

NARRATIVES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING CONVENTIONS:
BRANDING THE PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

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BRANDING THE PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

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ABSTRACT

After the riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, both parties altered the manner in which the party nominees were chosen. This change resulted in a shift for the conventions away from choosing the party nominee to setting the nominee and party up for the coming campaign. This study investigates the way various speeches play a role in branding the parties and their nominee. By analyzing the prime time speeches for both the Republican and Democratic Parties from 1972-2016, this study found the role each genre of address played in crafting the party brand. Notably, the analysis discovered the keynote address has three subgenres (former primary opponent, former or outgoing president, and party member representing a key constituency) with each serving a different role when utilized. Primary opponents promote party unity, former or outgoing presidents discuss their legacy to indicate the nominee is the heir to that legacy, and representatives of key constituencies attack the opposition while promoting party ideals. Spousal addresses focus on promoting a family narrative. Vice Presidential Nominees focus their branding efforts on attacking the opposition. Presidential nominees discuss a leadership narrative and policy branding. The nature of the election also impacts the party branding. An incumbent president or vice president usually has the incumbent party branding themselves as proven leaders while their opposition brand themselves as the party of change. Open elections have involved the parties battling over a qualified insider against a political outsider offering change. Finally, the Democratic Party has been less stable over the years than the Republicans in their branding. Democrats have shifted from the center to more liberal multiple times in an effort to meet the perceived desires of the American voter.

Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

Our modern presidential nominating conventions entail the pomp and circumstance of an election night victory party and the formality of nationally televised campaign speeches. The celebratory aspect represents the party uniting after a long primary season; and the several days of convention speeches offer a vision of the party's presidential candidate and platform as the electoral contest transitions into the fall election. This transition from primary to general election represents an important moment in the presidential campaign. This study explained the role the major speakers played in creating the party branding through the narratives they presented in various electoral situations. This study also examined how the party brand narratives did or did not change from election to election.

While the Anti-Mason Party held the first presidential nominating convention in 1831, the major political parties of today adopted this tradition soon thereafter creating a ritual that continues even today. The Democratic Party held its first convention in 1832 in Baltimore, nominating Andrew Jackson as the party's standard-bearer. In 1856, the Republicans followed suit in Philadelphia, with John Fremont getting their party's nomination. Since 1856, there has been a nominating convention for both major parties every four years to select the candidate who will represent the party in its bid for the presidency of the United States. Originally, the nominating conventions were an occasion for party elites to assemble and chose their party's presidential nominee (Carleton, 1957). This is still the case for the smaller political parties such as the Green and Libertarian Parties (Berg, 2008), yet these smaller parties also use their conventions to articulate an agenda for the public as well as for choosing their nominees. While the conventions of smaller parties function in much the same way as the major party nominating conventions in terms of articulating party priorities and recognizing their nominee, this study focuses only on the Republican and Democratic Party conventions as our nation's two major political parties and their conventions have provided the principle contenders for the U.S. presidency since 1856.

During the early conventions, the stakes were quite high as these political meetings were viewed as an important civic assembly that could make or break the future of rising political leaders and determine the success of the party. The conventions were highly deliberative in nature, as party elites sought to shape the tone and battle plan of the national election in addition to actually selecting the nominees for president and vice president (Trent, Friedenberg, & Denton, 2011). The party elites would spend time deliberating over the platform “planks” that would shape the message and major arguments the party would make during the fall election. Additionally, party elites would decide who would be the standard-bearer for the party by choosing the nominees for president and vice president. During this period, parties sought to find candidates that appealed to the major interests of its dominant supporters and would make its selection of nominees at their conventions based on who would best represent and articulate party values (Cohen, Karol, Noel, & Zaller, 2008).

In 1968, the Democratic National Convention in Chicago encountered civil unrest and turmoil due to frustrations related to the Democratic Party’s nominating process. Its initial leading candidate had dropped out of the race (incumbent President Lyndon Johnson), followed by its next leading candidate being assassinated (Robert Kennedy); and finally, the party’s eventual nominee (Hubert Humphrey) did not even participate in any of its primary elections. Both Johnson and Kennedy had appealed to large portions of the party base, thus causing a major division among Democrats (Johnson, 2008). A fractured base arrived at the 1968 convention, with internal struggles stemming from such issues as the Vietnam War and Civil Rights. The Democratic Party would dramatically change its process of nomination in response to these events.

In the aftermath of party division and struggle at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, the Democratic Party nominee, Hubert Humphrey, agreed to create a commission, known as the McGovern – Fraser commission, to reform its nominating process. The new method for selecting the party nominee, which was implemented for its 1972 presidential selection,

allowed for a process whereby delegates would be committed to a candidate and chosen through primary election results, thus ending the Democratic Party's deliberative era. The Republican Party followed suit by adopting similar primary election rules soon thereafter, creating the modern convention that continues today (Cohen, Karol, Noel, & Zaller, 2008).

Our modern political party conventions now serve, mainly, as nightly televised campaign events, or sustained political advertisements, which start with meetings and votes surrounding the articulation of a party platform which then crescendos into primetime keynote and acceptance speeches (Pfau, 2006). There is also an entertainment aspect of modern conventions, with entertainment and pop culture celebrities appearing at the conventions to either give speeches in support of the party nominee or to perform musical numbers that accompany videos and photographic biographies of the nominee. Kamarck (2009) argued that while the nominations are generally forgone conclusions by the time the parties meet in convention, there is still a chance the viewing public may witness an exciting floor fight. A recent example, which Kamarck claims could very well have happened in 2008, occurred when the two leading candidates, who were fighting mightily for the Democratic nomination (Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton), could have taken their fight all the way to the convention floor if not for a few circumstances along the way, including the possibility of the Michigan and Florida primary votes being contested due to a violation of party rules. Prior to the 2008 election, the Democratic Party designed rules that preserved Iowa and New Hampshire as the first contests for the nomination, as well as installing Nevada and South Carolina as part of the "early window" primaries. No other state was allowed to vote prior to these four states. Michigan and Florida in 2008, however, violated this party directive and ultimately had their delegate totals reduced. Without the rule violation, Clinton would have won a bulk of the delegates in these two states, which would have resulted in a much closer pre-convention tally for Obama and Clinton (Phillips, 2008).

In most primary election cycles, candidates begin to gain traction from early state victories, leading to a single candidate gaining enough momentum to receive enough delegates to

decide the nomination long before the convention. It is argued that the procedures of proportional allocation of delegates and the sequencing of primary elections, spreading them throughout the early part of the year, helps prevent the party from arriving at the convention without a clear nominee; but a circumstance similar to that which almost happened in 2008 with the Democrats indicated that it is not entirely impossible for an undecided, or brokered, convention to occur in the modern era (Kamarck, 2009).

In 2016, the Republican Party's nominating process could also have led to a floor fight for the nomination. Presumptive party nominee, Donald Trump, entered the convention with the requisite votes to earn the nomination. However, many prominent party members viewed Trump as an incredibly flawed candidate who would not be a suitable standard-bearer and one who might go on to lose the general election. This uneasiness within the party allowed for the possibility of "faithless" delegates. A faithless delegate is one who is pledged to vote for a particular candidate on the first ballot but instead will vote for a different, more preferable, candidate in subsequent floor votes (Silver, 2016). There was also talk within the Republican Party leadership of altering convention rules to allow delegates to vote for a candidate other than the one they were bound to due to state primary rules and delegate allocations. While this scenario did not play out at the 2016 Republican National Convention, it did become a major theme for media pundits which generated a lot of hype leading up to the convention (Miller, 2016).

