Brand Position Evolution
Political parties, as branded organizations, are cognizant of their brand position and (more often than not) trade upon those issues and policies for which they are viewed favorably. This finding is consistent with the extant understanding of parties and their

actors as strategic entities, which avoid or downplay issues on which they are perceived negatively. For all the similarities between the parties, an artifact of their occupying the same electoral system, there is consistent variation between party actors – as franchise extensions – who occupy different roles. All analyses to this point suggest franchise extensions that are more closely held by the party are more restrained with respect to their communication of the brand position. To this end, there is much less variability within and between the parties with respect to the messaging of party whips and chairmen. Conversely, congressional leadership (excluding the whips) and presidential candidates demonstrate greater variability from election cycle to election cycle and suggest the party organization affords them greater leniencies – be it in the stylistic expression of the party message, the pursuit of their secondary, individualistic aims, or otherwise.

With a baseline descriptive picture of both parties' brand positions and an understanding that party actors' behavior is rule-based and governed by the party and electoral system in which they are nested, Chapter 4 moves to isolate which party actors instigate changes to party brand and the extent to which the party brand position varies in content from year to year.

CHAPTER 4
Who Leads Whom?

4.1 Party Brand Evolution

Nearly all of the discipline's attention to party brand has centered on the heuristic value of a brand name in communicating information to the mass public (e.g. Aldrich 1995; Neiheisel and Niebler 2013; Butler and McDowell 2014; etc.) Much less attention has been paid to how party brands are developed, maintained, and – as if the focus of this chapter – evolve over time. Of those studies that do focus on brand development most have argued brands originate either in Congress (e.g. Woon and Pope 2008, etc.) or transform through the efforts of a particularly charismatic candidate who captures the attention of the voting public (an artifact of the "permanent campaign", Needham 2005).

This project's contribution is distinct in that it does not just make use of the phrase "party brand", but looks to theories of branding to guide application of the concept to American politics. This argument contradicts the discipline's to-date emphasis on the role of Congress or presidential candidate's primacy in shaping the national brand. Most notably, this dissertation diverges from prior accounts by arguing the national committee is the repository of a party's brand and that candidates and elected officials are merely extensions of the anchored identity.

Party brands are entities unto themselves, they are enduring, and perennial – outliving the political ambitions of any single actor. A presidential candidate or highly visible congressional leader can certainly influence the party's overall brand, but the ephemeral nature of political office – especially the presidency – diminishes the likelihood of any one individual's sustained impact. Rather, a party's brand is governed

by the national committee – through indirect (endorsements of candidates, etc.) and direct (promotion of the party's brand position, etc.) efforts – and can be influenced by Congress and the president, in that order.

It is rare for a franchise extension – products or elected officials – of a greater brand to have a sustained impact on the brand's core identity – the parent company or national committee. Take, for example, Cadillac's short-lived production of the Cimarron in the early 1980's. Widely heralded as General Motor's nadir, the Cimarron – as a franchise extension – was wildly inconsistent with Cadillac's core identity. It had a 1.8L four-cylinder engine with a manual transmission, which Cadillac had not produced in over seventy and thirty years respectively. It was comparatively inexpensive and resembled GM's lower-entry point, sister brand, Chevrolet. It was poorly engineered and suffered frequent mechanical failures. Taken together, the Cimarron was wholly inconsistent with Cadillac's core identity and is credited with independently halving Cadillac's share of the U.S. market (Pitta and Prevel Katsanis 1995; Aaker 1980). The Cimarron is the textbook example of the deleterious effects of a company embracing an off-brand extension, yet Cadillac's brand recovered[1] and has many of the same core identity attributes today (e.g. large engines, America's luxury car, etc.) as it did in 1980, before the Cimarron was introduced.

All of this is to say, even in a worst-case scenario, a brutally off-brand franchise extension/product does not typically have the capacity to reverse or permanently undo

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[1] Cadillac's U.S. market share is lower today than it was in 1981 when the Cimarron was introduced; however, this is due to other factors (e.g. increased preference for foreign makes/models, transition away from large, fuel inefficient engines, etc.).

years of branding and a strong core identity. Unfortunately, this also means a well-established core identity is somewhat impervious to the positive effects of its franchise extensions, unless the franchise extension's impact is sustained for a long enough period to be absorbed by the core identity.

For these reasons and consistent with the theory of party brand change articulated in Chapter 2, this chapter explores changes in both party's brand positions over time and uses a conditional maximum likelihood model to estimate the effects of different party actors on the overall party brand position.

4.2.1 Methods: Explaining Change Through Computational Text Analysis

Spatial analysis of manifestos has allowed for the examination of budgetary politics (Franzese 2002), labor politics (Wallerstein 1999), and has been used as an instrument to predict the duration of coalitional governments (e.g. Druckman and Thies 2002; Strom 1984, etc.) and policy change (e.g. Tsebelis 2002, etc.). However, the discipline lacks a unified method of estimating the position of political parties and existing methodologies include, but are not limited to; hand coding (e.g. Budge, et al. 2001), extensive surveys (e.g. Benoit and Laver 2006, Huber and Inglehart 1995, etc.), and computational coding (e.g. Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003, Slapin and Proksch 2008, etc.).

Computer based content analysis offers relative benefits when compared to its predecessors – most notably, it reduces propensity for human error during coding and inescapable subjectivity – but, as was extensively discussed in Chapter 3, the most common methods of partisan scaling are not appropriate for this project as there is no established reference text against which subsequent analyses could be anchored.

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Theoretically, data from the Party Manifesto Project could have been used to identify the most and least liberal/conservative platforms in this dataset, but because the Project's estimations are derived from the party platform, they would have produced biased scores for the virgin texts because of this project's focus on variation across actors, types of texts, and time.

The discipline's "go to" method of computational text analysis is Laver, Benoit, and Garry's *Wordscores*, which is more or less the open-source embodiment of the scales used in *Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data* (2003); however, without at least two reliable[2] anchor texts representing the extremes on both ends of the spectrum, subsequent ideological scaling using this method is an impossibility within the scope of this project. Nevertheless, scaling is a critical method that informs the discipline's understanding of party change over time and it would be imprudent for a dissertation that purports to gauge party change (via brand position) to neglect scaling all together. Instead, it is important to consider all possibilities of computational text analysis, which allow for similarity scaling of some kind. To this end, this project explored the use of Jaro-Winkler and Levenshtein string similarity, hierarchical clustering, and factor analysis, before pursuing a conditional maximum likelihood model using R's *Wordfish*.

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[2] Apart from being unsure as to the reliable identification of reference texts for this project, the discipline has noted that *Wordscore*'s reliability is questionable as researchers frequently disagree as to what constitutes an extreme position for a respective policy time and space (Slapin and Proksch 2008). There are also criticisms of *Wordscore*'s *ad hoc* rescaling of virgin texts so that those words that occur frequently, but convey little political information (i.e. stop words, etc.) do not bias the text toward the middle; while it is important the text is not biased due to meaningless verbiage, the rescaled scores differ from the original methodology's rescaled scores (Martin and Vanberg 2008).

Wordfish, developed by Slapin and Proksch (2008) and later integrated into Benoit's *quanteda* R package (Benoit and Nulty 2016), is strong in those areas *Wordscores* is weak (with respect to this project). Like *Wordscores*, *Wordfish* estimates positions based on relative word usage, but produces time-series estimates without a reference text, and uses all of the words in a document to estimate the importance of each word to the text's scaled position (Slapin and Proksch 2008, 708). This method builds upon prior quantitative text analysis by assuming word frequencies are generated by a Poisson process, which supposes the probability a given word is used is independent of the proximity of other words in the text. That is, individual words are distributed at random (708). While language and the decision to use a specific word in a given context is highly complex and not at all random, there has been great success in using probabilistic models that specify independence of word choice in political science and in linguistic studies more generally. For all intents and purposes, *Wordfish* is a Poisson *naïve Bayes* model and the reliability of *naïve Bayes* models in predicting the distribution of texts is well-documented (e.g. McCallum and Nigan 1998; Tan et al. 2009; Chen et al. 2009, etc.).

The model also does not assign any predictive weight to parties' scaled position at T_x. All party estimations are predicted simultaneously in relation to one another; if a party has a similar position at T_x as they do at T_{x+1} it is because they are using like words to frame and discuss topics of importance to them. The flip side of this independent modeling is that any movement over time can reasonably be assumed to be true change in the party's position, rather than an artifact of the model – another benefit over other

methods of time-series analyses. Moreover, *Wordfish* is unidimensional and each text is assumed to map on (in some way) to the left-right political dimension, though the estimated position scores are not ideological. This assumption is verified by Slapin and Proksch's (2008) comparison of their findings with the findings of other models, including multidimensional scaling, that also scale along the left-right continuum.

Taken together, the model's functional form is:

$$y_{ijt} \sim Poisson(\lambda_{ijt})$$
$$\lambda_{ijt} = \exp(\alpha_{it} + \psi_j + \beta_j * \omega_{it})$$

"where y_{ijt} is the count of word j in party i's manifesto at time t, α is a set of fixed effects [to account for some words being used much more than others by all parties], β is an estimate of a word specific weight capturing the importance of word j in discriminating between party positions [i.e. how relevant is a given word in meaningfully differentiating Party A from Party B], and ω is the estimate of party i's position in election year t [offering a sort of control for when a party text is particularly lengthy in comparison to others in the corpus]," (Slapin and Proksch 2008, 709).

In regressing the model, an expectation maximization algorithm is iteratively used to calculate maximum likelihood estimates for latent variables and involves the following steps; a) calculation of starting values, including word and party fixed effects (ψ and α), b) estimation of party parameters (β and α), c) estimation of word parameters (ψ and β), and d) calculation of the log-likelihood. Steps b, c, and d are repeated – with the re-estimation of word parameters – until convergence is met. Then, using a parametric bootstrap, 95% confidence intervals are calculated based on 500 simulations using the same data and process outlined above. This method of calculation is particularly reliable with respect to this project as the intervals shrink dramatically with large datasets (in which each word is treated as a data point), of which this project has many.

No method of text analysis would be without assumption, so subsequent findings will be presented with few caveats in mind. First and most importantly given the longitudinal nature of this study, *Wordfish* assumes that words have the same meaning across time. While this is not necessarily ideal, the alternative would be weighting certain words during certain periods of time, which would inject subjectivity into what is otherwise objective analysis. Additionally, *Wordfish* does not purport to assign ideological scores to each text, though the model inherently incorporates ideology as spoken and/or written. It is easy to misunderstand the estimated theta scores when viewing the graphs below as the measure of similarity is laid out on a left-right scale, so it is important to remember the measurement only estimates the spatial proximity and similarity between Texts A and B. While this distance often maps onto ideological dimensions, it cannot be assumed to measure ideological similarity.

Prior to applying the model above, the texts are cleaned and stemmed as they were in the las chapter. Once cleaned, a series of corpuses are created; each corpus contains the party texts to be included for similarity/difference measures. For example, the Republican Party / Presidential candidate corpus yields twenty total documents: one for the Republican Party's entire brand position for each election year (inclusive of all congressional, chairman, and presidential texts specified in Chapter 3's data selection) and one for each presidential candidate (inclusive of all the candidate's campaign commercials, campaign speeches, Meet the Press interviews, etc.). Once cleaned, the model is applied and yields *theta* estimates – indicating scaled position, standard errors at

a 95% confidence interval, and *beta* and *psi* measures for each individual word in the entire corpus.

4.3.1 Findings: Elite Polarization as Reflected Through Brand Position

There is a robust literature on party polarization and though the focus of this project is not elite polarization, comparing both parties' total brand positions for each year seemed a natural starting point and yields great insight as to how distanced each party's brand has become from their opposition. Furthermore, there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the model's estimations, but assessing polarization allowed the validity of the model to be tested and externally verified. The literature well-documents increased elite polarization between 1976 and 2012, with accelerated polarization in the mid-1990's (e.g. Aldrich 1995; Poole and Rosenthal 1997, 2001; Brewer, Mariani and Stonecash 2001; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Stonecash 2018, etc.), so the estimated distance between Democratic and Republican texts at T_{1+x} should be greater than the distance between Democratic and Republican texts at T_1 if the model accurately performs.

Figure 4.1 presents the estimated positions and standard errors for each party brand position between 1976 and 2012.[3] Prior to the election of 1996, the parties' brand positions were relatively similar. Between 1976 and 1992 both parties have an estimated position of between -1.1773 and -0.2338 (a spread of .9435), whereas all party scores afterward fall between 0.1365 and 1.6911 (a spread of 1.5546). Moreover, the Democratic brand positions for 1976, 1980, and 1984 and spatially and statistically

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[3] Recall, the theta estimates are merely spatial proximations, not ideological scales; the Democratic Party's 2012 overall brand position having the highest estimated theta is not evidence of the position being the most liberal or conservative, but the most different from the Republican Party's 1984 position, which has the lowest theta estimate.

indistinguishable from the Republican brand positions for 1976 and 1980. Beginning in 1988 the distance between the parties' brand positions increases with each subsequent electoral cycle, with the greatest jump for both parties being in 1996 and the greatest distance between the parties being in 2012 (Democrat's estimated theta at 1.6911 and Republican's at .1365, a difference of 1.5546.)
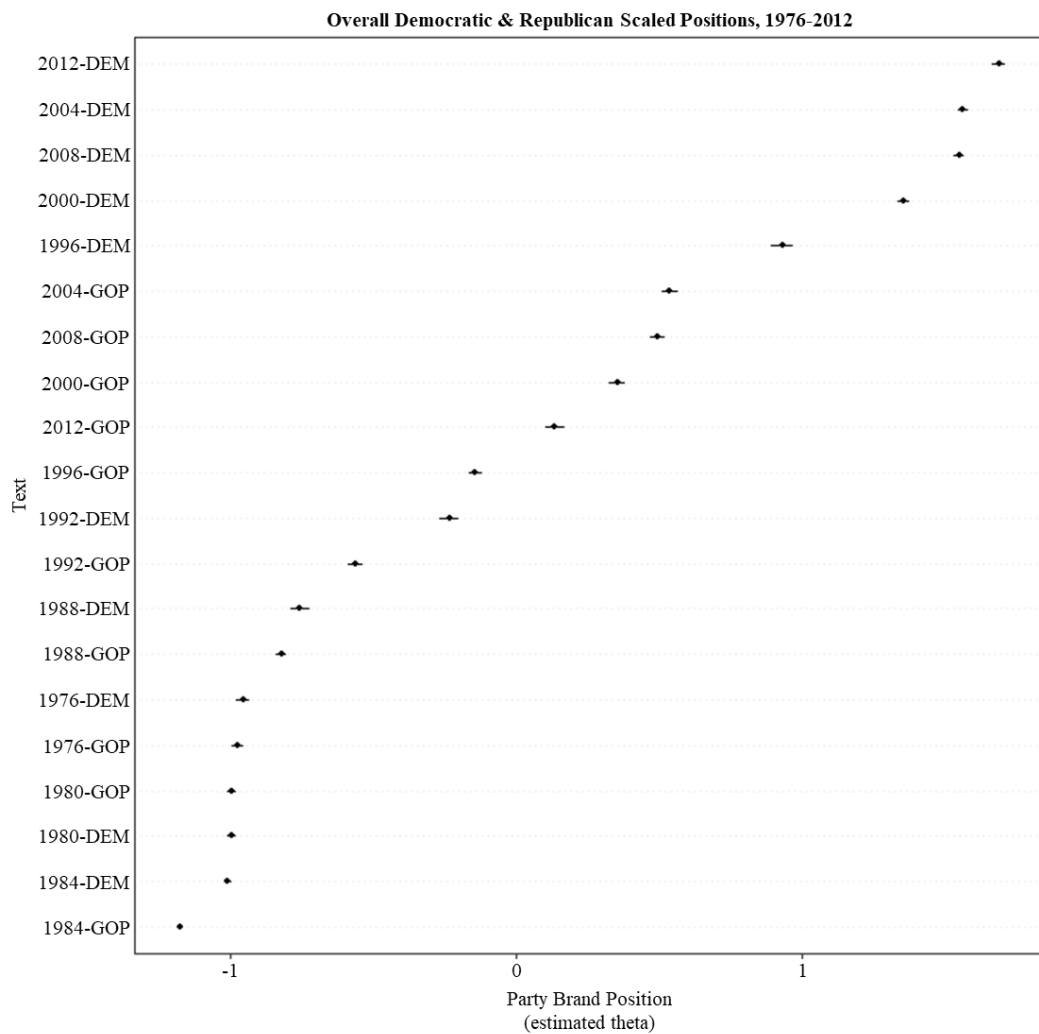
Figure 4.1 Spatial Comparison of Democratic and Republican Brand Positions, 1976-2012
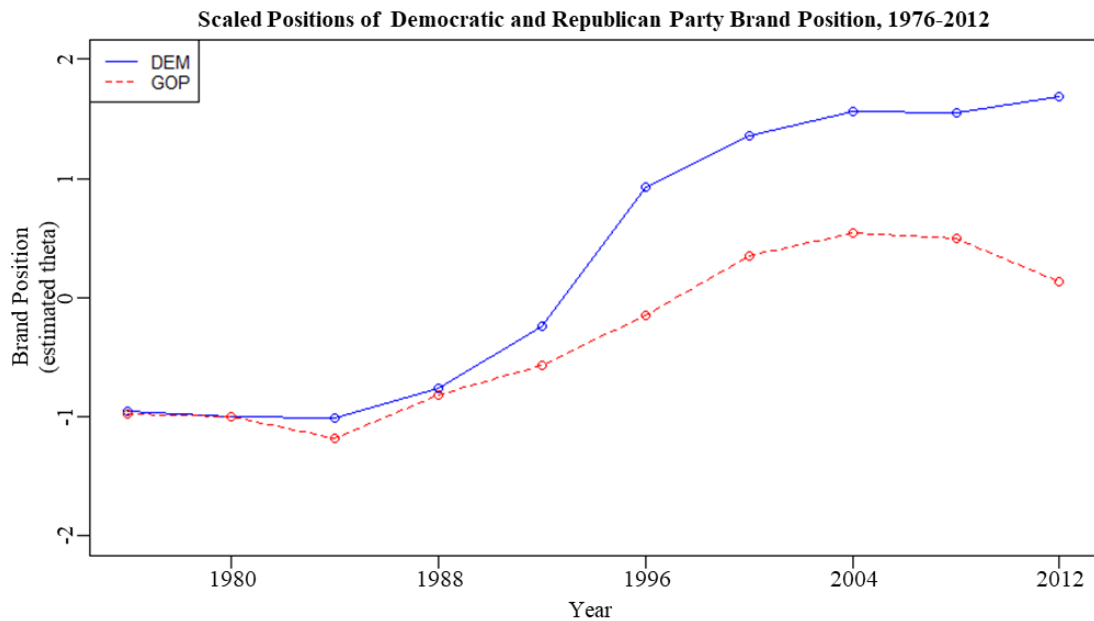
Figure 4.2 Polarizations of Democratic and Republican Brand Positions, 1976-2012

Figure 4.2 visually presents the increase in polarization over time. While estimated theta is not a measure of ideology, it does detect ideology as communicated through speech or written text, so the distance between the parties is both evidence of ideological separation (though not on the provided scale), and the parties' focus on different issues, discussed using different affective frames.

Figure 4.3 plots the fixed effects and weights assigned to each word in the analysis of all party documents. The plot does not necessarily enhance the argument for polarization, but provides some insight into the model that clarifies how position estimates are determined. In a two-party system, it is expected the parties will use many of the same words (e.g. there are only so many ways to talk about immigration without using the word "immigration") and so commonly used words have less weight than those used by a single party.

Word Weights v. Word Fixed Effects for Democratic and Republican Parties, 1976-2012

Figure 4.3 Weights versus Fixed Effects for Democratic and Republican Brand Positions, 1976-2012

When the fixed effects and weights of each word are plotted, they resemble an Eiffel Tower of sorts, indicating there is much commonality (or convergence) between the parties' word choice (as represented by the "body" of the tower), but that there is also divergence between the parties (as represented by the "legs"). The tighter the cluster of each leg, the more consistent the party in within their messaging. This is particularly relevant in assessing the similarity between a party's brand position as presented by different party leaders.

Here, words like "reaganomics" (for Republicans) and "millionaires" (for Democrats) are given more weight than words like "government", and "education", which are frequently used by both parties and thus, do not provide reliably specific information as to the party's position. Somewhat unintuitively, words on the left (with negative weights) are more often associated with the Republican Party and words on the right, the Democratic Party.

4.3.2 Findings: Institutional Change and Party Brand Position

The polarization of both parties' brand positions indicates not only a distancing between the Democratic and Republican parties, but also a rapid change in each parties' position. This is especially true of the change in brand position between 1992 and 1996, when both parties deviated substantially from their 1992 position. As theorized in Chapter 2, brands should be typically slow to move unless there is a change to the greater institutional system and/or environment in which the organization is nested. If only one party's brand position demonstrated great change between 1992 and 1996, it would be reasonable to focus solely on the behavior and actions of party leaders; however, because

both brands shifted during the same cycle it seems more likely there was a change in the system, which required both parties adapt as a form of self-preservation.

Figure 4.4 disaggregates the parties from one another and estimates each parties' brand position in relation to itself, across time. Both parties' positions jump from 1992 to 1996 by 1.0395 (Democratic Party) and 1.3381 (Republican Party) scaled points, indicating a shift in those topics incorporated and framed as part of the brand position. The movement between 1992 and 1996 accounts for nearly 47% of all change in Democrat's brand position and nearly 67% of all change in Republican's brand position between 1976 and 2012. Interestingly, after this schism, both parties return to normal rates of change from cycle-to-cycle, which also suggests an interference in the system and not change that can be credited to any single actor.

The mid-term elections of 1994 mark the first time Republicans won majorities in both chambers since 1954 and the Party made significant inroads at the state level, but more importantly, it's the year the Republican Christian Coalition is thought to have been solidified. The apogee of Republican efforts to secure a reliable base was made possible as the defining issue cleavage in American politics switched from being economic to social. The dividing line between Democrats and Republicans after FDR's New Deal was economic and, even throughout the Civil Rights Movement, the primary cleavage remained economic; however, after nearly forty years of strategic efforts on Republican's part, the defining cleavage in American politics became social, and voters resorted into the parties along the new line (Schofield, Miller, and Maritn 2003).
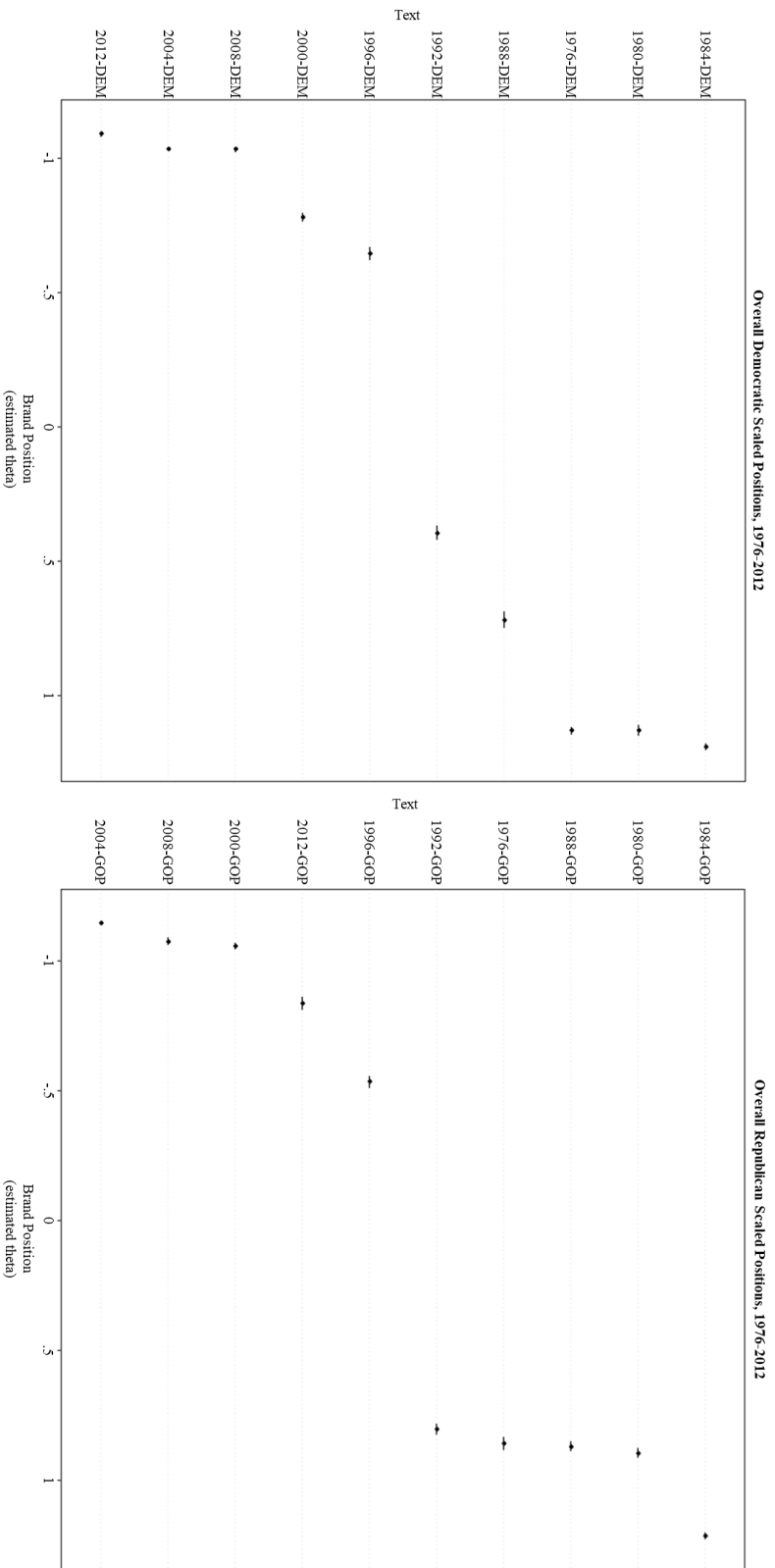
Figure 4.4: Cycle-to-Cycle Change in Democratic and Republican Party Brand Positions, 1976-2012

With this in mind, the leap in both parties' brand positions is logical: when the broader system undergoes rapid change, the parties must adapt to the new environment to ensure self-perpetuation, which in this case required reorienting the brand position in relation to the new cleavage.

4.3.3 Findings: Actor Groups and Change to Democratic and Republican Party Brand Positions

Apart from change initiated by structural upheaval, party brand positions should also evolve due to the efforts of the national organization, congressional leadership, and presidential candidates. There is a degree of coordination between these actor groups – as will be discussed in the next chapter – so it is not entirely fair to suppose a single actor or group is the architect of all change. Rather, the relative specializations of each group coupled with their party-attributed responsibilities dictates the extent to which a single group has influence over the brand position.

Here, influence over brand position is measured as the similarity between all brand positions texts of a given actor group and the overall corpus of party texts for a given election cycle (e.g. the estimated difference between all Democratic congressional leadership texts and the total Democratic corpus for the 1976 election cycle). To ensure a particularly verbose party leader did not bias the results, all texts were weighted prior to application of the model so that each actor group's set of texts was weighted identically to all other groups'.

Figure 4.5 Weights versus Fixed Effects for the Democratic Party's Brand Positions,
1976-2012

Figure 4.5 depicts the Democratic Party's brand position by charting the word

weights versus fixed effects assigned to each word in the total corpus. Similar to the word

cluster above it has two "legs", as did Figure 4.3 (above). Had the party system remained

constant – that is, if there were no shift in brand position substance in the mid-1990's –

the word plot would be more triangular in shape; there would not be a distinct point of departure between brand positions. However, because of this substantive schism and significant change in the Democratic party brand, each leg is comprised of words commonly use pre-1996 and post-1996. Those words that are negatively weighted are associated with the Party's post-mid 90's brand and focus much more on issues related to the social (moral and racial) cleavage that established the modern party coalitions. (e.g. "Christian", "extremists", "outsourcing", "immigration", and "border" all fall to the left to the midpoint, whereas economic issues "inflation", "salt", and "Reaganomics" all fall to the right.)

The same plot of word weights versus fixed effects for the Republican Party tells a similar story of brand position, with a caveat. The legs of Figure 4.6 are fairly short and tightly grouped, indicating convergence between each party actor. White the Republican plot also has two (albeit less-discernable) "legs" – indicating the brand position shifted modestly pre- and post-mid 90's – the left leg, representing the brand position post-mid 90's, is much longer and less densely populated than the right. This indicates there is greater disagreement between party actors beginning with the 1996 election and is an especially important point to return to as the GOP's intra-party brand disagreement allows for a more rigorous analysis of which actor/groups are driving the bulk of the party's brand position during a period of internal unrest.