Importance of Nominating Conventions

While some point to declines in viewership for political convention broadcasts as a measure of their decreasing relevance, Edy and Daradanova (2009) argued that when compared to ratings of other televised programming the viewership for the convention broadcasts is still quite high. Given that people now have a multitude of television and other viewing choices when compared to even 10 or 20 years ago, the percentage of the population that views the nominating conventions has remained relatively high. In 1960, for example, when the three major television

networks were the only choices viewers had and all three ran complete convention coverage, 80 percent of households watched the conventions. Today, conventions still draw approximately 33 percent of the potential viewing audience which, given the choice of hundreds of channels and other digital viewing options, still qualifies as a very significant portion of the viewing public as compared to the audience sizes of other programming choices (Edy & Daradanova, 2009). More specifically, in 2016, 33.3 million viewers watched Hillary accept the Democratic nomination and 34.9 million viewers tuned in to see Donald Trump accept the Republican nomination (Huddleston, 2016).

Also, in the summer months between July and September, the conventions occur at a time when there is a gap in “appointment” programming such as major sporting events or other special network programming. The conventions do seek to avoid the weeks of the quadrennial Summer Olympics in order to maximize viewers. The 2016 nominating conventions took place in late July, placing the conventions much earlier in the election cycle than the late August or early September dates for more recent conventions. This shift was also partially due to fundraising guidelines which created a separation of campaign contributions for the primaries and the general election (Tau, 2014). The candidates now wish to begin their general election campaigning and fundraising much earlier.

Aside from the general election debates, no other campaign events equal the size, scope, and public attention of the conventions. While a great deal of research has been conducted in recent years on debates (e.g. McKinney & Warner, 2013; Chadwick, O’Loughlin, & Vacarri, 2017; Jamieson, 2015), conventions have not received the same attention. However, conventions are regarded as one of the key moments of the presidential campaign. With their nightly primetime addresses, the conventions have remained somewhat uniform in the way they are conducted, thus making them particularly suitable for comparative study across multiple election cycles. Each convention features addresses from the presidential and vice presidential nominees, prominent or up and coming party members as keynote speakers, and a speech delivered by the

spouse of the presidential nominee has become a staple of the more recent conventions. The uniform structure of the conventions allows for analysis of a given party's convention across decades as well as analysis between the conventions of the two competing national parties.

Campbell (2001) has argued that conventions are generally one of the last campaign events that have truly affected voting intentions in the general election in most historical cases. Between 1948 and 2000, using Gallup polling data, Campbell found that, by a conservative estimate, more than 75% of elections have been decided by the end of the final convention. In other words, the candidate who is leading in the national polls conducted several days following the second of the two major conventions was the candidate that would go on to win the general election. One notable exception, which occurred after the Campbell (2001) study, was the 2016 election where Hillary Clinton was the clear favorite based on polling after the two conventions had ended during the summer, with Clinton eventually experiencing an Electoral College defeat to Donald Trump in November. Clinton did, however, win the popular vote, which fell in line with the previous research.

Candidate evaluations typically become more favorable after viewing a given candidate's nominating convention (Raven & Gallo, 1965; Panagopoulos, 2008); and the increase in favorability would explain why candidates generally enjoy a small bump in polling numbers in the days after their convention. The polling bump is often magnified by the attendant media coverage of that convention in the days following the televised party festivities (Campbell, Cherry, and Wink, 1992). This bump, with few exceptions, increases the candidate's standing in the polls by approximately five to seven points post-convention. While this increase is somewhat temporary for the nominee whose party holds the first convention, the nominee that holds the last convention typically enjoys a more sustained increase (Campbell, Cherry, & Wink, 1992). Starting with the 1956 election, the incumbent presidential party had been allowed to hold the second convention giving the incumbent party the more lasting bump in the polls.

Even though the nominations are no longer officially won on the convention floor, these major campaign events still serve an important function in uniting and activating party members who will serve an important role in leading the party's efforts for a general election victory (Wrighton, 2008). The four-day conventions increase support, from partisans, for the nominee and their party's candidates in the fall election. Generating this support for the nominee and party is especially important in the aftermath of a divisive and/or contentious primary process.

As the nomination process has moved to a process of delegate selection through primary elections, party elites have lost the considerable power they once held in influencing the presidential nominating process. Although their power was greatly diminished, party elites - as super delegates - still maintain some power over who is nominated. However, this shift in procedure altered the meaning and purpose of the conventions. Conventions now, largely, lack any real tension over whom the party's standard-bearer will be and are considered much like a four-day political advertisement with media commentary. In many ways, the convention is now an opportunity for the party and the nominee to establish their "brand" in the upcoming general election and in elections to come. The parties construct a desired brand through compelling narratives that frame the nominee and the parties' fall campaign message.

Narrative and Branding

Fisher (1984) describes man as *homo narrans*, or humans as storytellers who act through the sharing of symbols to bring order to the human experience. Order or understanding is achieved through a symbolic process by which shared meaning constructs the everyday explanations or stories that allow us to function in our worlds. Common or familiar narratives provide the currency that allows people to serve the role of storyteller, and through our storytelling activities we learn to read and interpret human communication that allows us to make sense of our shared existence. The proffered story leads to an evaluation of whether an instance of discourse provides a reliable and trustworthy guide for making sense of one's world (Fisher, 1986). Human decision-making is driven by the production of good reasons, which are ruled by

history, biography, culture, and character. The matters that rule good reasons are tied to narrative rationality and narrative fidelity, or how a story that is presented aligns with other familiar stories. A narrative paradigm or system of understanding, therefore, is created through symbols, signs, and the communicated expressions that construct our social reality (Fisher, 1984).

Narrative theory provides a level for understanding the ways through which humans conceptualize their world according to the heroes, villains, and plots that form the dramas of everyday life. By relying on the common elements of narratives, humans often will draw on familiar stories to guide decision-making and actions (Bascom, 1965). Through narratives, institutions, such as political parties, provide a plot for storytellers (Fisher, 1985). The narrative plot is the structure through which we can examine the shared symbols that the storyteller utilizes in constructing a narrative and the application of shared symbols in the context of a given interaction or event.

The application of narrative theory guides this study's analysis of political nominating conventions to gain knowledge about the speakers, the party itself, and the party's desired reality with respect to their campaign's characters, setting, conflict, plots, and themes. Narratives help provide voters with accounts that grant insight into what and who the party and candidates are. Narratives within organizations, such as a political party, can help clarify the culture of the party, which includes its ideology and goals. These conventions are the one occasion where party faithful come together to co-construct a narrative reality of the political party (Smith, 1989). Through the use of narratives, a presidential candidate and their party construct a brand with which voters might identify.

Within the context of marketing, brand has been defined to include tangible elements such as logos, and intangible elements such as brand personality and emotions. Brands, therefore, need to tap into a buyer's mood, or personality, offering a message that resonates with that buyer or voter (de Chernatony & Dall'Omo Riley, 1998). In a political context, buyers are synonymous with voters. A key object in creating a brand is differentiation from other, similar, brands

(Kapferer, 1992). It is within this framework that political parties, as well as candidates, can operate to shape their unique brand. Mumby (1987) discussed organizational identity and how narratives play a role in creating that identity. When looking at organizations, much the way political parties function, we can see how brand and organizational identity can be linked. A large part of constructing one's political identity and unique brand is based on the issues around which a party and candidate seek to champion.

The party as a whole, along with its leader and the policies they advocate, come together in conventions to offer a political brand image for voters (Smith & French, 2009). The choice of city to host a convention, for example, can function as a part in establishing the party brand. The major political parties, particularly for more recent conventions, made the strategic selection of the host city in an effort to highlight a community that fell within a key battleground state. Choosing the venue for the conventions is as much of a campaign strategy as the content of the convention addresses. At conventions, we see the nominee as party leader and the approved platform as its main policy objectives in creating the desired party and candidate brand. With the large number of speeches given by various party members who aid in building the party brand, many of these party leaders may be posturing to position themselves for a future run at higher office. The "invisible primary" or unspoken blending of one election into the next allows for political "up and comers" to also plant the seeds of their own future candidacies (Wrighton, 2008). These future candidates often seek to construct a desired party brand that endures beyond even the present election cycle. As previously noted, the party brand is created through many elements of the conventions. During the course of the convention speeches, many speakers will construct narratives to help create a more accessible brand with which voters can connect.