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Figure 4.6 Weights versus Fixed Effects for Republican Party Brand Positions, 1976-2012

Figure 4.7 graphs the brand position of the overall party, congressional leadership, the presidential candidate for each cycle, and the national committee chairman. Each estimated brand position is statistically distinct from the others, save for the overall and chairman positions from 2012, for which the estimates were so close the confidence intervals overlapped. The table of estimated positions and the corresponding standard errors are presented in the appendix.
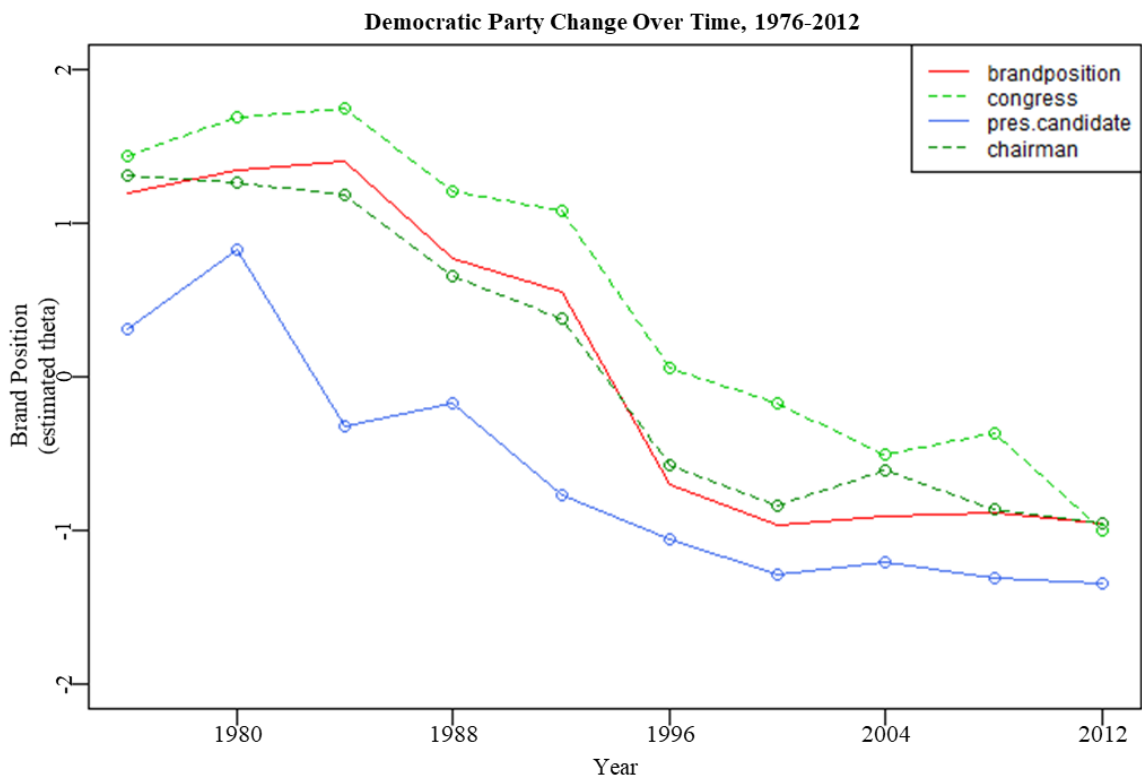
Figure 4.7 Change in Democratic Party Brand Position by Actor Group, 1976-2012

Consistent with the analyses above, the greatest shift in the party's brand position was from 1992 to 1996; however, with respect to the similarity between actors and the overall party, the national committee's brand position is consistently most similar to that of the overall party, though the congressional brand position is a close second.

Interestingly, presidential candidates do not appear to have any substantial or lasting impact on the party's overall position as it is consistently the least similar to the overall brand. To the extent a presidential candidate does have impact on the party's overall brand position, it appears influence is reserved only for those candidates who win office and have similar positions to that of their party's leaders in Congress. This suggests the effects of the president on the party's overall brand position are channeled through Congress, possibly via agenda setting.

Though still significantly distanced, there is greater correlation between the overall and candidate brand positions when the candidate is an incumbent president. Between 1980 and 1988, Democratic candidates' brand positions are not correlated with the overall, chairman, and congressional positions, but from 1992 to 2000 each actor's brand position follows a similar trend. The Democrat's party brand position is most similar to and anchored by the national committee, and is typically positioned between the presidential candidate and congressional leaders' brand positions with greater trend correlation between the overall and congressional positions than the overall and candidate positions.

Figure 4.8 represents the estimated brand positions of the overall Republican Party, the party chairman, congressional leaders, and presidential candidates. Similar to the Democratic Party's general dynamic, the national committee chairman's brand position is consistently most similar to the overall party brand position with respect to scaled distance and overall trend. Congressional leaders have the second greatest impact

on brand position, with a greater spatial distance than party chairman, but a mirrored trend.
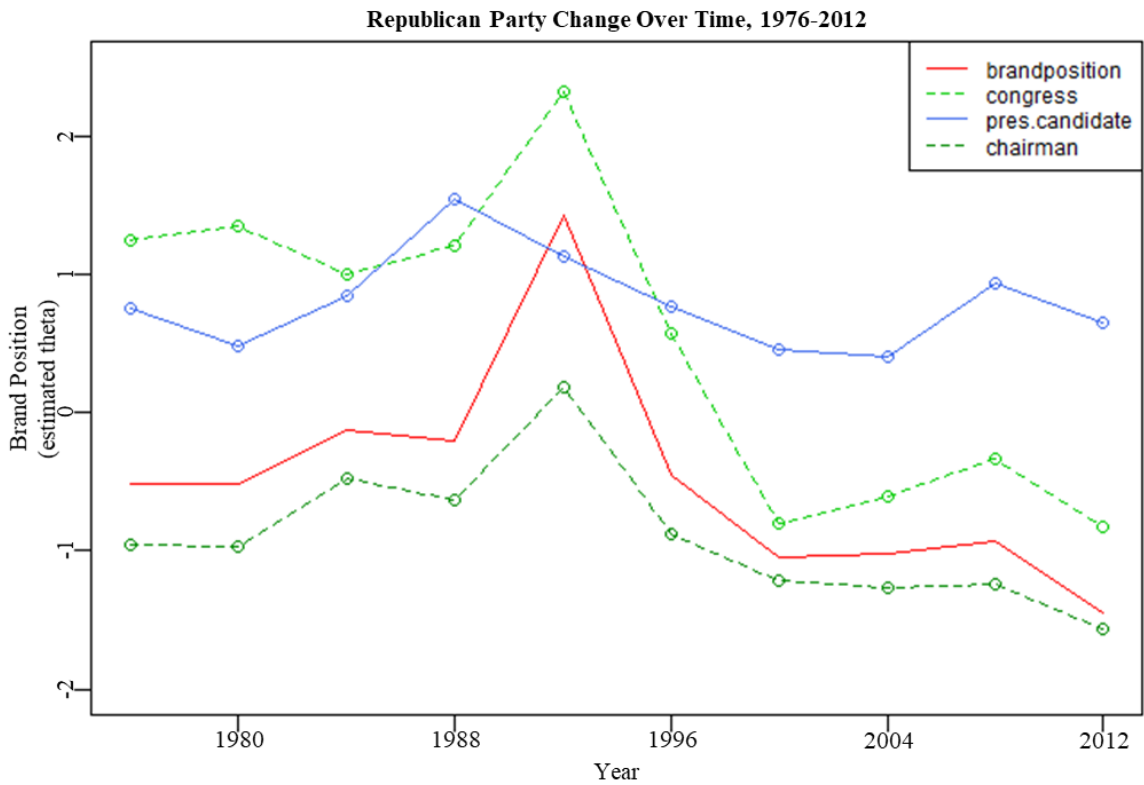
Figure 4.8 Change in Republican Party Brand Position by Actor Group, 1976-2012

Taken together, the Republican Party's scaled positions are unique when compared to the Democratic Party's as the overall brand position follows nearly the identical path of the committee chairman and congressional leadership's brand position, though the overall party brand appears consistently pulled toward or biased by the chairman's position. Also distinct from the Democratic Party, is that Republican presidential candidates are significantly distanced from the overall and chairman positions and do not follow the same pattern as the other actor groups. The (seemingly)

stochastic relationship between presidential candidates and overall party position holds even for those periods when the party holds the presidency.

4.4 The Role of Leadership with Respect to Changes in Party Brand Position

For both the Democratic and Republican parties, the national committee chairman's position is most similar to that of the overall party and most closely mirrors the changes in the overall brand position across time. This finding is consistent with the theory of party brand, which argues the central organization is the keeper of the brand and is best govern the brand position. Moreover, this correlation affirms the centrality of the national committee in coordinating the resources and messages of its actors.

Congressional leadership also has a consistent impact on the overall brand identity, inclusive of measures of spatial proximity and general trends. Speculatively, the constant presence of party leadership in Congress and the ability to pursue concrete policies and publicize related issues cultivates increased impact on the overall brand position. Both policies and issues are critical brand components that contribute to the party's core identity and heighten the importance of congressional leadership in cultivating and evolving a highly recognizable brand.

Presidents and presidential candidates appear to have a much looser relationship with the party's overall brand. Despite being an incredibly prominent fixture of the party, presidents – particularly in an age of candidate-centered campaigns – are granted greater leniencies in pursuing their own political ambitions than other party actors. Here it is suggested that any influence the president or presidential candidates have on their party's brand is largely directed through Congress via agenda setting. That is, the president's brand position may not closely align with or trail the overall party brand, but – the extent

to which Congress pursues the president's agenda – it is plausible the president's influence is slightly underestimated in these models as they cannot account for indirect impact on brand position.

Significant progress has been made in developing and refining methods for scaling text documents and treating words as data. Using a conditional maximum likelihood model, *Wordfish*, this chapter was able to test the extent to which both parties' brands have changed over time, the similarities between the two parties' brand positions, and the role of structural change and leadership in shaping the party's brand.

The next chapter clarifies the findings presented in this and the last chapter through a series of elite interviews conducted with key party leadership and their staffers, which ultimately lend credence to the hypotheses tested in this dissertation and the theory of party brand – as framed within institutional and party politics literatures.

CHAPTER 5
Party Branding in Practice

In developing and applying a new theoretical construct, it is critical to affirm the validity of the party brand framework and theory of party brand with respect to the extant literature and the reality of party dynamics. Chapters 3 and 4 square the theory of party brand with expectations from the extant literature; by and large, the findings and theory complement our understanding of party politics, individual agency within institutions, realignments, and the rise of candidate-centered campaigns.

With validity within the discipline established, it is also important to assess the extent to which this empirically-rooted explanation aligns with the reality of the phenomena sought to be explained. This chapter focuses on squaring the analyses to this point with elite interviews in an attempt to add a layer of understanding to the party brand dynamic – particularly with respect to whether key party actors realize they are engaging in branding activities and the extent to which franchise extensions feel constrained by the core brand – while providing some external validation of the theory.

5.1 Methodology: Selection Process & Interview Guide

At this dissertation's inception, the intent was to conduct interviews to assess whether the theory of party brand and related findings were externally valid in the eyes of party leadership. However, after digging into the project and linking it to institutional theories of organizations and actor-agency it became clear the missing piece (that would also provide external validity) was how party brands are managed on a day-to-day basis. It is widely understood that actors' behaviors are constrained – by opportunities and by rules – but what does this look like in practice? Party brand position is relatively

consistent from actor group to actor group (save for Republican presidential candidates, who seem to operate on their own plane), but what ensures this consistency in a system in which party discipline is (comparatively) weak?

Interviewing congressional staffers provides insight into the day-to-day operations of party activities in Congress, the role of party leadership in driving consistency among their members, in turn a greater understanding of the mechanisms underlying the creation of a uniform party brand. Seven interviews with congressional staffers and one interview with former Congressman, former Senate Minority Leader, former Senate Majority Leader, former Republican National Committee Chairman, and 1996 Republican Presidential Candidate Bob Dole were conducted. Taken together, the staffer interviews provide an on-the-ground perspective that has been little explored to this point. Senator Dole's interview corroborates the findings presented in this chapter and in Chapters 3 and 4 by providing a firsthand account of the role of different party actors; Senator Dole's interview is included in the Appendix.

Using purposive sampling, the interviews include congressional staffers on both sides of the aisle, who represent legislative and office operations, who work in the Senate and House of Representatives, who worked in Congress during the period of analysis (1976-2012), and (ideally) those who have worked under both majority and minority leaders. Additionally, a range of staffers representing a range of constituencies and who work for members of varying self-professed ideologies (e.g. conservative, libertarian, democratic socialist, etc.) were included to ensure some diversity within the sample. (e.g. socialism, libertarianism, etc.).

Using these criteria, offices of sixteen members of Congress were contacted. The initial contact was based solely on the diversity of the districts the members represent and the partisanship of the member, with consideration for whether these offices were representative of the "norm" for the party. After making contact via phone or email, requests were made to interview a staffer in the Washington, D.C. office, with a preference for Chiefs of Staff and legislative staffers. Despite having initial interest from fourteen of the sixteen offices contacted and scheduling ten interviews from that fourteen, six staffers were ultimately interviewed, including; two chiefs of staff (one for a Democratic Congressman, one for a Republican Senator), one scheduler turned legislative assistant (for a Democratic Congressman), one legislative director (for a Republican Senator), and two legislative assistants (one for a Republican and one for a Democratic Congressman). The interviewees represent varying levels of experience (with most having worked in more than one position) and work in offices for districts in the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, South, and on the West Coast. Furthermore, two of the offices represent swing districts, while the other four represent solidly Democratic or Republican districts. Five of the interviewees work for members who are par for the course for their respective party and one works for a member who is widely recognized as ideologically distinct from their party.

Identifier	CS	JW	TV	SL	LE	FM
Informed Consent	x	x	x	x	x	x
(current) Member	4-term, Democratic Congressman	2-term Republican Senator	2-term, Republican Congressman	1-term, Republican Senator	3-term, Democratic Congressman	1-term, Democratic Congressman
Job Title	Chief of Staff	Legislative Director	Legislative Assistant	Chief of Staff	Scheduler/ Legislative Assistant	Legislative Assistant
Years Experience	18	11	7	23	2	9
Still at Position?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No; left 2012	No; left in 2008
Describe your office's constituency	Urban, solidly Democratic district in Northeast	Predominantly rural, solidly Republican state in the Southeast	Rural, solidly Republican district on the West coast	Rural/urban, solidly Republican state in the South	Urban/rural, swing district in Midwest	Urban, swing district in the Midwest

Figure 5.2 Staffer Profiles and Unique Identifiers

Figure 5.2 summarizes general demographics for each interviewee. Interviews were conducted over the phone and in-person between March 2015 and January 2016 at the convenience of the interviewee. Interviews lasted between thirty minutes and an hour and ten minutes.

Prior to the interviews, all but one staffer indicated serious concern for anonymity – both for themselves and their member – so a condition of the interviews was using the interviewee's initials in lieu of their name, not identifying the specific office in which the staff worked, and not presenting the interview in-full, which would increase the propensity the interviewee could be identified. For example, "CS" is currently Chief of Staff for a 4-term Democratic Congressman who represents a solidly Democratic district, in the urban Northeast. Moreover, the members are referred to as "they" or "them" or "Congressman [initials of interviewee]" to ensure gender is not revealed, which could lead to easy identification. Redacting this identifying information does not in any way

obscure the content of the interviews. Finally, non-content based edits were made to ensure the excerpts were understandable; these edits are denoted by ellipses, in the case a portion of text joining two statements was removed, and brackets, in the case a pronoun was modified, the name of the member redacted, or a word added to ensure readability.

Apart from four questions which gauge the frequency with which staffers interacted directly with their representative, with staffers in other offices and the frequency with which staffers' opinions were solicited by their member, all questions are open-ended. Interviews with staffers focused on five primary substantive areas designed to unpack the relationship between party leadership and their members and the creation of a unified party brand including; a) interaction with party leadership, b) party-building and party loyalty, c) party branding activities, and d) interaction with staffers in other offices. The complete interview guide is included in the Appendix.

5.2.1 Findings: Leadership and Staff Pressures, Party Constraints

The focus to this point has very much been on the role of party leadership in crafting a strong party brand that can be traded upon, so the role of party leadership in Congress – particularly with respect to inducing certain behaviors among members – was of primary interest. Somewhat surprisingly, all interviewees indicated the preferences of party leadership are consistently apparent in day-to-day operations, though the level of interaction with party leadership varies from member to member, as does who delivers the message from the "top".

LE's worked as a scheduler (one and a half years) and a legislative assistant (one year) for a Democratic Congressman who represents a swing district in the Midwest during their second and third terms. As a scheduler, LE was uniquely positioned as they

reported directly to their member and, due to the nature of their work, were kept abreast

of legislative and campaign related activities. Despite being from a swing district, LE's

member was not particularly moderate and the member's position often aligned with that

of the Democratic Party, which LE believes is the driving reason their office had less

aggressive interaction with party leadership. In describing the relationship between

Congressman LE and Democratic leaders, LE said:

> "***[They were] a little bit of a party darling***. Everybody thought [they were] going to run for [senator's name redacted]'s seat when he left, so [they] kind of [were*] given national fundraising opportunities that House members don't have…[They] were given that position on [the Democratic Congressional Caucus' policy and steering [committee]* even though [they were] a fairly new member at the time. **I don't really remember being pressured all that much because [they were] in those positions, but [they] probably got those positions coming in because there was a high degree of alignment between [they and the party]**," (LE personal communication, January 2016).

However, even though Congressman LE was favorably aligned with party leadership, LE

remembers the member was not without party oversight.

> "I do know that **we got whipped a few times when I was scheduler** because I would have to talk about **our standard answer anytime the Whip's office called, which was that we didn't know, even if we did**. Sometimes [Congressman LE] was *going to vote the way they wanted us to anyway, but I was still just told to tell them, "we don't know*,". I don't know what the rationale was for that…" (LE personal communication, January 2016).

This method of shirking or avoiding party leadership is a recurring theme for every

member, regardless of their partisanship, experience, or alignment with the party and will

be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

While Congressman LE is a "party darling", Senator JW is far from it. Despite

being a nationally recognizable Senator, Senator JW does not seem to be granted the

leniencies or given the prestigious appointments afforded to Congressman LE. JW began

their career on the Hill as one of their member's Legislative Assistants, but was promoted

to Legislative Director six months prior to our speaking. JW indicated that even though

their member nearly always votes as the party wants, they are viewed as a nonconformist

– a reputation the member relishes, but JW finds, "difficult to manage," because, "the

office dedicates a lot of time and resources to reassuring leadership," that they are, "on

the same team," (JW personal communication, April 2015). JW elaborated:

> "I think we're **watched more closely because [Senator JW] isn't your traditional
> Republican**. *On big votes they actually tow the party line almost as much as like,
> for instance [Senator Mike] Enzi and [Senator Tom] Coburn[1]*, but that's not
> [Senator JW]'s reputation. And I know for a fact **the party doesn't hassle Enzi
> and Coburn as much as they do us**. I definitely have *fielded my fair share of
> calls where we're whipped*. If the call makes it to me *I'll explain our rationale*.
> But they know what they're getting. It's not a surprise [that Senator JW is going
> to vote in the way they do], so they usually just say, "okay, we'll check back in".
> But sure, there have been **three times things escalate and I got a call from the
> Leader's staff or the Leader will call [Senator JW] directly about a vote**. *That's
> when it's serious*." (JW personal communication, INSERT DATE)

Though JW implied such heavy party oversight was needless, I was curious if the

frequent calls and visits paid off. JW furthered:

> "I can **count the number of times leadership has actually convinced the member
> [to vote with the party when conscience would dictate otherwise] on one hand,
> but I guess when they have it's been on critical votes for the party**. *National
> newsworthy votes*." (JW personal communication, April 2015)

JW's emphasis on party leadership's persistence and success, particularly with respect to

high profile issues, is consistent with the broader theory of party brand. A party cannot

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[1] Senator JW voted with the party roughly 85% of the time in 2012, while Senators Enzi and Coburn voted
with the party roughly 90% of the time.

actively maintain all brand components simultaneously, so they focus their energy on a brand position comprised of their identity as it relates to salient, timely issues. Thus, it is within reason the party would apply greater pressure when the legislation is highly visible to the public as it is part of their activated identity, which is communicated to the public.

The other interviewees voiced similar routine office interactions with the Whip's office, with no real decipherable difference in activity between when the party is in or out of power. Furthermore, each interviewee indicated, based on their own experience and the experience of staffers with whom they are friendly in other offices, that a member is much more likely to be whipped if the party is unsure of their position. This is a logical, though FM furthered that if the Whip has been advised the member is voting with the party they may still provide oversight if they, "don't really trust [the member]…[either] because they are new, so they're an unknown or because they burned the party in the past," (FM personal communication, March 2015).

Outside of direct interaction with the Whip's office, I asked four interviewees about the role of the Leader in their chamber; all agreed the leader is, "more of a figurehead for the caucus to look to and someone for committee leaders to work with [on] important issues," (TV personal communication, July 2015) and that the leader and their office are much less likely to interact with the member and their office than the whip. The Speaker, when of the same party as the member, is perceived as even less likely to contact individual members as they are more of a, "figurehead for the public," (TV personal communication, July 2015). While all interviewees reported an interaction between their member and their party's leader in some way, these seem to take place

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behind closed doors at party gatherings and more private meetings (typically without mid- to low-level staff) at the request of the leader.

The only interviewee who volunteered knowledge of a specific interaction between their member and their party's leader was SL, a twenty-three year veteran of the Hill and, at the time of the interview, Chief of Staff to a Republican Senator from the South in their first term.

> "Senator SL told me about [their] *first interaction with party leadership…[they] won in a special election and the leaders want[ed] to welcome [them],* so a meeting was set up…[They] thought it was just going to be a polite "glad to have you" conversation and it was, until **leadership told Senator SL that [they were] expected to earn [their] seat through daily fundraising**. If *[they] wanted the party's support in the next election [they] needed to schedule time to call donors everyday and needed to meet their quota. **As a party[member] that is [their] job**.* It caught [them] off guard but [they do] it. I don't know if [they] were singled out because of the special election, but I've heard [about] other closed door meetings like this." (SL personal communication, November 2015)

With their many years of experience working for Senators and vast institutional knowledge, SL did not seem particularly surprised by the focus of this meeting and seemed almost amused Senator SL did not anticipate such request. While the fundraising responsibilities of congressmen have increased significantly after Citizens United (Grim & Siddiqui 2013; Ferguson 2013; Levitt 2010), SL stressed, "fundraising has been a big part of the game the entire time I've been here…it's how the party sustains itself, it's just a reality," (SL personal communication, November 2015).

While I argue brand cultivation is top-down, it does not necessarily have to come as an edict from a party's leader or whip. After talking to the interviewees, it seems most of the day-to-day party operations are at the behest of committee staff. Whereas oversight

by the leader or whip is stochastic, party messaging and communications by leaders of

the committees appears to be constant. TV, a legislative assistant to a Republican

congressman from the West coast, echoed his colleagues when he said:

> "Well ***committee leaders have their [committee] staff put on like, info sessions about things that were coming up***. Big bills that were being debated or marked up. *Congressman TV doesn't go to those meetings, but [the staffers] try to make the meetings relevant to our legislative area…*Working on the legislative side, ***this is the most important service the party provides...***They ***offer to write opening statements*** if the member wants them to, they ***send over briefing materials***, *so that we have a baseline*, and it helps because ***we'll use that to put together a briefing packet for Congressman TV***. *We all work off the same foundation…We* ***know the party's stance and we put the member's spin on it from there***." (TV personal communication, July 2015.)

This project has devoted much time – particularly in chapters 2 and 3 – to

discussing institutionally prescribed scripts, derived from rules that govern behavior, but

TV (and the other interviewees) confirmed there are *literal* scripts distributed by party

leadership to its members surrounding active legislation. While the members are not

bound to use the information the committee provides, all interviewees indicated their

office nearly always use the information they are given, both because its high quality

(e.g. well-researched, which frees up member staff to focus on other tasks) and is

generally, "pretty consistent with what we'd come up with," (TV personal

communication, July 2015). When they do alter the original information, it is usually by

adding information relevant to constituents or the members' general interests.

Congressional staffers essentially frame these scripts to suit their district/state, while

maintaining the core information proffered by party leadership.

Congressional leadership is centrally important in the development, perpetuation, and evolution of a party's brand and these interviews provide insight as to three different pathways the party is able to encourage brand unity: 1) oversight of the member from the whip/their office, 2) leadership as a figurehead (and likely in smaller meetings), and 3) the development of appropriate and shared scripts by party leadership in committees (with likely pressure from the chamber's leader via the committee's leader).

5.2.2 Findings: Staff Pressures

The decision to interview staffers was motivated by a desire to learn from those who have a ringside seat to the routine, internal machinations of parties' in Congress, but what was particularly surprising is that each staff member with whom I spoke described some way in which they constrain member actions, usually in line with party expectations. For most of the interviewees, their acting on the member and encouraging them to follow leadership seems secondary. For example, each interviewee indicated that when their member wanted to make a statement the office staff would, "give [them] talking points…really just bullet points from briefings and our research on the position [they] should take and reasons why…[They] would fill out the rest of the talking points…mak[ing] sure what [they] wrote aligned with what we gave as sort of a baseline," (LE personal communication, January 2016). In this sort of case, the staffers' primary objective is providing their member the information necessary for them to write a strong statement, but it has the secondary effect of reinforcing the party's influence as they include information from the committee's briefings, which – as discussed above – are facilitated by party leadership. However, there were three powerful examples of staff

carrying out their job function in a way that strategically attempted to persuade and constrain the member in line with normative expectations.

I asked each interviewee about the conditions under which their member reaches out to or responds to the media as a way of gaining some insight as to how non-leadership members publicize the party's brand. In doing so, JW (Legislative Director to a nationally visible, 2-term Republican Senator from the Southeast) underscored the extent to which their office works together as gatekeepers, largely attempting to restrict access to Senator JW out of respect for the Senator's time and out of concern the Senator may say or do something that will create more work for them. Because Senator JW is well-known, they are often requested to appear on political talk shows. Knowing the staff acts as gatekeepers, I asked if the office or designated press staff ever refrain from notifying the Senator about such requests, to which he indicated Senator JW is not told about, "them all because there are too many to count and [they] wouldn't think most are worth his time," (JW personal communication, April 2105). I pressed further and asked if the staff ever refrains from passing along media requests the Senator would find worthwhile, to which JW demurred.

Additionally, JW explained more routine media requests (e.g. smaller outlets, requests for comment, requests for rebuttal, etc.) are often brought by the press staffer[2] to the relevant legislative staffer, who may offer comment on behalf of the Senator. JW furthered:

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[2] Five of the six interviewees were asked whether their office has a media plan in place. All indicated they did, but there was variation with respect to who fields the initial request as some, larger offices have a dedicated press staff, whereas the job falls to the scheduler, legislative director, or chief of staff in other offices.

"We get *requests for comment…sometimes they came to my desk* [when I was a Legislative Assistant] *because they [would] implicate one of, you know, my issue areas*. **Working for a Republican on healthcare, working for a Republican who is vocal about healthcare is tough**. I was *swamped with requests for comment during the ACA lead up*. **Unless it's a rebuttal we need to make or an outlet with a lot of viewership, I just ignored requests or referred them to committee**. **If Senator JW had [their] way, [they] probably would talk every time, so we try to reign [them] in**. [They've] got a fire to do good by their conscience and I respect that. And **sometimes you have to give [them] a chance to comment, but I am always very clear what the stakes are**. *This is what we've said before. This is what committee [leadership] gave us. This is what you should say. This is what your supporters want to hear*. It's tense sometimes. But you know, [they] **know it's better not to comment unless [they] are sure [they'll] come out looking good**. *I mean media was not even really my job, but [Senator JW] knows we're a team, trying to get it done*." – (JW personal communication, April 2015)

I asked JW what the concern was if Senator JW was given cart blanche to speak on every

healthcare media request, to which they said:

"*[Senator JW] voted against the ACA, but [they] saw value in some of the provisions and would say so*…**when [they] did offer comment we [the office] almost always got contacted by leadership**, usually the Whip, and then *had to reaffirm we were not in favor…they'd push the talking points, we'd say we understood*…It put us [the office] is a weird spot [because] **we couldn't say, "we've told [Senator JW] that, [they] just jettisoned it during the interview, but he's still a nay,"**….I don't remember if it was [then-Senate Minority Leader Mitch] McConnell or [then-Assistant Senate Minority Leader Jon] Kyl who called out [Senator JW] by name on [a Sunday morning news program], but one of them basically said don't listen to or, or worry about [them]. That was hard, because *we were really trying and knew [Senator JW] wouldn't vote for [the ACA]*, **but he's passionate and we can't keep that quiet always**," (JW personal communication, April 2015).

LE (a scheduler-turned-legislative-assistant to a Democratic congressman in

[their] second term from the Midwest) had a similar story of staff influence, but in their

case it was staff from other offices trying to persuade their member to vote against party

lines. LE explained:

"*If the NRA wanted us to vote for something we always voted against it*. Like, we were very proud of our "F" rating. ***I know other Democrats in [state] were not so happy with us*** *because they were much more scared of the NRA,* so they would be willing to get like, a "C" rating. They ***didn't think it looked good [to the party] when we were willing to vote against it and they weren't***. In those sorts of instances, ***we would get pressure from their [legislative director] asking us not to vote against them***… It *wasn't anything top down from a party leader*. It was like, *our state delegation [was] trying to be more neutral and patrol because they were worried about the wrath*," (LE personal communication, January 2016).

LE's story fits with the broader narrative that party leadership is more willing to make allowances for deviations from the party line when they see it as necessary for the member to satisfy their constituents.[3] Here, Democrats from the same state were looking to Representative LE to validate their position on gun control legislation in the eyes of the party; if all Democrats from the state opposed a bill and cited it their constituencies as the reason, it would be much more believable to party leadership than if there was one member who broke from their state delegation and towed the party line.

FM worked on the Hill for 9 years – beginning as an Administrative Assistant and ending as a Legislative Assistant – before leaving in 2008. I was put in contact with them by the office of the last congressman – a Democrat from a swing district in the Midwest – for whom they worked. FM also detailed the power of staff pressures to reign in their member to the favor of the party. Specifically, they remembered:

"There were some times [Congressman FM] missed a vote. [They] didn't vote yes or no, but [they] just missed a vote that was very important to our chief of staff…something to do with beer distributors. And [the chief of staff] was really mad

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[3] Senator Bob Dole spoke at length about this dynamic during our interview, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

about that and I think [Congressman FM] claimed [they] didn't miss it intentionally, but I

think [they] did because [they] had expressed they were conflicted. They were like, "you

want me to vote on this because of fundraising, but I don't really know how I feel about

it," and so [they] purposefully skipped it. [Congressman FM] was weighing a Senate run

and the chief was always very focused on the long-term impact of today's

decisions…And it happens with frequency with members." (FM personal

communication, April 2015).

It became clear in talking to FM that the Congressman's chief of staff was acutely

aware of making sure the party and fundraisers were satisfied, so the Congressman would

be well-positioned for a future campaign. As will be discussed in the next section, this

sort of shirking is incredibly common among members looking to avoid the pressures of

party.

Somewhat unexpectedly, congressional staff – at all levels – plays a major role in

encouraging their member adhere to normative expectations, which are unique to the

institution and, in many ways, designed to ensure the perpetuation of party and party

interests. Though the reason staff encourage adherence to rule-prescribed varies – for JW,

it meant decreased workload for the office and for FM it meant ensuring future electoral

success – staff are crucial in reproducing institutional norms and influencing their

members' behavior.

5.2.3 Findings: Senator/Representative Behavior and Party Constraints
When discussing constraints on member behavior – specifically the hurdles party

leadership place in the way of a member pursuing their own party-inconsistent ideas –

each interviewee brought up examples of their member shirking responsibility, either to

avoid having to follow a party decree with which they strongly disagreed or avoid

retribution by the party.