One major facet of a narrative brand of a party or candidate are the issues that are focused on as part of the narrative. Issue ownership also plays into a party's brand development by having campaigns focus on those issues that the party has a standing or advantage over its opposition (Petrocik, 1996). Focusing on those issues that a party's targeted voters are likely to agree with

allows for a clearer differentiation between the parties. The building of a party brand will therefore emphasize selected issues that make up the main platform components of a party's identity. In terms of differentiation, issue ownership also leads to the candidate and the party acclaiming their positive traits, attacking the opposition, and defending itself against the opposition's attacks.

In addition to issue ownership, Benoit, Pier, and Blaney (1997) explicated the three functions of campaign discourse. The three principle components of campaign discourse include attacks, acclaims, and defenses. These three functions can also be broken down as relating to either policy or character. The functions are employed frequently as part of the narrative brand to distinguish a candidate or party from the opposition. Attacks are characterized as undermining the opposition party or candidate. Acclaims are used in an effort to bolster one's own credentials. Finally, defenses are employed to respond to attacks from the opposition. These three functions allow for parties and candidates to show clear distinctions from their opponents. As candidates differentiate their own credentials and positions from that of their opponents, they work to create a distinct brand for themselves and their party. The current study utilized the theoretical perspectives and concepts of narrative, branding, issue ownership, and functional discourse to better explain the communicative functions of the modern presidential nominating convention. This study argued that narratives, issues, and functions work together in creating the candidates' and parties' narrative brands.

Study Goals

This study sheds light on how the two major parties and their nominees utilized their conventions at both the candidate and party level. The first portion of the study examined the narratives of each individual speech presented during each convention, starting with the 1972 conventions. The 1972 election provided an appropriate starting point for this analysis, as it was the first time both parties selected their nominee through the primary process. By analyzing each of the 98 main primetime addresses (see Appendix A) from the Democratic and Republican Party

conventions from 1972 through 2016, similarities and differences between and among the party and candidate brands were identified. The second portion of the study examined each type of address' role in constructing the narrative brands broadly. The second part examined the role of each genre of speech and points out how the genre aids in the construction of the brand. Then, the type of election (incumbent, sitting vice president, open) was examined to see how the various situation changed the party branding. Finally, the party brands from the various conventions were examined to determine the enduring party brands.

First, a narrative analysis will include a comprehensive message analysis of the conventions through exploration of speech transcripts and speech videos to examine the stories used to define a party's identity and brand across both the Democratic and Republican conventions from 1972 through 2016. The narrative analysis examined at how each individual major primetime speech builds the overall narrative of the party and its nominee. This study involved a close reading of convention transcripts from each primetime address or watching the network broadcasts of these addresses where transcripts were not readily available to identify the major narratives present within the convention messages. Exploring the narrative or overarching story of each individual convention address demonstrated whether there was a cohesive party narrative and party that corresponded with a given presidential nominee's brand or if there were apparent differences.

The narratives constructed in the addresses were compared within each convention, against the opposition's convention to compare competing narratives and brands, and across the years to see if there were uniform or changing party and candidate narratives and brands developed throughout the era of modern political party conventions. The stories or narratives that make up the party/candidate identity or brand encompassed the issues that were important to the party and also what differentiated a party and its presidential candidate from the opposition. This analysis allowed for an in-depth exploration of how narratives built the brand of the party and nominee within the nominating convention.

This study compared convention addresses in several ways, including between parties, from election cycle to election cycle, and incumbent status. Each party attempted to create a brand that was distinct from their opposition, which might ensure that each party had an element of stability in its branding from convention to convention. As events and circumstances surrounding each election changed, each convention approached those circumstances differently and may alter their party and candidate brand. Finally, candidate incumbency status may well change the way parties and nominees approached the opposition. If a party was trying to take back the White House, a frame of “change” would likely be utilized much more often than a candidate who was seeking reelection. Therefore, this comparison allowed for an explanation of how party brands changed over time based upon the situational characteristics of an election.

Additionally, parties may emphasize different facets of the brand based on incumbency status leading to a change in the party brand due to events that occurred during one’s first term. Each major primetime address (keynotes, spouse, vice presidential nominee, presidential nominee) were examined to explain how each speech type contributed to the branding. Finally, this study builds on the analysis of nomination acceptance speeches (Benoit, 1999) and the main keynote speeches (Benoit, Blaney, & Pier, 2000) by examining all of the primetime convention speakers (including keynote, spouse, vice presidential and presidential nominee speeches) to explore the functions of campaign discourse (attacks, acclaims, and defenses) and how different speakers, such as the spouse’s address, and electoral situations, such as incumbency, may employ discursive functions differently, if at all. While this analysis did not conduct a formal functional analysis, the analysis did point out where these functions were utilized in constructing the party brand. This will allow for pinpointing which type of convention speech addresses utilized certain purposes when compared to others.

Another facet of the analysis focused on how incumbency status may affect convention messaging. Being a member of the incumbent president’s party may have an impact on the brand the party puts forth. The analysis also determined if there are differences in the narratives

contained in different convention speeches when an incumbent is running for reelection compared to an open election or one where a sitting vice president is looking to ascend to the presidency. Through the aforementioned functional analysis, certain contexts, such as incumbency or an open election, related to different purposes of each type of speech. Some speeches, such as the presidential nominee's address, could be used to bolster a candidate's credentials while others, such as the vice presidential nominee, could be geared toward attacking the opposition party or presidential opponent. Other convention speeches, such as the spouse's address, could develop a more personal side of the candidate rather than overt political appeals. The types of narratives utilized within each genre of convention address indicated a specific role for each speech in constructing the narrative brand.

Each speech, along with each convention, had specific exigencies which altered the way the candidate and party brands were constructed. The investigation of how each type of campaign (open, reelection, or sitting VP seeking to ascend to the presidency) provided insight which demonstrated how the desired branding of a particular convention was achieved. The narratives constructed in a convention were meant to bolster the candidate and the party, but this key moment in the ongoing campaign was also a time where attacks could be levied on the opposition. Conventions provide an opportunity to create an "us versus them" message. A narrative about the parties and candidates can acclaim their own credentials and also attack the claims and credentials of their opponents to an approving audience. As the convention narratives generate an overall identity for the party and its presidential nominee heading into the general election, these same narratives are able to create clear distinctions with the opposition party and its nominee. Therefore, the combination of a convention's dominant narratives, issues developed, and discursive functions of campaign discourse come together to form the desired party and presidential candidate brand. The branding narratives of each convention and party set the tone for the election that followed and galvanized support from partisans as the party hoped to be victorious in November.

Chapter Two: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of the study was to analyze how candidates and parties utilized narratives during their nominating convention in order to create and maintain a party brand. Within the context of this study, the discourse of major party nominating conventions is explored. Since the nominating conventions are seen to mark the beginning of the general election, it is important to explore how the parties used their conventions to define their party brand. It is particularly important to investigate the ways parties and candidates differentiated themselves from the opposition party.

This chapter first reviewed the theoretical perspectives of branding. Second, this chapter explored narrative theory as a framework for the rhetorical analysis. Next, is an examination of the relevant scholarly literature helpful in understanding political party conventions as well as presidential campaign discourse during the nominating conventions, especially through the key primetime addresses. Finally, this chapter outlined issue ownership and functional theory, as each of these perspectives are utilized, along with narratives, in identifying the manner in which presidential campaigns used their conventions to brand their party and presidential candidate for the fall election.

Branding

The narratives, issues, and functional discourse of the conventions come together to create a brand for both a political party and their presidential candidate. There may be overlap between the party and candidate brand or potentially some stark distinctions, depending on a given election. In general, owners or managers construct brands based on a desired identity that one wishes to portray. Potential “buyers” then take the brand that is presented and construct their interpretation of a given brand’s image (Burmah, Hegner, & Riley, 2009). We can apply the framework of branding within the political context where voters are consumers and candidates are marketed as goods or services (Shama, 1976). Voters ultimately take a candidate’s and political party’s brand into account when making their vote choices (Guzman & Sierra, 2009).

Within political campaigns, candidates present themselves before the public in an effort to gain public acceptance and votes. Campaign rituals, such as conventions, have a legitimate marketing function in creating and promoting a desired brand. Traditionally, candidates, through their advertising, were marketed like goods, such as soap, but such thinking has now evolved to where a candidate's marketing more closely resembles that of a service provider (Morland, 2003). Candidates seek to make the services they wish or do provide to voters known through their branding efforts. Often, candidates wish to appeal to various – and sometimes even competing – publics, which will lead candidates to segment and arrange voters into coalitions that will work to promote the candidate at a more local or grassroots level (Newman, 1994). By creating a brand that voters make some sort of connection to and identify with, the voter will have more affinity to a candidate and their campaign. For instance, in 2008 Barack Obama utilized the slogan of “Change you can believe in” to galvanize voters. That slogan resonated with voters that were uninterested in traditional politics and wanted something, and someone, different from the usual politician (Newman, 2016). Party conventions serve as a key moment to reinforce a brand that emerged from the primary process, as Obama did in 2008, or to offer a general election brand in the case of an uncontested primary season, as Obama had in 2012.

The branding of a candidate represents the confluence of five factors. The first factor is competence. Competence is a trait that indicates the candidate's ability to understand the job and their ability to execute the functions surrounding it. Next, is having empathy or an ability to understand the problems that voters encounter on a daily basis. Candidates who may be able to relate to the struggles of a citizen's everyday life are often viewed more favorably. The third factor is openness. Being open about the type of person the candidate is can be important in constructing a narrative that details how the candidate was able to rise to their current position. Next, agreeableness is the fourth factor in creating a candidate brand. Agreeableness is classified as being generous, loyal, sincere, and reliable. Finally, the fifth factor is attractiveness, which is also referred to as handsomeness. A candidate's physical features can be used as an asset as part

of the candidate's brand (Guzman & Sierra, 2009). For instance, Barack Obama in several of his convention addresses, references his big ears as an endearing feature. These five factors are often constructed during the conventions through the narratives developed within the various addresses.

Campaigns engage in different marketing strategies based on the perceived strengths of the candidate and the different segments of targeted voters. Newman (1994) explained that there are four "p's" that make up a marketing campaign for elected office. The first is the product or campaign platform. These are the issues and policies that the candidate wishes to center their campaign around. The second "p" is push marketing or the grassroots campaigning done by volunteers on a local level. The third "p" is pull marketing, which is the use of broad channels of communication such as television and print sources. The fourth is polling or the data that indicates the success of certain ideas and messages. In the context of this study, convention speeches are firmly planted in the third "p" due to their reliance on mass media to get a desired message out to the public; but the other factors, such as product development through campaign issues and policies, are also involved at the nominating convention stage and this study's analysis will draw on the relevant "p's" of political marketing as they are utilized in developing a party and candidate's brand.

A candidate can construct their brand by engaging in several actions. First, the candidate needs to know what voters want so the candidate can, therefore, address voters' concerns. Addressing voters' concerns may be accomplished through the use of personal narratives. Next, candidates should make a connection between issues and personality. Issue ownership may be able to help explain how a candidate's personality and values drew them to their party, based on their commitment to key issues. Third, candidates need to make an emotional connection with the voters. This connection, again, can be made through narrative, as a candidate might be able to share how their personal struggles are similar to those of the average person. Finally, a candidate should emphasize change. This facet can be developed through functional discourse. By showing how a new administration seeks to bring about change through their discursive attacks, acclaims,

and defenses, a candidate can build an image of serving as an instrument of desired political or social change (Newman, 2010). The interaction of these five facets of a candidate's message constructs their brand. The interactions between the party leader or nominee and the party and its policies create a consumer memory, or an identity for voters to recall of the constructed party brand (Smith & French, 2009).

As parties attempt to construct brands to compete with their opposition's brand, they will look to paint the other party as undesirable or less desirable. For instance, Republicans have gone to great lengths to interpret the label of "liberal" with negative connotation and to tie this negativity to the Democratic Party. They have done so at such a successful level that certain segments of the Democratic Party actually denounce or avoid the "liberal" tag (Jarvis, 2005). The ability to create connotations for a party brand is inherent in constructing cohesive party and candidate narratives.

With the party and candidate brand representing a multifaceted construct, the nominating conventions are the first moment in the campaign where a high number of voters are watching and therefore serve as a prime moment for the candidates and parties to introduce their brand. Conventions are also the first moment of the campaign where different party coalitions seek to unite behind the party's nominee. Furthermore, candidate and party brands are cemented during the various primetime addresses by using narratives, campaign functions, and issue ownership. Through successful branding of the party and its presidential nominee, the unification of the party for the general election is solidified.

Narrative

A principle way in which the nominating conventions can create its brand is through narrative construction. Narrative is the symbolic presentation of a series of events connected through a subject and related by time (Scholes, 1980). Symbolic convergence introduced the notion of socially shared narrations. These shared narrations are recurring forms that indicate humans have achieved shared consciousness. Through their shared consciousness, humans' social

or collective narrations emerge and disappear causing changes, which affect meanings. Socially constructed narrations also dictate why people share what they do when engaging in a symbolic exchange (Bormann, 1985). By sharing a socially constructed narrative we are passing on familiar events that often repeat themselves. The sharing of these narratives helps to define us, unite us, and distinguish our in-group and those that represent our out-group.

Humans are inherent storytellers and we base actions and decisions on how compatible the stories we are told are with the stories we already know. It is within these stories or narratives that humans persuade others to make decisions or take actions related to the presented narratives. This is often done through a recitation of good reasons. Good reasons for complying with a story's goals aid in decision-making. The good reasons are guided, again, by the past stories we already know (Fisher, 1985). Familiar stories are prevalent in all narratives. The familiar parts of the story are meant to serve as connections from past to future events. As we look at the discourse of nominating conventions, it is obvious that the parties often attempt to connect the present nominee to previous great leaders within the party. The modern Republican Party, for instance, continually invoked Ronald Reagan as the presidential leader who represents the guiding principles for their party.

The fidelity of the current story to past stories shows the audience that it is a rational story. A similar story occurring multiple times in the past lends itself to being probable as well. By being rational and probable, a story is much more likely to be agreeable and accepted. Our world is shaped by the stories we choose to recreate (Fisher, 1984). A compelling narrative serves as a lens through which people make sense of seemingly independent and disconnected elements of existence and make meaning of a given story as parts of a whole (Polkinghorne, 1988). By telling a story that resonates due to its shared characteristics with familiar stories, a storyteller can be much more persuasive. This concept is evident in the telling of a speaker's journey as part of the American Dream. No matter what individual struggle the speaker had endured, the audience

easily understood how a person started from nothing and overcame obstacles to achieve the American Dream.

The main aim for narratives throughout a campaign is to generate their acceptance. During Barack Obama's 2008 campaign, Obama employed a narrative that included the public and emphasized their role in the unique community that is America. He utilized the symbolism of an American civil religion, which constitutes the public as active members in the narrative rather than passive observers. The utilization of this scheme was uniform throughout speeches in the Obama campaign in an effort to craft a coherent and unified narrative. Within campaigns, narratives need to be broad enough to attract a wide coalition of voters but intimate and narrow enough to feel authentic and exceptional (Hammer, 2010). Obama's campaign message demonstrated the nuance needed for acceptance of the narratives being presented.

Often, stories contain a heroic figure. The heroic figure will have taken on a journey where they confronted and overcame many obstacles (Campbell, 1973). A narrative with a defined hero that has overcome long odds is a prevalent part of political campaign rhetoric. For example, during Reagan's presidency, he painted himself as a storyteller that was both the virtuous hero and the narrator of the story that simply told it like it was (Lewis, 1987). Reagan was able to promote himself as the hero throughout his administration by using narratives that proclaimed his overcoming of major challenges. Reagan was also effective in painting clear adversaries for him to overcome such as unemployment and the Soviet Union. Common narratives within U.S political rhetoric paint the government against such a formidable foe as the "evil empire" and sometimes paint the government as such a foe itself. The use of this common political plot constructs a shared meaning for the public that reinforces ideological disagreements about who the enemies are and how they should be approached (Bennett & Edelman, 1985).