SL (Chief of Staff to a Republican Senator from the South) shared a story they

learned early in their career, which helps facilitate these avoidance techniques. SL

advised:

> "Their *calendar should always be full*. Not because they're going to make [every] appointment, but **because they need a reasonable explanation why they aren't meeting with people who want to meet with them**…When I was a scheduler we kept a duplicate calendar in the front office [in case we] needed to find [them]. About a week after I started, **a staffer from the assistant leader's office came by, saw that our Senator was in a committee meeting that was ending soon, and that [they] didn't have another meeting afterward. Next thing, the Assistant Leader walks in. Apparently, the Senator had been dodging [their] calls for a month.**" (SL personal communication, November 2015)

LE's (a scheduler-turned-legislative-assistant to a Democratic congressman in

[their] second term from the Midwest) recollection mirrored SL's. LE described how

their member would avoid fundraising call time:

> "When he was in D.C. there was **call time scheduled every day**. Now sometimes [they] didn't show up to it. Like, **[they] would go rogue, not answer [their] Blackberry, not answer [their] cell phone, and not be in the office or in the call center when it was scheduled**." (LE personal communication, January 2016).

As SL discussed as part of their interview (relevant excerpt included above), daily call

time is a non-negotiable commitment to the party and here Congressman LE is eschewing

this party requirement through avoidance. I asked LE if there was any sort of retaliation

by the party against the Congressman and they said there was not, though the

Congressman did not routinely miss call time and was a "party darling", which may be

part of how they were able to get away with shirking this responsibility.

CS (Chief of Staff to a four-term Democratic Congressman from the Northeast) also discussed the lengths members will go to in an effort to dodge their party's oversight. During their eighteen years on the Hill, CS explained:

> "When I started we hadn't gone digital yet, so *votes were logged by someone for the Democrats on one side of the chamber and someone else for Republicans on the other*. The **Majority and Minority leaders usually stood next to the person tallying to, you know, keep watch and make sure their members were voting the way they should**. But **sometimes Republicans would go on the Democratic side, and vice versa, and vote and then immediately leave so their party wouldn't know they deserted until after voting ended**. I remember both parties were very excited when we switched to computers because they thought it would stop this. But **congressmen who really, really want to break from their party will still go to the other side, register their vote, and then run**. None of my members ever have done this, but I've seen it and it happened to a friend of mine. *Her member voted on the Republican side, left, and didn't go back to the office because he didn't want to be found*. **If they [party leadership] finds you, they will corner you and bring you back to re-register your vote.**" (CS personal communication, May 2015)

Every staffer interviewed indicated their member engaged in some form of shirking, despite my not asking the question directly. Understanding avoidance as a generally appropriate strategy for neglecting party directives is important as shirking is a rule-based behavior unto itself. As opposed to the rules discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, which facilitate party discipline, shirking provides an "out" for members whose day-to-day activities are conducted under the watchful eye of the party.

5.3 Preliminary External Validation

These staffer interviews provide external validation of key components of the theory of party brand and, more specifically, the extent to which party leadership is able to influence and direct their brand with the aim of self-perpetuation.

Most notably, party leadership on both sides of the aisle is omnipresent; whether it be through routine calls from the whip's office to confirm (and in some cases, re-confirm) the member's position stance, through the leaders' direction by setting the party's position on a given bill, through collective leadership's requirements of daily fundraising, or through committee leadership's dissemination of the party's position on active legislation via issue statements and briefing materials. Moreover, the staff plays a surprisingly central role in reinforcing the party leadership's directives, often unknowingly or as a secondary effect of some other action.

When confronted by party leadership's umbrella of influence, discordant members engage in shirking to temporarily ignore the party's requirements of them. This appears to be normatively acceptable behavior and layers upon previous chapters' emphasis on the importance of rule based behavior in ensuring the perpetuation of a party's brand. Just as institutionalized rules govern the way party whips discuss the overall brand position (e.g. Chapter 3) and govern the argument strategies of congressional leaders and presidential candidates, institutionalized rules allow congressmen to desert the party without reprisal, which begets flexibility intrinsic to franchise extensions.

CHAPTER 6
Conclusion

6.1.1 In Summary

Party brand is more than a political buzzword of the day and recent scholarship

that has made use of the business marketing model has made terrific inroads in advancing

the study of party politics. Within this comparatively new literature, most scholarship

centers on the relationship between voters and a party's brand. These analyses typically

consider how an individual's perception or impression of a party impacts partisan

identification (Baker et al. 2016; Lupu 2013; Busby and Cronshaw 2015, etc.), strength

of partisanship (Marder et al. 2016, etc.), and/or vote choice (Nielsen and Larsen 2014;

Veer et al. 2010, etc.). A smaller subset of the literature considers the relationship

between brands-in-crisis and partisan dealignment (Lupu 2014, 2013), and a smaller still

subset integrates expressly leverages insights and constructs from business-marketing to

explain elite party (in)action (Butler and Powell 2014; French and Smith 2010, etc.) and

party brands (Rutter et al. 2018) .

This project contributes to this last group by explicitly incorporating business-

marketing's brand-image framework and various dimensions of branding theory (e.g.

franchise theory, house of brands versus branded house models, etc.) to further the

discipline's understanding of political parties as strategic organizations in the American

political landscape. As well, this project buttresses the broader party brand literature by

providing conceptual clarification (i.e. party brand is defined inconsistently within the

discipline's study of branding activities) and speaks directly to the American party

politics literature.

A party's brand is the collection of concrete attributes (e.g. policy platforms, "owned" issues, affiliated leaders) and intangible mystique (e.g. symbols, ideology, personality) developed over time. At a given point in time the party will project or activate a portion of its overall brand identity; this is the party's brand position. The brand position is communicated to the populace and this message is mediated by the party's previous brand position, the opposition party's brand position, news sources, and the individual's prior conception of the party. The brand position as distorted by these factors is the party's brand image, the individual's picture of what the party is project.

Within this general framework, this project argues the national committee functions as a corporation in that it is the repository of the party's brand identity. The national committee is uniquely equipped to serve in this central capacity as it controls critical financial and informational resources, routinely surveys likely voters to keep abreast of their constituents' preferences/market demands, and is somewhat insulated from the ephemeral nature of politics as the committee persists regardless of election outcomes.

A party's candidates and its elected officials act as franchise extensions of the core brand identity. When a party endorses a candidate or official, they enter into an informal contract wherein they provide critical resources (e.g. donor networks, proprietary data, etc.) and expertise in exchange for cooperation on issues critical to the party. Franchise extensions are permitted to take certain liberties with the party's core identity and add a layer to the core brand that facilitates appeal among targeted constituents. This project contends only highly visible franchise extensions at the national

level, including congressional leadership and presidential candidates, play a crucial role in the branding process and in communicating the party's brand position.

This framework complements the discipline's extant understanding of political parties and, as extensively discussed in Chapter 2, brings the party organization back into the study of American politics. Additionally, this conceptual model actively joins the study of party-organization (PO), party-in-government (PIG), and provides a framework for incorporating the study of party-in-the-electorate (PIE). This is a notable divergence from the last five decades of the discipline's scholarship in this area, which usually focuses on one component of the party to the neglect of the others. (e.g. Cox and McCubbins' seminal work on responsible party government wonderfully illustrates the role of parties in Congress, but at the expense of considering how other "branches" of the party materially inform and/or impact congressional activities.) In addition to putting forth party brand, this project emphasizes the importance of the holistic study of parties in an effort not to over- or understate the role of any one actor arm. Furthermore, this dissertation strongly advocates on behalf of reincorporating institutional theories, particularly as they pertain to the study of parties at the elite level.

The next sections summarize central findings as presented in chapters three, four, and five, before moving to suggest future areas of research.

6.1.2 In Summary: Issue Ownership

Chapter 3 joins theories of issue ownership with the theory of party brand and argues that party-owned issues are a central facet of the party's core identity, operating as the brand-as-issues component. Focusing on the pathway highlighted in Figure 6.1, a party in control of their brand position will strategically choose to highlight those issues

over which they are viewed as having ownership, and are thus viewed favorably on, as opposed to focusing on issues owned by the opposition party and/or neutral issues.

Connectivity clustering of party texts from 1972-2012 finds correlational support for the importance of issue ownership to a party's brand position. For seventeen of the included twenty election cycles, both parties were more likely to emphasize issues they owned than issues they did not and did so with greater frequency.
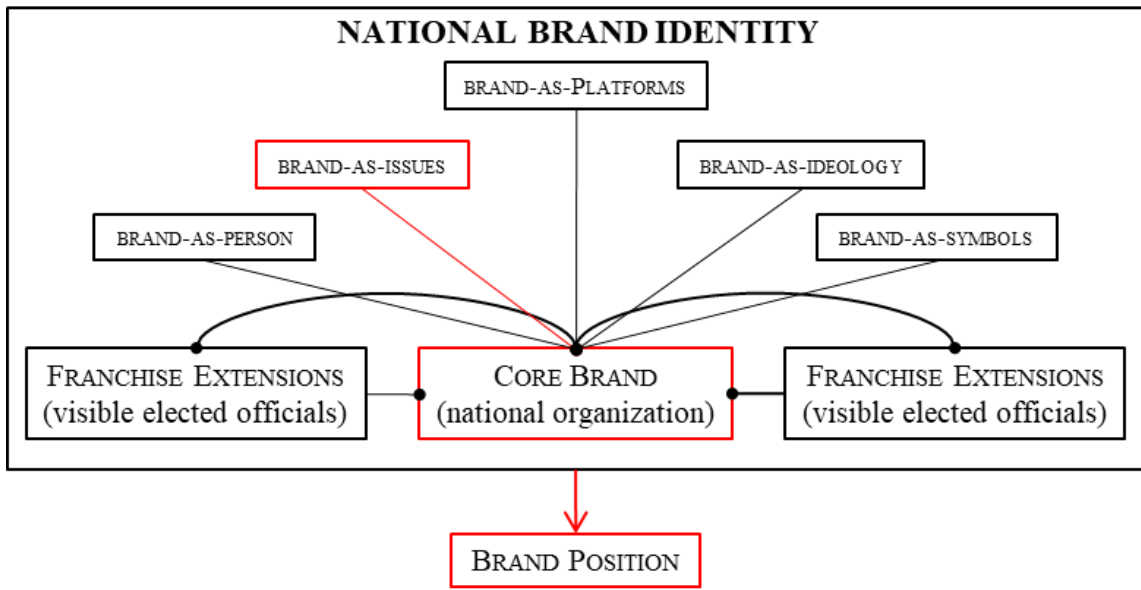
Figure 6.1 The National Brand Identity Framework (subset of the party brand framework)

6.1.3 In Summary: Elite Specialization

Furthermore, it is argued candidates and elected officials, as franchise extensions, are granted varying degrees of autonomy in pursuing their own political ambition based on their party-assigned role. For the party organization to self-perpetuate, there is a division of labor among relevant actors and their behavioral decisions are guided by their specialization and the rules tied to their position. To this end, Chapter 3 presents correlational findings, which indicate that party actors on both sides of the aisle present

and engage with their party's brand systematically, using distinct frames. Party whips and

party chairmen are much more likely than presidential candidates and Senate/House

leaders to use language that "rallies the troops", positions the party against a foil, and

provide linear argument, among other differences. These affective differences in framing

and valence are meaningful in that they indicate different party actors, even within the

same actor group (e.g. senatorial whips and leaders, etc.), are prescribed distinct ways of

interacting with and publicizing their party's brand position.

6.1.4 In Summary: Behavioral Similarities Induced by Institutional Environment

Moreover, the effects of the electoral and party systems, in which both

organizations are nested, appears to shape both parties' affective engagement with their

respective brands and the behavioral patterns of their subgroup actors. For all

dissimilarities in party brand content, the similarities in the way the parties conduct

business points to a force that acts upon both organizations. To this end, I interview both

Democrats and Republicans in an effort to understand whether the similarities between

the parties as presented in the data are aberrant or an artifact of both parties occupying

space in the same system.

6.1.4 In Summary: Polarization and Realignment

Chapter 4 uses computational text analysis to analyze collected party texts and

assess changes to the party brand system and determine which subgroup actors have the

greatest impact on the party's brand position. Using a conditional maximum likelihood

model to compare the overall Democratic and Republican corpuses, it becomes clear

there was a major shift in the substantive content of both party's brands between 1992

and 1996. It is argued that this jump in scaled position, which is clearly a departure from

the pattern pre- and post-1996, is evidence of a realignment, which supports the

discipline's increasing recognition of the 1994 midterms as marking a secular

realignment (e.g. Abramowitz and Saunders 1998; Campbell 2006; Brooks and Manza

1997, etc.). Specifically, this dissertation posits the defining cleavage in American

politics was predominantly economic until the mid-1990's, when the GOP's forty years

of strategic coalition building and cultivation of the Southern Strategy and Christian

Coalition redefined the cleavage along social (and moral) lines. Thus, both parties

adjusted and rebranded with respect to the new cleavage in an attempt to woo voters.

6.1.5 In Summary: The Role of Actor Groups in Producing Party Brand
        Chapter 4 also tests the strength of the relationship between the overall party

brand position and the branding activities of the chairmen, congressional, and presidential

franchise extensions. As highlighted by the party brand framework, the national

organization is the origin of the party's brand and, to that end, the chairmen's positions

most closely align with and drive the overall brand. In a candidate-centered era,

presidential candidates – who are less reliant on the party organization for resources than

congressional leadership – should contribute to the overall brand position, but to a lesser

extent than congressional leaders. Here, the observed findings are consistent with the

theoretical expectations set forth in Chapter 2.

6.1.6 In Summary: Insights from Congressional Staffers and the Constraints of Institutional Norms
        Chapter 5 summarizes interviews with congressional staffers and provides broad

support for the findings and trends uncovered through computational text analysis.

Specifically, party leadership plays a daily role in their elected officials' routine through

committee activities, reinforcement of the party's position on a given bill or topic, and

fundraising requests. Somewhat surprisingly, congressional staffers play a role in reinforcing party leadership's directives. While the staffers indicated party leadership is, more often than not, helpful (e.g. providing key information resources, etc.) they also indicated that when their member was at odds with the party they would engage in shirking as a way of circumventing party directives. In these scenarios, staffers emphasized shirking on non-critical issues, with minimal frequency was viewed as acceptable and allowed members some flexibility when their beliefs were at odds with the party's preferences.

6.2 Future Research

This project's contribution is largely conceptual and the analyses provide a foundational understanding of party brand dynamics at the national level of American politics. Three directions for future research are clearly supported by the conceptual development and findings presented here, including a conceptual extension of party brand to state and county parties, research that bridges party brand position and party brand image, and more rigorous empirical analysis of party brand during periods of intraparty brand disagreement.

The decision to exclude state and county parties was necessary for this project's completion due to scope constraints. However, business-marketing literature – specifically licensing and other extension sub-literatures – holds much promise in expanding the party brand framework to questions relevant to the federal party system.

Additionally, there is a wealth of research conducted in the behavioral tradition that either explicitly unpacks or is highly relevant to individual party image. With PO and PIG accounts joined, a critical next step is to incorporate PIE literature. This research

would provide critical insight into how elite branding and marketing efforts impact voter perceptions of party and how mass preferences inform these elite efforts. The latter is very much consistent with traditional market research, though both complement the study presented here.

Finally, this project provides speculative insight as to how branding is impacted during periods of intraparty disagreement and offers a wealth of opportunities for further research in this area. While party brand remains a powerful explanatory concept during periods of harmony and unrest, it is particularly important to understand how party brands are managed during periods of electoral uncertainty and in emerging contexts. Beginning in the 1980's, a growing number of political scientists discounted the centrality of political parties to American politics and argued on behalf of a candidate-centric system. While candidates have been pushed to the forefront and new media has increased the opportunities candidates have to communicate directly with the people, parties persist as the central feature of American politics. Moreover, this research highlights parties do more than serve minimal heuristic function and aggregate electoral resources, as the party organization continues to anchor its leadership's messaging with presidential candidates having the least impact on their party's brand identity.

With an increasing number of registered independents, increasing party polarization, and the introduction of new media (as illustrated so powerfully through Donald Trump's use of Twitter to connect with his supporters) it is ever more critical to understand how parties maintain relevance and support in a new electoral landscape. In spite of these hurdles, parties persist and party branding helps explain how.

APPENDICES

Appendix A:
(Chapter 3) Supplemental Descriptive Text Analyses

Table A.1 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses –Total Democratic and Republican Texts, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
D **E** **M** **O** **C** **R** **A** **T** **I** **C**	1976	1.64	7.05	1.00	4.65	1.99	0.80	0.45	2.68	0.57	76.55	91.94
	1980	2.10	6.79	1.11	4.42	1.76	0.78	0.74	2.32	0.56	72.69	93.35
	1984	2.37	7.64	1.52	4.36	2.41	1.30	0.93	2.68	0.80	75.25	88.68
	1988	2.28	8.63	1.23	4.82	2.06	1.02	1.20	3.29	0.99	83.14	86.71
	1992	2.36	7.84	1.25	5.49	2.04	1.05	1.00	2.66	0.77	76.98	82.71
	1996	2.00	9.09	1.25	4.50	1.96	0.99	1.05	3.60	0.81	87.53	83.78
	2000	2.28	8.65	1.19	4.60	2.66	0.86	1.17	3.04	0.74	83.72	85.76
	2004	1.79	7.55	1.78	5.44	2.45	1.45	0.28	3.93	0.98	85.45	88.74
	2008	2.13	8.94	1.74	5.02	2.34	1.12	1.05	3.31	0.87	82.35	83.48
	2012	1.46	8.13	1.84	5.41	2.32	0.86	1.30	4.72	0.10	89.08	82.70
	Avg.	2.04	8.03	1.39	4.87	2.20	1.02	0.92	3.22	0.72	81.27	86.79
R **E** **P** **U** **B** **L** **I** **C** **A** **N**	1976	1.60	7.80	1.25	4.40	1.67	0.72	0.65	2.91	0.85	79.37	90.67
	1980	1.69	7.03	1.32	4.03	2.21	1.00	0.41	2.43	0.88	76.87	92.52
	1984	2.20	6.71	1.16	4.16	1.96	0.89	0.48	2.56	1.22	76.66	91.98
	1988	2.13	7.59	1.55	4.32	1.90	0.87	1.00	2.76	1.39	79.30	90.42
	1992	2.15	7.42	1.27	3.74	1.93	0.88	0.87	2.69	0.98	80.19	89.99
	1996	2.40	7.42	1.26	4.13	1.92	0.89	1.22	2.35	0.91	81.63	87.63
	2000	1.40	6.70	1.36	4.55	2.24	1.21	0.11	2.13	0.94	75.29	94.12
	2004	1.60	6.65	0.98	5.34	1.91	1.51	0.19	2.03	0.95	78.69	94.73
	2008	1.51	6.89	1.22	4.42	2.14	1.52	0.41	2.51	1.01	77.21	92.15
	2012	1.77	10.01	0.90	3.02	2.45	1.98	0.09	2.05	1.49	75.29	93.08
	Avg.	1.85	7.42	1.23	4.21	2.03	1.15	0.54	2.44	1.06	78.05	91.73

Table A.2 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses –Democratic and Republican Presidential Candidate Texts, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
Carter	1976	4.46	12.12	0.80	3.20	1.07	0.26	3.20	2.86	1.80	83.62	59.56
Carter	1980	1.93	8.67	0.61	3.59	1.75	1.23	2.89	1.23	0.26	63.03	84.85
Dukakis	1984	2.03	8.12	1.43	2.77	2.17	0.92	2.31	2.21	0.74	76.69	81.80
Mondale	1988	2.03	8.12	1.43	2.77	2.17	0.92	2.31	2.21	0.74	76.69	81.80
Clinton	1992	3.80	11.07	1.60	2.87	3.14	0.47	2.20	3.00	0.60	77.64	74.69
Clinton	1996	1.01	6.00	2.73	2.49	4.99	1.71	0.55	1.95	0.00	87.56	76.42
Gore	2000	2.76	6.80	0.86	3.70	2.67	1.63	0.69	1.81	0.52	83.91	73.44
Kerry	2004	3.84	9.70	1.35	4.01	3.84	2.24	3.33	2.15	0.59	82.34	67.42
Obama	2008	2.77	9.00	1.55	5.56	3.98	0.66	2.34	3.46	0.46	86.11	75.48
Obama	2012	1.21	10.31	2.03	4.20	2.09	0.26	3.08	3.87	0.27	89.70	78.62
	Avg.	2.58	8.99	1.44	3.52	2.79	1.03	2.29	2.48	0.60	80.73	75.41
Ford	1976	3.43	12.66	1.19	2.69	2.81	1.04	4.83	2.10	0.35	68.52	70.21
Reagan	1980	3.02	10.73	1.77	2.99	2.42	0.42	1.77	1.98	0.94	69.89	69.22
Reagan	1984	3.76	10.34	1.57	3.22	1.25	1.07	0.52	2.82	1.04	85.92	74.97
Bush (41)	1988	3.06	8.40	1.42	3.87	2.50	0.72	1.64	1.85	0.14	76.62	84.30
Bush (41)	1992	2.34	9.60	1.61	2.52	1.69	1.63	1.86	0.48	0.48	78.32	84.63
Dole	1996	3.17	7.45	1.54	3.32	2.11	0.74	1.11	1.88	0.68	87.96	78.76
Bush (43)	2000	0.83	6.71	2.76	3.51	2.21	2.53	1.65	1.38	0.28	66.06	86.93
Bush (43)	2004	2.86	6.49	0.84	3.04	3.45	2.02	2.75	1.25	0.59	66.34	76.77
McCain	2008	2.66	8.28	1.54	2.87	3.77	3.12	2.60	2.44	0.80	75.51	70.51
Romney	2012	2.07	8.77	0.79	3.01	2.90	2.01	2.75	1.04	1.87	78.38	82.69
	Avg.	2.72	8.94	1.50	3.10	2.51	1.53	2.15	1.72	0.72	75.35	77.90

Table A.3 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses –Democratic and Republican National Committee Texts, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
D	1976	1.38	6.45	1.01	4.70	2.02	0.80	0.19	2.38	0.52	74.56	93.94
E	1980	1.67	6.23	0.96	4.86	1.68	0.61	0.12	2.68	0.55	78.32	95.41
M	1984	1.37	6.31	1.48	4.20	2.31	1.13	0.08	2.25	0.64	75.21	94.66
O	1988	0.62	5.65	0.64	5.90	2.14	1.27	0.00	3.64	0.76	86.48	94.10
C	1992	1.63	6.84	1.18	4.62	2.55	1.45	0.38	3.04	1.00	82.81	92.42
R	1996	1.72	8.26	0.81	5.44	2.25	1.26	0.02	3.53	1.04	89.00	92.59
A	2000	1.60	8.35	0.85	4.71	1.86	1.01	0.03	3.28	1.37	84.79	89.91
T	2004	1.26	7.55	2.05	6.04	2.51	1.49	0.08	4.60	1.00	88.06	87.88
I	2008	1.58	7.22	1.68	5.30	2.12	1.19	0.16	3.68	0.95	86.19	89.54
C	2012	1.76	7.29	1.18	6.37	2.85	1.08	0.25	3.15	0.92	83.42	91.17
	Avg.	1.46	7.02	1.18	5.21	2.23	1.13	0.13	3.22	0.88	82.88	92.16
R	1976	1.12	7.25	1.21	4.80	1.75	0.79	0.05	3.57	0.59	83.45	92.37
E	1980	1.20	6.04	1.32	4.43	2.31	1.04	0.04	2.46	0.77	76.91	95.13
P	1984	1.90	6.24	1.16	4.34	2.13	0.96	0.25	2.62	0.91	77.82	93.32
U	1988	1.60	6.37	1.39	4.68	2.07	0.93	0.16	2.94	0.74	80.94	95.16
B	1992	1.78	6.60	1.08	4.70	1.92	0.78	0.40	2.57	1.13	80.61	93.25
L	1996	1.41	6.04	1.25	4.38	2.25	1.06	0.07	2.81	1.56	81.76	94.62
I	2000	1.50	6.77	1.29	4.52	2.13	1.20	0.10	2.25	1.00	76.30	93.92
C	2004	1.35	6.53	1.34	4.73	2.19	1.26	0.04	2.21	0.96	76.56	94.55
A	2008	1.51	6.47	1.28	4.59	2.24	1.38	0.03	2.07	1.28	75.49	94.55
N	2012	1.10	5.71	0.99	4.29	2.08	1.52	0.19	2.52	1.36	77.84	95.02
	Avg.	1.45	6.40	1.23	4.55	2.11	1.09	0.13	2.60	1.03	78.77	94.19

Table A.4 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses –Democratic and Republican National Committee Chairman Texts, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
D E M O C R A T I C	1976	2.69	7.67	0.90	4.48	2.45	0.60	1.21	2.11	1.00	76.55	85.49
	1980	2.69	7.67	0.90	4.48	2.45	0.60	1.21	2.11	1.00	72.69	85.49
	1984	2.36	6.23	0.85	3.11	1.43	0.50	0.45	1.00	0.45	75.25	93.71
	1988	2.44	7.01	0.83	3.00	1.09	0.44	0.70	2.49	0.55	76.17	87.98
	1992	2.81	7.33	0.90	3.03	2.86	1.56	1.20	2.53	0.74	83.14	88.88
	1996	1.22	5.18	0.30	2.74	2.44	0.91	0.30	1.83	0.91	76.98	88.54
	2000	1.64	8.43	0.81	4.61	1.78	0.90	0.06	3.06	1.41	87.53	89.73
	2004	1.49	7.70	1.99	5.67	2.52	1.46	0.13	4.26	1.02	83.72	88.09
	2008	1.35	7.14	2.29	5.20	2.23	1.34	0.04	4.33	0.98	85.45	87.25
	2012	1.22	7.32	2.68	5.82	1.98	0.98	0.05	4.12	0.87	81.66	86.90
	Avg.	1.99	7.17	1.25	4.21	2.12	0.93	0.54	2.78	0.89	79.91	91.32
R E P U B L I C A N	1976	2.59	10.26	1.78	3.13	2.75	0.59	1.30	4.60	0.11	89.08	86.74
	1980	1.88	8.31	2.83	4.48	3.07	0.59	1.30	4.60	0.52	81.27	86.44
	1984	2.40	7.55	1.05	2.61	2.05	0.73	0.84	0.55	0.65	79.37	90.22
	1988	2.63	7.30	1.01	2.79	2.00	0.98	0.84	0.80	0.74	76.87	90.41
	1992	3.02	6.14	0.81	3.44	1.87	0.72	1.61	0.89	0.85	76.66	92.44
	1996	1.60	6.07	1.20	4.32	2.08	0.93	0.15	2.56	1.14	79.30	94.41
	2000	2.35	7.81	0.94	3.54	1.67	1.05	0.46	2.59	1.19	80.19	89.70
	2004	1.81	6.21	0.97	4.91	1.53	1.02	0.23	2.60	0.97	81.63	93.98
	2008	2.46	6.09	0.85	3.91	2.30	1.93	0.06	1.48	1.44	77.21	94.39
	2012	2.33	8.10	0.89	3.87	1.60	2.23	0.10	1.03	1.63	82.01	94.44
	Avg.	2.31	7.38	1.23	3.70	2.09	1.08	0.75	2.17	0.92	80.36	90.97

Table A.5 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses – Speaker of the House Texts, 1976-2012

	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
Albert (1972-77)	2.01	8.59	1.68	1.97	1.11	0.86	1.80	1.02	0.89	79.98	82.11
O'Neil (1977-87)	2.22	10.56	2.99	4.99	1.08	1.20	2.34	2.13	1.01	94.72	87.79
Wright (1987-89)	1.16	6.45	1.05	4.45	1.61	0.89	1.22	1.39	0.55	72.72	88.52
Foley (1989-95)	1.89	9.61	1.22	2.89	0.99	1.15	1.68	2.10	0.77	82.09	80.15
Gingrich (1995-99)	2.38	7.96	3.89	7.78	5.19	3.41	3.44	4.63	3.93	91.86	94.68
Hastert (2000-07)	2.22	9.23	2.58	4.57	1.92	1.94	2.98	1.64	2.73	85.63	88.46
Pelosi (2007-11)	2.28	8.88	1.59	2.88	1.90	1.75	1.23	3.87	1.52	81.59	82.60
Boehner (2011-12)	2.04	7.75	1.22	4.20	3.62	2.51	2.23	2.96	2.23	89.47	93.07
Avg.	2.02	8.63	2.03	4.22	2.18	1.71	2.12	2.47	1.70	84.76	87.17

Table A.6 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses – Democratic House Leadership, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
HOUSE LEADER	1976	2.97	8.55	0.88	1.85	1.21	0.29	0.89	0.33	0.48	76.14	89.42
	1980	3.16	9.12	0.69	2.94	1.08	0.35	1.73	0.26	0.65	72.69	93.35
	1984	5.37	2.74	0.42	1.26	1.74	0.21	1.00	0.34	0.22	75.25	88.68
	1988	1.70	7.77	0.95	2.81	2.31	0.85	0.80	1.80	0.60	83.14	86.71
	1992	1.80	6.94	1.07	3.64	1.85	0.98	0.53	2.03	0.73	76.98	82.71
	1996	2.38	6.55	1.34	3.13	2.20	0.67	1.27	1.15	0.97	87.53	83.78
	2000	2.10	6.60	0.62	3.81	2.67	0.43	0.11	1.05	1.38	83.72	85.76
	2004	2.56	7.09	1.09	4.70	2.17	1.37	0.53	3.51	0.42	85.45	88.74
	2008	2.15	7.31	1.20	3.71	1.93	1.30	0.26	2.30	0.97	82.35	83.48
	2012	2.26	8.06	1.35	3.88	2.02	1.22	0.44	0.99	0.84	81.80	82.10
	Avg.	2.65	7.07	0.96	3.17	1.92	0.77	0.76	1.38	0.73	80.51	86.47
HOUSE WHIP	1976	1.88	3.55	0.66	1.44	1.09	0.43	0.44	2.08	0.94	75.88	92.43
	1980	2.37	2.47	0.53	1.29	1.00	0.41	0.89	2.31	1.01	76.87	92.52
	1984	1.54	5.97	0.85	3.58	1.79	1.36	0.68	1.19	0.85	76.66	91.98
	1988	1.71	7.21	0.84	2.72	1.88	0.83	0.49	2.02	0.91	79.30	90.42
	1992	2.68	7.89	0.63	2.37	1.34	0.71	0.47	1.89	1.10	80.19	89.99
	1996	2.18	9.42	1.25	3.12	1.95	0.93	0.39	2.57	1.09	81.63	87.63
	2000	2.35	8.92	0.76	2.72	1.84	0.93	0.34	2.35	1.13	75.29	94.12
	2004	3.52	7.03	1.02	2.50	4.08	2.83	0.40	1.76	0.96	78.69	94.73
	2008	3.10	5.50	0.87	3.77	1.80	0.85	0.33	1.84	0.85	77.21	92.15
	2012	3.22	4.88	0.99	3.11	1.76	0.90	0.34	1.92	0.95	76.63	94.01
	Avg.	2.46	6.28	0.84	2.66	1.85	1.02	0.48	1.99	0.98	77.84	92.00