While narratives shape public opinion while governing, narratives also are important during campaigns. Within campaigns, candidates offer narratives that compete for voter acceptance. Acceptance is achieved by introducing reasons that support one plot and rejects

recognition and acceptance of a competing plot (Bennett & Edelman, 1985). With the two competing political parties, candidates look to present their plot as more relatable and believable than the opposition. Voters will often look to narratives to find themselves as part of a collective identity that is created through the shared meaning presented by the candidate (Hammack, 2012). Voters who can identify narratives as familiar are more likely to be persuaded to vote for the candidate presenting such narratives. Political stories that are seen to be agreeable or well-known are often thought to be more factual (Bennett & Edelman, 1985). Stories that are seen as familiar or agreeable match Fisher's (1984) call for narratives to have fidelity to the shared meaning constructed by past stories.

Since the nominating conventions are seen as little more than advertising with the party producing controlled messages, there are several elements of campaign advertising present within the conventions. Within campaign advertising, there are two main narratives through which candidates are presented. The first is an adversarial narrative. Adversarial narratives look to paint opponents as a villain who must be stopped. The narrative often focuses on the "past sins" of the opponent (Gronbeck, 1992). Rarely do ads contain a full juxtaposition of the villain and the hero, as this is left to the audience to fill in the blank. Indeed, campaign narratives often contain fragmented outlines allowing voters to fill in the gaps (Bennett & Edelman, 1985). The second main narrative of campaign advertising is a sequel narrative. Within sequel narratives voters are presented with the proposition that the past villainous deeds committed by the opposition will surely be repeated again (Gronbeck, 1992).

As candidates continue to build their case for election, they will attempt to create a narrative of belonging based on experience. Candidates look to paint themselves as qualified and therefore they belong in office. The narrative structure will be such that the only possible hero in the story is the candidate telling the story. Within that belonging, candidates will cast the present as a natural extension of the past, a past in which the speaker's experiences are uniquely matched and therefore needed to address current concerns. Furthermore, any contradictions that the present

has in relationship to the past are offered as opportunities for the candidate to solve and thus become the hero (Duranti, 2006).

Campaigns may vary in the types of narratives they utilize in attempting to gain broad acceptance, but each campaign hopes to demonstrate its narrative fidelity to familiar stories. This study explored the narratives presented during nominating convention speeches to examine whether parties had a unifying narrative that went beyond a single election and served as a party's enduring narrative brand. Also, nominating conventions will be examined to determine if the type of election (open, incumbent, or sitting vice president looking to ascend) dictated a need for an alternate narrative brand.

Functions of Nominating Conventions

Conventions attempt to accomplish several overarching goals as the campaigns move from the primary to the general election. Each part of the convention is scheduled deliberately to ensure that these goals are met. The literature surrounding the purposes and functions of the nominating convention details the strategies that the parties utilize as they transition from the primary to the general election season.

Trent, Friedenberg, and Denton (2011) argued political party nominating conventions serve four purposes in the modern era. The first is to reaffirm and legitimize the electoral process. Second is the legitimization of the actual nominee. Conventions can act as a ritual of legitimization of the party process and to legitimize the (new) leader of the party (Farrell, 1978). Third is demonstrating party unity. Finally, the candidate and party will offer campaign themes and outline their issue priorities for the general election (Trent, Friedenberg, & Denton, 2011). Similarly, Smith (1990) described the party nominating conventions as the institutional response to a need for coalition formation and for unifying party coalitions behind its nominee.

Conventions also provide a view into the social makeup of the coalitions present in a party at a given point. As the party looks to promote itself and its nominee, we can see how the party elites envision the role of the party in constructing the larger narrative of the nation as a

whole beyond the election. The party elites often reflect the main coalitions that make up the party base. Since the nominee controls much of the inner workings of the convention, including which party elites are featured as speakers at the conventions, knowing the social makeup of the party provides insight into the values of the candidates themselves (Shafer, 2010).

Beyond the party's social makeup, conventions often contain a message strategy of "us versus them," which seeks to portray one party as the symbol of hope and the opposition party as a group that is misguided or worse, and thus needs to be defeated (Timmerman & Weier, 1998). The strategy that only one party is capable of guiding the country on a path to prosperity and the opposition party will take the country down the road to ruin is a strategy that is often used in campaigns. In 2010, President Obama, employing humor, provided a metaphor of driving a car and pointed out that "if you want to go forward you put the car in D, and if you want to go backwards you put it in R (Shear, 2010)." Obama utilized this metaphor to illustrate that his party (the Democratic Party) would take the country forward while the Republicans would take the country backwards. While this example first emerged during the 2010 midterm elections, it was used again during Obama's reelection bid in 2012 against Mitt Romney.

Throughout the conventions, several major character schemes or role players are present. Role players exist to serve particular roles in the previously mentioned functions such as demonstrating party unity, offering campaign issues and themes, and creating a clear "us versus them" frame. The first role is that of the party hero, and keynote speakers can often fit this characterization. Also-rans are another character present at conventions. These individuals are highlighted to help construct party unity after their own unsuccessful battle for the party's nomination. Additional characters include those who are auditioning for future party leadership positions. These individuals are often seen as "up and comers" and seek to make a name for themselves on a national stage in an effort to either be part of a new administration or to position themselves for their own future run at the nomination. The final characters that play a role at the convention are those who represent various points of the partisan spectrum within the party.

These representatives are present in an effort to emphasize the notion of inclusion for all perspectives within a party's coalition and to make sure a broad coalition is represented (Farrell, 1978). Since the primary election often had candidates that appealed to the different constituencies within the party, the notion of party unity is served by showcasing representatives of the varied groups. Vigil (2015) also indicated that various speeches play different roles for the convention with keynote speakers setting the tone, vice presidential nominees demonstrating a strength of unified vision, the nominee spouses serving to humanize the nominee, and the presidential nominee looking to connect their views and brand with the voters.

Presidents, and therefore presidential candidates, are expected to play a role in shaping national identity. The conventions function as a way for candidates to begin to clearly demonstrate their view of our national identity, often in contrast with that of their opponents. Democrats quite often present a nuanced and complicated view of national identity by talking about the complexities of our nation and of our role within the world. Republicans, on the other hand, present a straightforward sense of unity through emphasis on U.S. superiority, suspicion of government, and a responsibility to protect long standing American values (Stuckey, 2005). Parties will utilize discourse in an effort to create an identity, not only for America, but also for the party itself. A candidate's fidelity to the party line is considered of utmost importance to many in the modern electorate. One such way parties utilize partisanship in crafting their identities is where Republicans frame themselves as the enduring voice of traditional American values. Democrats, on the other hand, craft an identity of being the voice of all Americans, of every type and creed throughout the country (Murphy & Burkholder, 2004). A single individual or party leader does not construct this party identity alone. Such identity construction is the result of the individual stories that are told throughout the convention that contribute to a cohesive narrative about who the party and the nation are (Smith, 1990).

Occasionally, a convention may respond to the outcome of the previous election. If a particular nomination, and therefore the eventual election, does not go as a party hoped, there can

be an “over correction” in an attempt to make up for problems of the last convention. In an attempt to correct the perceived mistakes of the last election, the party may attempt to dramatically alter its strategy. Timmerman and Weier (1998) noted such a correction happening during the 1996 Republican National Convention. Since the 1992 Republican Convention was one of discontent within the party, the 1996 convention was structured to feature little to no conflict. Unfortunately, the convention was deemed so uninteresting that it did not have the intended purpose of exciting the party base or the general electorate and therefore this course correction did not function as the party had hoped.