Table A.7 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses – Republican House Leadership, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
H	1976	2.85	7.75	1.32	2.22	1.62	0.60	0.87	0.72	0.72	59.33	90.85
O	1980	2.51	7.72	1.03	1.93	1.35	0.49	1.35	0.99	0.58	68.12	94.92
U	1984	3.12	8.68	0.88	2.34	1.71	0.63	0.88	1.45	1.25	65.17	85.20
S	1988	2.88	6.82	1.01	2.88	1.75	0.66	1.03	0.97	0.88	69.33	87.60
E	1992	2.39	5.96	1.19	3.98	2.03	0.40	0.94	0.80	2.19	73.77	93.03
L	1996	1.96	5.09	1.17	3.13	1.43	0.32	0.74	1.01	0.64	66.63	94.63
E	2000	1.69	8.75	1.53	3.84	2.44	0.46	0.25	1.45	2.19	72.11	89.83
A	2004	2.25	9.15	1.67	4.31	3.15	1.94	0.42	1.90	1.02	74.84	89.57
D	2008	2.59	6.44	1.44	4.19	2.33	0.79	1.00	2.73	0.71	75.98	92.49
E	2012	2.44	7.10	1.55	4.00	2.68	1.02	1.44	2.03	1.55	78.44	90.24
R	Avg.	2.47	7.35	1.28	3.28	2.05	0.73	0.89	1.41	1.17	70.37	90.84
	1976	1.19	8.66	0.97	1.94	1.57	0.44	0.52	0.75	1.49	64.75	95.16
H	1980	2.58	6.96	0.86	2.18	2.48	1.04	0.46	0.86	0.49	60.06	90.64
O	1984	1.06	6.74	1.18	0.95	0.71	0.24	0.24	1.65	0.35	67.96	94.87
U	1988	1.10	7.28	1.36	1.03	1.05	0.33	0.30	1.42	0.59	69.22	93.86
S	1992	1.43	7.89	1.21	1.78	1.88	0.89	1.01	1.86	0.72	68.99	93.45
E	1996	2.91	7.35	1.17	2.73	2.01	1.09	0.66	2.25	0.45	71.95	91.03
W	2000	1.72	6.63	1.19	3.66	2.60	1.33	0.06	2.01	0.69	73.79	91.30
H	2004	1.55	7.97	1.43	3.79	2.42	3.67	0.45	2.95	0.97	63.88	91.39
I	2008	2.88	6.23	1.23	3.26	1.82	1.21	0.40	1.76	0.96	64.69	91.87
P	2012	3.21	6.28	1.18	3.12	2.77	2.62	0.55	1.88	1.16	68.42	93.34
	Avg.	1.96	7.20	1.18	2.44	1.93	1.29	0.47	1.74	0.79	67.37	92.69

Table A.8 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses – Democratic Senate Leadership, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
S	1976	1.95	6.77	1.52	2.88	1.77	0.57	1.07	1.22	0.30	64.35	90.76
E	1980	1.90	6.85	1.62	3.70	1.54	0.60	1.15	1.48	0.22	52.85	91.93
N	1984	2.63	6.85	1.11	2.50	2.69	1.74	0.74	2.40	0.21	68.50	93.28
A	1988	1.51	7.92	1.40	3.26	2.33	1.17	0.12	0.81	0.88	61.02	93.80
T	1992	2.56	7.13	1.04	3.93	1.47	0.70	0.76	0.74	0.49	53.39	85.69
E	1996	4.24	6.45	0.68	2.53	1.93	0.33	3.22	0.51	0.39	59.04	88.32
	2000	4.88	6.60	1.11	2.34	1.25	0.58	2.44	0.98	0.75	62.94	86.29
L	2004	4.67	6.59	1.09	2.60	2.19	1.65	1.30	1.03	1.15	67.01	93.81
E	2008	2.32	7.88	1.26	3.22	2.08	1.27	1.70	2.23	1.12	77.37	89.85
A	2012	3.42	6.89	1.34	2.78	1.92	0.99	1.03	1.33	1.00	79.64	90.60
D	Avg.	3.01	6.99	1.22	2.97	1.92	0.96	1.35	1.27	0.65	64.61	90.43
E												
R												
S	1976	1.90	7.88	0.89	2.69	2.77	1.41	0.80	1.02	0.82	53.89	93.41
E	1980	1.85	7.83	1.09	3.50	2.59	1.39	1.46	0.74	0.84	53.17	90.13
N	1984	2.30	6.03	0.78	2.62	2.79	1.72	0.71	1.45	0.58	60.30	93.40
A	1988	2.34	6.41	0.88	3.15	2.11	1.78	0.26	1.63	0.75	65.11	95.36
T	1992	2.78	5.36	0.88	2.20	2.18	1.04	1.34	1.00	0.38	57.38	94.13
E	1996	2.55	6.89	1.03	2.30	2.43	1.48	0.97	1.44	0.56	58.09	92.33
	2000	2.46	6.73	0.98	2.45	2.05	1.30	0.72	1.51	0.89	60.22	92.75
W	2004	1.73	6.62	0.92	2.65	2.29	1.98	0.52	1.38	1.15	64.59	94.18
H	2008	2.89	7.34	1.35	3.18	2.01	1.26	0.54	1.31	0.90	70.11	91.06
I	2012	2.33	7.03	1.20	2.28	2.44	1.23	0.68	1.42	0.84	64.26	93.59
P	Avg.	2.31	6.81	1.00	2.70	2.37	1.46	0.80	1.29	0.77	60.71	93.03

Table A.9 Sentiment, Leadership, and Analytical Analyses – Republican Senate Leadership, 1976-2012

	Year	%Past	%Present	%Future	%Positive	%Negative	%Anxiety	%I	%We	%Them	Leadership*	Analytical*
S	1976	2.13	6.39	1.14	3.12	1.14	0.85	1.77	1.28	0.71	57.33	91.52
E	1980	2.01	7.99	1.01	3.13	1.04	0.87	1.45	1.87	0.65	65.56	88.27
N	1984	2.09	7.65	0.88	2.45	0.97	0.30	1.63	2.93	0.67	72.01	90.16
A	1988	1.82	7.53	1.82	3.24	1.97	1.06	1.89	2.38	1.12	71.23	87.99
T	1992	2.05	8.18	1.17	3.41	1.89	0.89	1.91	2.12	0.73	72.05	94.13
E	1996	2.2	7.02	0.99	2.85	2.73	1.26	1.94	1.14	0.67	61.98	91.46
L	2000	1.94	7.35	1.52	2.26	1.42	0.52	1.16	1.76	0.47	53.15	94.82
E	2004	1.83	9.52	1.67	1.95	3.41	2.12	1.29	1.91	0.87	68.65	87.7
A	2008	1.99	8.1	2.02	3.76	2.14	1.06	1.65	1.77	0.95	68.06	90.12
D	2012	2.19	6.88	1.89	3.54	2.11	1.02	1.71	1.59	0.77	73.45	89.89
E R	Avg.	2.03	7.66	1.41	2.97	1.88	1.00	1.64	1.88	0.76	66.35	90.61
S	1976	2.56	6.98	0.87	2.77	1.12	0.91	0.45	1.49	0.78	55.89	90.38
E	1980	2.97	6.75	1.02	2.64	1.88	1.03	0.66	2.02	1.04	60.20	92.25
N	1984	3.27	6.06	0.73	1.64	1.73	0.82	0.91	1.7	1.55	61.45	91.84
A	1988	2.51	7.14	1.35	3.18	1.35	0.91	1.01	1.48	1.35	74.57	89.96
T	1992	2.44	7.22	1.01	2.62	1.62	0.85	0.83	1.53	1.07	65.97	91.88
E	1996	2.81	7.22	1.04	2.83	1.69	0.80	0.7	2.35	1.71	65.82	90.44
	2000	1.71	6.61	1.19	2.63	1.58	1.32	0.66	2.24	1.45	68.78	92.44
W	2004	2.33	7.18	1.21	2.64	2.50	1.92	0.7	2.21	1.81	60.38	93.52
H	2008	2.87	6.79	0.75	2.87	2.77	2.47	0.65	2.11	1.7	57.2	90.35
I	2012	2.67	7.01	1.04	1.88	2.94	2.66	0.72	2.88	1.89	56.43	93.26
P	Avg.	2.61	6.90	1.02	2.57	1.92	1.37	0.73	2.00	1.44	62.67	91.63

Appendix B:
(Chapter 5) Interview Guide & Interview Summary

INFORMED CONSENT

By stating your name, you are consenting to be interviewed as part of a dissertation research project. As per our conversation, your name [will/will not] be included in connection with any of your answers. You are not obligated to answer any of the questions I ask and may terminate the interview at any time. At the end of our conversation, I will debrief you and am happy to answer any questions you may have regarding my larger research project and your contribution at that time. If you agree to these terms and do not have any questions, please state your name as a form of verbal consent.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Did you work for a member of the House of Representatives or the Senate?

Which member(s) did you work for?

When did you begin working for [ ]? Do you still work for [ ]?
    IF no: When did you stop working for [ ]?

What was/is your job title(s)?

Can you briefly explain what your primary job responsibilities included?

Can you briefly describe the district [ ] represents?

WORKPLACE INTERACTIONS

Would you characterize your interaction with [ ] as very frequent, somewhat frequent, somewhat infrequent, or very infrequent?

Using the same scale, how would you characterize your professional interaction with other congressional staffers?

Using the same scale, how often would [ ] solicit your opinion?

Thinking of those times you did offer an opinion, do you feel [ ] took your opinion very seriously, seriously, somewhat seriously, or not at all seriously?

INTERACTIONS WITH PARTY LEADERSHIP

Was your office ever contacted by the [Speaker/Leader/Whip::Leader/Assistant Leader]? (Speaker, Leader, or Whip)

        IF yes: Can you tell me a little about why they were calling?

Was it common for leadership to call on [ ]?

Can you recall a time when [ ] either was not likely to support the party's position?

        IF yes: Did party leadership get involved?

        IF yes OR no: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

Is there a time you can recall your office being contacted by the national committee?

        IF yes: Can you please describe the nature of that interaction?

From your perspective, is party leadership omnipresent in day-to-day interactions?

Can you give me an example of a time party leadership explicitly attempted to influence [ ]'s position on a vote, day-to-day operations, etc.?

Do you recall a time [ ] ignored the advice of party leadership?

        IF yes: Can you tell me a little bit about the circumstances surrounding their ignoring the party line and if there was any backlash?

IF interviewee has worked for the minority and majority: Is there a difference in leadership presence depending on whether the party has control of the chamber?

PARTY BUILDING, PARTISANSHIP, AND PARTY LOYALTY

What types of party building activities did [ ] participate in?

Did [ ] participate in fundraising for the party?

        IF yes: Could you explain a little about the different types of fundraising activities [ ] participated in?

Did you get the impression that party loyalty was particularly important to [ ]?

        IF yes OR no: What gave you that impression?

Was bipartisanship [in legislation/in Washington] important to [ ]?

How important was party loyalty in your job performance? Please describe.

PARTY BRAND POSITION

Did [ ] frequently contribute to newspapers, magazines, or other forms of media?
> IF yes: Was [ ] typically contacted by the media source for comment? Did [ ]/the office take it upon themselves to request coverage? Did party leadership even direct media inquiries to your office?

What was [your/the office's] role in preparing [ ] for an unscripted media appearance?

What was [your/the office's] role in preparing [ ] for a scripted media appearance?

Did your office have a media plan?

In recent coverage of politics, particularly partisan politics, the term "party brand" has been incorporated into news anchors' nomenclature.
> With your experience, what does "party brand" mean to you?
> If you had to describe the [Democratic/Republican] party brand, how would you?
> Insofar as you think there is a "party brand", do you think [ ] and/or your office contributed to the development of the brand?
>> IF yes: Could you elaborate a bit as to how?

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER STAFFERS

How would you describe [ ]'s office operations with respect to those of other congressmen and party leadership?

Did you share information on active legislation, mail, or other day-to-day operations with other staffers?
> IF yes: Can you tell me a little about the type of information you would share and how information shared with you was incorporated into your position?

CATCH-ALL

Is there any story, vote, or otherwise relevant event that implicated your office and party leadership that you think I would be interested in hearing about?

CLOSE

Thank you for taking the time to reflect upon and share your experiences with me today. Your insight will be incorporated into my dissertation project, which argues political parties develop brands that are maintained and developed by various actors, including congressional leadership and congressmen. I am especially interested in how party

leadership is able to induce favorable behaviors from their agents and how congressional staff contribute to the maintenance of party brand. As a reminder, I [will/will not] tie your name to your responses. Additionally, you are free to rescind your answers at any time prior to the filing of this dissertation. I so appreciate your time and welcome any questions you have.

Table A.9 Interview Summary by Unique Identifier

Identifier	CS	JW	TV	SL	LE	FM
Informed Consent	x	x	x	x	x	x
(current) Congressman	4-term, Democratic Congressman	2-term Republican Senator	2-term, Republican Congressman	1-term, Republican Senator	3-term, Democratic Congressman	1-term, Democratic Congressman
Job Title	Chief of Staff	Legislative Director	Legislative Aid	Chief of Staff	Scheduler/ Assistant	Legislative Aid
Years Experience	18	11	7	23	2	9
Still at Position?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No; left 2012	No; left in 2008
Describe your office's constituency	Urban, solidly Democratic district in Northeast	Predominantly rural, solidly Republican state in the Southeast	Rural, solidly Republican district on the West coast	Rural/urban, solidly Republican state in the South	Urban/rural, swing district in Midwest	Urban, swing district in the Midwest
Frequency of interactions w/[ ]	x	x	x	x	x	x
Contacted by Party Leadership	x	x	x	x	x	x
Example of Time [ ] Disagreed w/Party Line	x	x	x	x	x	x
Day-to-Day Role of Party Leadership	x	x	x	x	x	x
Difference Between Majority & Minority	x			x		x
Party Building Activities	x	x	x	x	x	x
Fundraising Activities	x	x	x	x	x	x
Importance of Party Loyalty	x	x	x	x	x	x
Importance of Bipartisanship	x	x		x	x	x
Frequency of Media Appearances	x	x	x	x		x
Role in Preparing for Media Appearances	x	x	x	x		x
Media Plan	x	x	x	x		x
Party Brand Contribution		x	x		x	x
Sharing Resources w/Other Offices	x	x	x	x	x	x

Justine Ross (interviewer):	00:04	Okay. Thank you again for taking the time to talk to me.
Senator Bob Dole (interviewee):	00:06	You're very welcome. (unintelligible) …happy to talk to the next generation doing good work.
Ross:	00:10	Well, you're very kind. I don't want to waste any of your time, um, so I'll get straight to it. The focus of my dissertation and my research is political parties and party branding, which is very much linked to party leadership dynamics. And I think you're the ideal person for me to speak with because you've held virtually every national party leadership position there is. If it's alright with you I'd like to begin with a couple of questions about your time as Republican Party Chairman and then move to your leadership in the Senate and then your time as the party's presidential nominee. Does that sound okay with you?
Dole:	00:35	Yes. Absolutely.
Ross:	00:38	Thank you. So, it's fairly widely documented that you were loyal to President Nixon and, um, you were a vocal proponent of many of his policies on the Senate floor. But did you anticipate Nixon would tap you and [that you would be] nominated as chairman?
Dole:	0:53	I didn't expect to be chairman of the Republican National Committee. Didn't see it coming. I got some opposition from a couple of senators (unintelligible) Saxby, including the leading senator Scott, who was a Republican leader. [He] didn't want me over there [at the national committee] or as the chairman. Maybe I'll say something or do something… (trails off)

Ross:	1:14	And you were fairly new at that point, correct? You had only been in the Senate for two years. Do you think your being a newcomer, um, threatened Senator Scott or his leadership? I guess I'm asking, where do you think the opposition to your nomination was coming from?
Dole:	01:49	I think Senator Scott or Senator Saxby from Ohio were the most upset with it. But we, uh, I remember meeting at night with a fellow named Bryce Harlow, which you may have run across in your research. He was very close to Nixon and I remember meeting with him. [He was] saying, you know, if I've been nominated… Is the nomination in trouble because I know there were a couple of guys trying to shoot it down.
Ross:	02:49	Did he give you any direction or advice?
Dole:	02:52	Well, we worked several hours with Alderman…
Ross:	02:56	Okay.
Dole:	02:56	Finally it resolved everything. And I became the chairman.
Ross:	02:59	What was there to resolve?
Dole:	03:03	Well. I was relatively unknown. I think they just needed to, an assurance.
Ross:	03:10	You mentioned Senator Scott and Saxby by name. Were they accepting of you as party chair moving forward?
Dole:	03:14	Yeah, I think [Scott] was a great guy and I don't think there's any malicious intent on his part. But I'm not sure I could say the same about Saxby. Senator Scott and I, we worked, we worked very closely, so it wasn't any competition or who's going to be in the newspaper. Things like that.