Finally, storytelling plays a large role in the modern convention. The role of storytelling emerges as part of the legitimization ritual of the conventions. These storytelling rituals are meant to provide a wider appeal beyond the party faithful in attendance at the convention and to reach a national audience that participates in the creation of the ritualistic drama. The stories that are told as part of the legitimization process are a large part of the convention and campaign. The individual stories presented at the conventions can serve as the building blocks and organizing principles for the entire fall election campaign (Smith, 1987). Whether it is an anecdote of someone the candidate met on the campaign trail or a personal story of the candidate’s life that shows the candidate can relate to the average voter’s experiences, these stories shape how the people will respond to the party and its presidential nominee.

Media Coverage of Conventions

The only way conventions are able to achieve their goals and tell their stories is through media coverage. Parties and candidates craft the convention schedule in a way that will attract media attention and therefore provide greater public exposure to the conventions. The narratives constructed by the conventions are carefully chosen in hopes that the media will relay the desired messages to the viewing audience and in the media’s ongoing reporting, and thus these narratives will have much greater reach than the immediate audience within the convention hall. The media have tremendous power to shape how the voters receive a party’s message.

In order for the conventions to meet the desired objectives, parties seek to take advantage of the television coverage each of the major television networks allocate to the conventions. Kreiss, Meadows, and Remensperger (2015) indicated that conventions are “bounded spaces” where the physical site and the ceremonial occasion present opportunities for politicians and journalists to interact in a patterned manner that befits the importance of such an important event. The conventions are not a normal campaign event where the press has free access to the candidates before and after a speech to shout questions in hopes of getting an answer. Conventions are more formal settings, similar to campaign debates, where party surrogates are placed near press outlets to provide insight or “spin” as desired. Politicians and journalists each have their own goals and aims but will work in concert to meet their tasks within defined parameters. To that end, Blankenship, Robson, and Williams (1997) stated that the media are often complicit in painting the picture of the candidates and parties that matches the desires of the party. Media are driven by their desire to get the largest audience possible. Candidates, too, hope to get their message to that audience. Therefore, candidates will often utilize campaign strategies that drive viewers to networks and networks will choose the most compelling campaigns narratives to build their audience.

Tiemens, Sillars, Alexander, and Werling (1988) showed how various networks covered Jesse Jackson’s address to the 1984 Democratic National Convention. By analyzing each network’s coverage, it is obvious that each network carries with it an ability to change perceptions of candidates and surrogate speakers. Within various media sources, certain outlets cover the conventions differently by framing one party in a more favorable light. FoxNews, during the 2004 conventions, covered the Republican Convention much more favorably by praising the messages and themes being used than those utilized during the Democratic Convention, while CNN did not differ much between the two conventions in their coverage (Morris & Francia, 2009). Morris and Francia went on to state that selective exposure adds to the influence on viewers’ opinions that are formed from the conventions. Additionally, Paletz and

Elson (1976) indicated that NBC's coverage of the 1972 conventions caused damage to both the McGovern campaign and the Democratic Party. From these studies, it is evident that the media's coverage of the conventions can influence public opinion. How the media covers the convention can be quite consequential in attempts to build a desired party brand.

Networks previously provided gavel-to-gavel coverage of the conventions. Over time, however, coverage has decreased significantly. C-SPAN is now the only source for true opening to closing coverage of the events at the conventions. This decline of the major network coverage has also raised the importance of what is actually being shown (Shafer, 2010). Of course, the parties have grown savvy to the role the media plays in covering the conventions. Since the major networks only give an hour or two of coverage each night, the parties often put the most exciting part of the evening's proceedings in that time slot (Timmerman & Weier, 1998). While the traditional networks have started to taper the amount of coverage each convention receives, the cable news networks have picked up some of the lost coverage by dedicating several hours each night to speeches and analysis from the conventions.

One part of the conventions that sometimes get overlooked by the networks is campaign films. Conventions often have vignettes or short films that are shown as a way to introduce a candidate, speaker, or the party platform. During the 1984 convention, for example, rather than providing a keynote speech during primetime, the Republicans opted to show a video titled "A New Beginning" in an effort to get the networks to relay their party film. This departure from the traditional primetime convention speech was met with some resistance, as NBC was the only network to show the entire video; yet analysis found that those that watched on NBC took away a greater affinity toward the Reagan campaign as opposed to those viewers who watched convention coverage on other networks, even though NBC's coverage included negative evaluations of the video, demonstrating that the manner in which the conventions are televised can impact evaluations of the candidates (Simons, Stewart, & Harvey, 1989). The parties have

utilized these videos more recently as a way to give a brief introduction for the candidate before they address the convention.

Both the Republican and Democratic Conventions in 1992 utilized campaign films in order to illustrate the character of the candidates. The Clinton video, titled “The Man from Hope,” highlighted Bill Clinton’s upbringing. The fact that his hometown was Hope, Arkansas made for a good title as well as a belief “in a place called Hope.” The video showed Clinton in a way that a speech could not as it narrated Clinton’s personal life while ignoring completely his career in public service. George H. W. Bush’s video on the other hand showed moments of American triumph and how Bush was somehow intertwined with all of those key moments. By indicating a connection, either directly or indirectly depending on the key moment, it was meant to show Bush as presidential and the personification of the “American Spirit.” Candidate films are an effective way of demonstrating the character and personality of the candidate (Timmerman, 1996). The videos utilized by Clinton and Bush demonstrated how the televised convention paradigm had shifted away from exclusively scheduling speeches in primetime to allowing for alternative presentations, due to the effectiveness of Reagan’s use of the video in 1984, instead of speaking. While candidate profile videos are departures from convention speeches with an impact on viewers’ candidate evaluations, most conventions and the concurring media coverage continue to focus on the various addresses given on the convention floor. While candidates’ profile videos are not included in the current analysis, certain speeches may reference the content of the videos as part of the overall convention narrative.

Major Addresses

A majority of the networks’ media coverage encompasses each night’s primetime convention schedule. This primetime coverage is meant to feature the scheduled “headlining” speakers. These speakers are major names that the public at large would recognize and may tune in to hear. The major addresses include speeches by the candidate’s spouse, important keynote speakers, the vice presidential nominee, and presidential nominee.

Spousal address. The spouse of the nominee often gives one of the main speeches of the convention, which, until Hillary Clinton became the Democratic nominee in 2016, meant the nominee's wife delivered this speech. The first speech given by a candidate's spouse was by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1940. The spouse's speech was used occasionally but was not a permanent part of both conventions until 1996, when Barbara Bush and Hillary Clinton addressed their respective conventions, making this address part of every convention since that time (Anthony, 2013). Wives of the candidates have been almost restricted to traditional or stereotypically feminine topics. The wives tend to use a personal speaking style and focus on home and family while ignoring policy topics, including those topics with which they may have great expertise (Vigil, 2014).

Blankenship, Robson, and Williams (1997) introduced the concept of a feminine style within campaign discourse, specifically emanating from the 1996 conventions. They found that women traditionally play supporting roles at these conventions. The manner in which the parties utilized the feminine style varied slightly. Republicans relied on talk of family and looked to revise its party's history on women's issues. This use of the feminine style was meant to aid in closing the gender gap. Democrats on the other hand looked to emphasize its party's history on women's issues (Blankenship, Robson, & Williams, 1997). Generally, with some exceptions, the most prominent female convention speaker has traditionally been the nominee's spouse. As we may possibly be moving to a period of having more female presidential candidates, there may be a shift in the expectations for women speakers at the conventions. Additionally, with the first female presidential candidate being nominated in 2016, Bill Clinton's address demonstrated that this address was no longer reserved for a candidate's wife but for a more general spousal address.

Spouses of candidates in both parties use language that focuses on traditional family, yet ideological representations of what constitutes traditional family are found in the two party's familial addresses. Republicans focus more on traditional representations of the nuclear family, and of the importance of families in our society and particularly against abortion. Democrats

focus more on equality and differing family structures, along with an emphasis on the reproductive rights of women (Pilecki & Hammack, 2015). In regard to these findings, there are some departures from the strictly feminine language in spousal addresses, particularly the first spousal speech given by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1940 (Blair, 2001).