Ross:	03:29	Are various leaders, like in this case Senator Scott and yourself as Chairman, often competitive over who gets media attention?
Dole:	03:36	They can be, but Senator Scott and I worked well together, so there was never any of that. We got along and agreed [on] most things. Yeah, we didn't have an issue, but it wouldn't have been the first if we had over, over my nomination.
Ross:	03:50	That makes sense. And actually you bring up an interesting point. I had another question about the visibility of the party chair. When the president isn't of the same party you tend to hear a little more from the chairman, but you help the position under a Republican president and from what I can tell you were publicly active during your two year tenure. When you were chairman did you feel there were certain delegated responsibilities based on those who came before you? Or do, um, President Nixon talk to you and give you some direction?
Dole:	04:20	Hmm. (pause) I did what other party chairmen did before me and maybe I did a little more. I would travel around and help candidates and try to find candidates in different states. So I was, I was on the road a lot trying to find good candidates for the party. We also started… When I was chairman the chairman of the Black Republican Council, uh, (unintelligible) we happened to be friends. And a couple of friends of mine from Kansas and a couple of others who were good Republicans, we took the doors off the front door of the RNC to demonstrate we're an open party, you know. We wanted everybody to come in.
Ross:	04:59	And was President Nixon involved in setting this vision for an open party? Did you have much interaction with him in your capacity as chairman?
Dole: left office. I	05:10	I always got along well with Nixon. Even after he
		don't think, you know, I used to go to meetings as [part of] leadership when the president was there

and there was a little office right off his office. We'd meet and mostly pleasantries. I remember saying one day that I'd heard things on the road about Watergate. Dead silence in the room. So I knew I wasn't going to raise that again.

Speaker 3:   05:50   I can imagine. So these leadership meetings weren't, um, instructional? They were more or less, like status updates so all leaders were kept abreast?

Dole: 05:58   Yeah, most of the time.

Ross: 06:01   So getting back to the Black Republican Council. Removing the doors from the RNC headquarter is symbolically, um, quite powerful. Trying to reach out to African American voters, that seems somewhat contrary to what popular belief is regarding Nixon and the southern strategy. Can you speak to that, specifically during your time as chairman?

Dole: 06:29   We didn't want to [have] Republican types. You know, for the most part. We didn't want any kind of a closed door party, we really want to be the party of inclusion, not exclusion. Because you know, you can't win without a majority, so that was sort of our pitch that we had and that we gave when we went around. We had, I thought, a good time when I was chairman. Of course, as you know, I was succeeded by President George H.W. Bush.

Ross: 07:25   I read somewhere that you were under the impression you thought you'd have the position a bit longer. It sounds like you enjoyed the work you were doing and that you, um, were passionate about promoting the GOP. How did you feel about the transition? How was it handled? Did you like, have any input in the succession plan?

Dole: 07:52   Could've been a little longer. In fact, uh, I traveled up to Camp David on the chopper to visit with President Nixon. I remember he gave me a jacket thanking me for uh, it had the mileage that I [traveled] as chairman and, uh, so that I had done a

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great job and you, had done all the right things. But I kind of left knowing that I was probably not going to be chairman very much longer. [They] had to find a place for Bush. He was coming back from China.

Ross:	08:40	UN ambassador at the point, right?
Dole:	08:44	Yeah. And he did a good job there. I just, uh, Bush had been in the congress where I knew him slightly. I never at that point knew him well and he succeeded me and did a good job. He had to deal with all the Watergate stuff. I remember one reporter came to me, his name was Joe Alaska, from the Kansas City star I think. And he said, Bob I've got to ask you a question because the Democrats are pushing. He said, are the burglary tools hiding in your apartment? I said, no Joe. I had nothing to do with the break in.
Ross:	09:59	Did you ever find out who was behind that story?
Dole:	10:07	No and it shows how rough and tough politics can be in Congress. I don't know who the Democrats were, but they were insisting I be asked that question. I had a lot of Democratic friends, but when it comes to elections (inaudible) is, uh, fair game. And [President Nixon's campaign] had what they called CREEP, committee to reelect the president, and I do think they were a little involved [with the Watergate break in]. But the RNC? That goodness they didn't trust us or whatever.
Ross:	10:57	Absolutely. Very lucky. And that raises another question I have about Nixon's role. Nixon is usually cast as, um, insulated from other leaders and not really the best party builder. Sort of like with CREEP. I'm interested in your perspective on Nixon and other Republican presidents. Do you see him as a great party builder? Or was he more insulated and um, focused on his presidency?
Dole:	11:46	He was a brilliant man and had a lot of progressive ideas for the Republican Party. Family assistance

plan, FAP, was one of his ideas and the welfare reform and affirmative action in federal employment, things that hadn't been considered. Now some wonder why would we ever create FAP? But at the time, he did try to get the party behind him. Maybe it wasn't the right time or maybe people didn't take to it and he could've done something different. But he was always very friendly to me, you know, he would always reach out and shake my left hand [because] I can't use my right. He left in disgrace I waited a couple of years and then I contacted him. Went up to New Jersey to visit with him and took some senators with me. I invited him to address the Republican senators, which he did, and then Robery Byrd, the leading Democrat, Democratic senator, he took him on a trip around the world. You know, it was so good on foreign policy. Some of the Democrats who went wondered were their jobs open. I couldn't believe Nixon had this grasp on foreign policy. But anyway, it was sort of for Nixon and his rehabilitation.

Ross: 13:32   It sounds like it would've meant a great deal to Nixon.

Dole: 13:35   Then I spoke at his funeral in California. Yeah, I think Nixon, you know, it's unfortunate obviously sort of how he left and then his ideas fell away. Even the ones that had support. A lot of people today are surprised to, uh, hear Nixon signed an order of affirmative action. When he came to visit the capitol there was a line up all the way down to the Senate or the House of Representatives, which is a pretty long walk. Just to get a picture with him and just to shake his hand. I think that had to be good medicine for Nixon because he'd been gone quite a bit.

Ross: 14:54   That's sort of a nice ending to what could have been a long rest of his life. Your perspective on Nixon is so interesting. I want to skip back to something regarding your efforts to make the Republican Party the party of inclusion. When you were going around the nation and helping to recruit candidates, how

did that, that sort of idea of inclusion factor into the people you recruited?

Dole: 15:48   When I go into state party leaders and it's not a state where we already have Republicans in the House and Senate, I would visit them about potential candidates to run against X, Y, or Z on the Democratic side. So I bring that information to them and then take it back with me. It was just not an opportunity you'd want to pass up.

Ross: 16:33   How would you describe the coordination between the RNC and state parties while you were chairman?

Dole: 16:48   We had a good relationship. I was sort of an outreach person anyway. I made friends with most of those state chairmen and of course we had meetings where there would be all the party leaders. I'd have an opportunity to speak with all of them and, so we had a good relationship.

Ross: 17:21   Flash forward 40 years, do you think the RNC struggles with coordinating with the state parties? The RNC has made a point to be more inclusive in their language, but we don't always, um, see that reflected at the state level. Do you think this is just an issue of coordination or of leadership?

Dole: 17:49   Yeah, I think we have a good national committee chairman (Reince Priebus) and he is very active and aggressive in making contacts and trying to keep the parties happy in each state. No Republicans in the state will ever say they have enough contact with the national committee, but he's done a good job, so I don't think it's a leadership issue. He's a young man. He'll be around for a while. I don't know of anyone who's criticizing what he's doing. Maybe some of the far right people. There's mostly a level of respect for what he's done for the party. Last election cycle he really, uh, had a plan and did his best to execute. We did well. We have new Republican senators, nine of them and then three

who replaced (inaudible) retiring Saturday. That's a big group.

Ross: 19:44   Right. This is subjective, but you're, um, sort of uniquely equipped to assess this. Do you think the party is moving in the right direction?

Dole: 20:00   It's going to be tougher in 16 because we have (inaudible) and they only have 11 and we've got 5 who are probably in danger. And the only Democrat we might be able to flip is Harry Reid. We picked the wrong candidate last time and Harry may retire. I don't know. I'm a friend of his, but I think there are just a couple of seats out of 11 and that might be one. Colorado and Nevada and that the rest. Democrats are pretty safe right now. We need to get a Republican president. That'll be the challenge.

Ross: 21:14   The party has struggled with its image, well, for a decade or so, but it's gotten much worse recently. Do you think a Republican president could repair the party's image?

Dole: 21:40   Well, it depends. Not by itself, but either Bush or Rubio would be my choices. There are some other good candidates out there, but some are so extremely conservative. I don't think they would speak for traditional Republican, conservatives and we need that more than far right people. The far right isn't going to win for us in the long run and uh, I don't think, I don't believe [a far right candidate will] be nominated.

Ross: 22:46   Well, it seems like far right candidates get a lot more attention and air time than traditional Republicans, which doesn't help the party's push toward, um, conventional conservatism.

Dole: 23:18   Yeah. Well the media isn't going to help Republicans. That's something else that has to be sorted out.

Ross:	23:34	No, well. I suppose we'll see. I want to make sure I get to your time as a leader in the Senate and as a presidential nominee, so just a couple of questions here. In preparing for this interview, compromise is often included as a sort of hallmark of your service. From a branding perspective, unified messaging or, um, position is very highly valued, so I'm curious if you found compromise in the Senate diluted the Republican position?
Dole:	24:13	I had a lot of Democratic friends and you used to be able to get a Democratic vote or two or three. We'd sometimes lose someone like Arlen Specter, Olympia Snow. They were more liberal in their attitudes, but we had a good group to work with, which makes it easier for the leader. We had good people who might have had a little different views of the legislation, but we'd work it out in our Republican conference and then go to the Democrats and try to bring a few of them aboard if we needed to. I don't think the compromise we had to do was bad for the party, it was just doing business. That's probably because we had such a good group though, we could compromise without damaging our relationships or the party. And it was sort of understood the, uh, Democrats would sometimes work with us. When they did or when Republicans worked with them it wasn't about the party, it was about them protecting their own interests. We just didn't view it as hurting the party. But it's different now, different group.
Ross:	25:56	Interesting. While you were leader, did you consider the party as a whole while conducting business and, like, negotiating these compromises?
Dole:	26:14	Yes. We wanted good legislation for America and the party. It worked out pretty well. I was proud to be the leader, we had a great time. We're going to have a reunion of our old guys in April. They all come back. The former senators come back to DC and have lunch and have a little memorial service for the 12 who passed away. And then we just sit around and visit.

Ross:	26:41	You talk about relationships a lot as leader and as RNC chair. Do you think having good relationships with your party members is key to having a strong party brand or image?
Dole:	26:58	Yeah. It's relationships on both sides. Strong working relationships make it possible for us to, uh, get what we need to get done. If you don't have good relationships, it makes it easier for people to walk away.
Ross:	27:21	Do you think that's what the Republican party's problem is today? Leaders don't have strong enough relationships with all other Republicans?
Dole:	27:40	I think it's possible. Leadership does try and they're doing a good job, but the far right and traditional conservatives have some differences.
Ross:	27:56	As party leader of the Senate you were incredibly visible and a Sunday morning show favorite. Did you prominence ever affect your position on certain issues? Were you cognizant of pressure from the Republican Party and feel like you had to represent the party instead of just maybe your constituents or your conscience on (inaudible).
Dole:	28:18	I have my own philosophy, but on most of these talk shows they have these gotcha questions to get you to say something you probably shouldn't say. So I try to avoid that. I finally got in trouble a few times with the party but nobody [complained] too loudly.
Ross:	28:47	Before we move to your presidential nomination, can you just tell me a little about party building during your time as Senate leader? Was it at the forefront of your mind?
Dole:	29:02	Oh yeah. We're always trying to build the party in the Senate. We're looking for good candidates and trying to help some who are not so strong. You always try to build your base and we didn't have too

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much luck with the black community. They've been democrats for a long time, but we were able to make some headway with women and some other communities that are not tending to be more about Democrats. We tried to find candidates and support candidate who would help build that base because a community would support them.

Ross:	30:48	We're running short on time and I know you have a meeting right after this, so
Dole:	31:00	Yeah, I have a senator waiting for me in the other room, but I have time for one more.
Ross:	31:09	Perfect. My last question has to do with your GOP nomination for the presidency. In interviews, Hayler Barbour has given the impression that you were sort of pushed by the party during your campaign to be much more socially conservative then you'd want to be. Do you recall this pressure and, if so, how you were pressured?
Dole:	31:20	Not really, but I think maybe some of the senators thought I didn't have a conservative record. I was one of Reagan's top supporters, one of his third or fourth, so I didn't feel like I had to apologize. But uh, you know, some of the (inaudible) said that afterwards I wasn't conservative. Dole was a modern and all that stuff. But I'm still conservative. I had a very popular (inaudible) and maybe some said I wasn't conservative enough but, you know, Clinton was very good. We're, we're friends now and, uh, the economy was good and I remember getting a letter from Nixon saying all these good things, but the last thing he said was, if the economy is good you can't beat Clinton. He was right.
Ross:	32:40	Yes, he was. Okay. Well, thank you so much for agreeing to talk to me. I really, I really appreciate it.
Dole:	32:48	You're welcome. I definitely want to help others get out there (inaudible) and I like hearing about the good work you're doing. Be in touch again if you need anything. Nice to talk to you.

Ross: 33:33   You, too. Thank you so much, Senator.

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