Eleanor Roosevelt utilized an opportunity to address the 1940 Democratic National Convention to expand her role as First Lady (Blair, 2001). The 1940 Convention was the first time a spouse of a candidate addressed the assembled delegates. Roosevelt used the acknowledgement of time, suggesting the nation was at a crossroads of crisis and opportunity, as a rhetorical device to paint a picture of needed change. Blair (2001) argued that Roosevelt's address provided an opportunity for the role of First Lady to be one of significance in these critical times. While research suggests that Eleanor Roosevelt is something of an outlier, as she was the first spouse to deliver a convention address, other presidential spouses (ex: Hillary Clinton, Laura Bush) have moved beyond simply using the feminine style to talk about their own families and incorporate areas of their own expertise to argue for policy positions. Laura Bush, in her spousal addresses, spoke of policies that were related to her policy passion, education. She tied her policy advocacy to that of traditional feminine style, however, as her policy positions related to children and education.

Keynote addresses. In addition to speeches given by the spouse of the nominees, nominating conventions feature several keynote speeches. Either prominent party members or rising stars within the party often give the keynote speeches at the conventions. A keynote address has two main objectives. The first is to raise the level of enthusiasm of the delegates and the second is to rally voters under the party standard (Miles, 1960). Similarly, Smith (1975) identified three audiences that need to be addressed in convention keynote addresses. The three audiences include the delegates present at the convention, the speaker's constituents, and the national public. While these are still parts of a keynote speaker's charge, there is more to be had in a modern keynote address. Now that the keynote speakers are generally chosen by the nominee

to highlight a certain aspect of the campaign or to appeal to a certain party constituency, the keynote speaker needs to make their purpose central to their address. Keynotes are strong indicators of the party's knowledge of the rhetorical situation. During the nominating conventions where candidates were chosen at the convention, keynotes had to be able to adapt to the party that was present and avoid antagonizing delegates (Smith, 1975). Currently, the keynote speaker is chosen ahead of time by the party's nominee and has more time to craft a message that appeals to supporters of the nominee well in advance of the convention.

Benoit, Blaney, and Pier (2000) utilized a functional approach to analyze keynote addresses from 1960 to 1996. Interestingly, the keynote speaker does not engage in defenses. Republicans and keynotes for incumbents were much more likely to acclaim, while Democrats and keynotes for challengers were more likely to attack. Policy issues were also much more prevalent than talk of character. Overall, attacks are not used much more frequently than acclaims or vice versa, leading one to conclude that keynote addresses provide an opportunity for acclaiming of party achievements while also attempting to shine a light on the opposing party's failures. The current study will explore if certain types of elections (incumbent, sitting Vice President, and open elections) differ in the way the keynote address is utilized in these functions.

Barbara Jordan, 1976, was the first Black Woman to ever address a major-party nominating convention. Barbara Jordan's address to the Democratic Convention had three primary audiences. The first two audiences were consistent with Smith's (1975) observed audiences, including the delegates and the national viewing audience. The third primary audience for Jordan was those suffering from some form of discrimination (Frye & Krohn, 1977). This does not seem too dissimilar from modern keynote speeches, especially from Democrats. The discussion and sometimes the very embodiment and enactment of equality brings these important issues to the forefront of the party platform in hopes of bringing others who identify with the struggle for equality to the party.

Similarly, the showcasing of Barack Obama and Arnold Schwarzenegger for keynote addresses at the Democratic and Republican Conventions, respectively, in 2004 evoked the American Dream through the eyes of those that were initially on the outside looking in. While Obama was born an American citizen, his father was Kenyan and thus the Illinois State Senator was therefore able to craft a vision of an American Dream where an immigrant's son can rise to the top. Schwarzenegger was an Austrian immigrant that had gone from body builder to Hollywood action star to politician, demonstrating a different vision of the American Dream. These two men utilized the American Dream trope in an effort to rescue, reinvent, and reinvigorate their individual party's sense of purity, innocence, and goodness (Elahi & Cos, 2005). It was in Obama's speech that Rowland and Jones (2007) felt the American Dream was actually reconstituted from a conservative ideal to a liberal one. Rowland and Jones argued that Reagan had previously cast the American Dream as an individual value and Obama had cast it as more of a communal one. The American Dream presents a romantic myth of the American culture and by framing it as a communal goal, Obama made it something that was no longer a conservative individual value but one for our nation to strive for together. The narratives provided by these two keynote speakers demonstrated versions of the "American Dream" that may be ever present in many convention addresses. Obama was also considered a keynote speaker for the Democrats, while Schwarzenegger was a speaker earlier in the evening for the Republicans, which could speak to the emphasis that each party sought to place on a speech featuring this narrative.

Various keynote speeches come with their own style and exigencies that call for individual analysis. For instance, Edward Kennedy in 1980 challenged sitting President Jimmy Carter in the Democratic primary. After a long primary fight Carter emerged victorious and Kennedy was invited to give the keynote address at the Convention. In that address, Kennedy used nostalgia to persuade people to bring the Democratic Party back from a time forgotten. Kennedy felt that liberals should and could retain their idyllic past. Kennedy also called for a

return to the past while moving it into the future (Depoe, 1990). It is not often that a keynote speaker departs from the dominant message or convention theme that the nominee was seeking to develop. Kennedy was an exception due to the nomination fight ending with a compromise, allowing Kennedy to speak in this capacity. Jesse Jackson also employed a different tone to his speech in 1988 at the Democratic convention. Jackson utilized a speaking style and tempo that not many could or should utilize. Jackson relied on his Black Southern Baptist style of oration and created an almost musical delivery. The rhythm and cadence created the feel of a Black church in the South (Wilson, 1996). His message was one of going to “church” through reaffirming the party commitment to change. These two addresses were examples of rhetors who abandoned the objectives of the convention in favor of advancing their own agendas.

Vice Presidential Nominee addresses. The acceptance addresses given by the nominees for vice president have gone largely unstudied. They are often considered speeches that are meant to do no harm to the ticket while, also, bolstering the candidate at the top. However, along with the vice presidential debate in the fall, the speech the vice presidential nominee gives at the convention are the two moments in the campaign where the vice presidential nominee has as much visibility and scrutiny as their presidential counterpart. The greatest amount of published research on the vice presidential address focuses on the address of 2008 Republican Vice presidential Nominee Sarah Palin due to the historic nature of her place on the ticket – the first female Republican nominee and only the second female candidate as part of a major-party ticket – and also the incredible popularity and media attention she gained during the campaign, particularly during her convention speech. In fact, Sarah Palin’s popularity created an interest that, at times, overshadowed John McCain at the top of the ticket.

Harp, Loke, and Bachmann (2010) examined the rhetoric of Palin during the first week of her nomination, which culminated in her address to the Republican National Convention. Through the lens of gender schemas, they were able to explain that Palin was able to couch the masculinity that is often thought of in Republican politics within femininity. Furthermore, the

address by Palin crafted a persona of motherhood but also celebrated hegemonic masculinity that was prevalent throughout the convention (Gibson & Heyse, 2010). Obviously, the unique nature of the 2008 Republican ticket provided an opportunity to see the role of gender within that party's convention.

Deason and Gonzalez (2012) compared the two parties' use of either "strict father" or "nurturing parent" frames during the 2008 nominating convention acceptance speeches by both the presidential and vice presidential candidates. While their study did not separate the presidential and vice presidential addresses, the findings did indicate that there was not a significant difference between the two in their use of the frames. It did, however, find that the Republican candidates utilized the "strict father" frame more than the Democrats but both relied heavily on the "nurturing parent" frame. Further investigation of the vice presidential nominee addresses explored other differences and possible similarities between the addresses of the vice presidential and presidential nominees.

Presidential Nominee addresses. The final speech of any nominating convention is that of the party's presidential nominee. The presidential nomination acceptance address is a ritual in American politics, as it formalizes the end of the primary process and kicks off the general election. This address is an important rhetorical situation because the situation itself demands a formalized discourse that is not typical of campaign or rally addresses. The acceptance address represents the public assumption of the role of party leader by the nominee. The assembled delegates are encouraged to give a vocal response at times. The address also represents an ideological solidarity in party unity going forward (Nordvold, 1970). Valley (1974) contends that there are several elements necessary to acceptance speeches. The first is to praise one's own party with a much larger ratio to attacking the opposition. The next element is discussing the current political situation. In this element, incumbents can focus on the successes of the recent past. Finally, the nominee must discuss contemporary issues of importance (Valley, 1974). For Valley's analysis of acceptance speeches from 1932-1972, only Democratic speeches were

studied which leads to questions about whether Republican addresses function similarly. Valley (1974) also noted that domestic issues were talked about much more frequently than foreign issues, which raises the question if this finding was strictly a product of the times or an enduring part of acceptance speeches.

Acceptance addresses have been analyzed in several different ways. Ritter (1980) believed that the acceptance address was a form of secularized jeremiad. The civic religion of the American Dream was important to this analysis. The great or “holy” texts were the words of great presidents in our nation’s past. These texts were calling us to come back to an America that we have strayed from and the nominee can lead “we, the people” to salvation. Nominees attempt to present themselves as the nation’s last and best hope to repentance. This strategy works especially effectively for the party that is currently out of office (Ritter, 1980).

Benoit (1999) analyzed acceptance addresses using a functional approach similar to the one used to examine keynote addresses. Nominees engaged in acclaims at a much greater rate than the other two functions. Attacks were also utilized, but not nearly to the extent of acclaims. It seemed that challengers were more likely to attack than incumbents. Also, more recent nominees were also more likely to directly attack the other nominee rather than the party as a whole. The current study will examine if the different primetime addresses serve different functions and if they are directed more at policy or character given the different types of elections mentioned previously.

In addition to the other roles, acceptance addresses must demonstrate that the nominee is to be an embodiment of a captivating vision of the nation’s past and destiny. The mythology of the American Dream is the focus of acceptance addresses. The promotion and recognition of the American Dream is often presented through the use of narratives. Each address demonstrates the candidate to be a force in the national consciousness. The address will show the American Dream through partisan interpretations. Each address will also contain the candidate’s personal vision statement for this mythos (Dearin, 1997). Dearin analyzed several contemporary addresses in an

effort to craft together the language surrounding the myth of the American Dream as a central theme of the acceptance speech.

Metaphor can also play a powerful role in framing a candidate and their distinctions between each other. Bill Clinton and Bob Dole both used a bridge metaphor during the 1996 campaign. Clinton stated his was a bridge to the future, while Dole argued he would be a bridge to a bygone era of peace and tranquility (Benoit, 2001). These metaphors also demonstrate the narratives in which both candidates hoped to situate themselves in the minds of voters. Dole's metaphor had trouble resonating with younger voters who did not long for a bygone era and were looking to the future.

Similarly, to creating a view of the American Dream, candidates must also explicate their view of American values. In 2000, the acceptance addresses of both George W. Bush and Al Gore centered on several American values: freedom, equality, individualism, community and tolerance. Where they differed was in the role of the government in meeting and achieving those values (Holloway, 2002). Reagan also utilized American values in his 1980 address. Values such as family, work, peace, freedom, and a strong America were tenants of Reagan's rhetoric (Scheele, 1984). Morality also plays a role in acceptance addresses. Through the role of "family," Democrats often position themselves as a nurturing mother. Democrats also use morality to paint certain views that the party owns as moral imperatives. Republicans, on the other hand, utilize both a strict father and a nurturing mother frame depending on the issue of discussion (Deason & Gonzalez, 2012). The current study examined the evolution of the parties and whether the Republicans have taken a stricter father posture in recent years.

Since the acceptance speech is the grand finale of the conventions, they are the last chance to shape the brand of the campaign going forward. It is in these addresses where the case will be made to voters. The nominee utilizes this address to cement the brand of both the party and their candidacy. While the nominee's acceptance speech is the finale before kicking off the

fall campaign, all the primetime addresses and the media coverage that surrounds them aid in developing the party's election branding.

Issue Ownership

Issue ownership theory states that candidates will emphasize issues that the public views as a strength for that candidate or party. When voters view a candidate as better equipped to handle the issues that are important to those voters, the candidate will perform better (Petrocik, 1996). Candidates try to steer the campaign toward high salience issues on which they are viewed more favorably than their opponents. Only issues that are of high salience in the minds of the voters are important in terms of owning a given issue (Belanger & Meguid, 2008).

Since salience drives the campaign toward issues that are both important to voters and strengths of the party, it is important for a party to develop a long-term hold on issues they do well with. Accordingly, a particular party will tend to have long-term ownership of an issue. However, events may emerge that alter a party's ability to claim an issue as their own for a short time (Petrocik, 1996). Traditionally, Democrats tend to have an advantage on issues surrounding social welfare and intergroup relationships. Republicans, on the other hand, tend to do better with issues of taxes, spending, the size of government, and foreign affairs and defense to a lesser extent (Petrocik, Benoit, & Hansen, 2003). These advantages help steer the candidates toward issues the voters will respond favorably to because of the party's ability to solve the problem in a preferred manner.

Throughout a campaign, candidates will look to make the election about certain issues through raising the issue's salience. Candidates will attempt to raise the issue profile by painting an issue as a problem that needs solving. Voters often respond better to issues that are presented as problems that can be solved rather than policies that should be pursued (Petrocik, 1996). During debates, candidates will often try to raise the salience of "winning" issues that they are stronger on (Benoit & Hansen, 2004). Moving beyond debates, candidates will also try to raise the salience of issues they are stronger on at many major campaign events.

The Republican and Democratic parties approach issue ownership differently in a couple ways. First, Republicans will often not focus on Republican owned issues until the general election debates (Benoit & Hansen, 2004). Next, both Democrats and Republicans tend to focus on Republican issues more than Democratic issues. However, certain inter-election fluctuations may be related to situational factors (Petrocik, Benoit, & Hansen, 2003). These differences in engaging in issue ownership may explain the levels of success each party has had in the last several decades.

Candidates will often engage in campaigning on issues owned by the other party due to a few reasons. First, this “issue poaching” may occur when a candidate is trailing in the polls. Candidates that are trailing may try to cross over in an effort to steal the thunder of the opponent by attacking a strong point. Next, a candidate may try to discuss an issue owned by the opposition due to that issue being highly salient. Even though an issue might be owned by the opposition party, a candidate may have to engage in discussing it if it reaches a certain level of saliency and polling indicates that the candidate is trailing due to a lack of attention paid to a problem. Finally, as previously stated, Democrats will often try to discuss issues that are viewed as owned by Republicans. This is due to the Democrats attempting to stake a claim on such national issues as taxes and national security (Damore, 2004). Parties may make an ideological shift on an issue in an effort to appear more attractive to voters. Such a shift can also have negative consequences for the party if the base does not approve of that shift (van der Burg, 2004).

Issues that are not clearly owned can be claimed through the strategic use of the media (Walgrave, Lefevere, & Nuytemans, 2009). Issues that are not clearly owned are often that way due to situational factors that are occurring during the election and will provide an opportunity for a party to steal an issue from the party that has traditionally owned it. When appearing on various media outlets, candidates are able to repeatedly position themselves as the one most able to solve the problem that has emerged rather than the opposition. Occasionally, parties can use the media to take an issue over for the long-term but usually it is a short-term ownership. Candidates,

however, would do well to stick to the issues that their party owns. Between 1952 and 2004, in 11 of the 14 presidential elections, the candidate who most frequently acclaimed their party's traditionally "owned" issues won the general election (Benoit, 2007).

The current study analyzed the speeches to examine the emphasis of certain issues and how ownership of those issues played into the party's overall brand development. The study examined which issues were essential to a party's identity from election to election, and which issues were more situational.

Functional Theory

The next theory this study applied is the functional theory of political campaign discourse. Functional theory of political campaign discourse states that voters will choose the candidate that appears to be most preferable. In order to appear more preferable, candidates have three discursive options: attacks, acclaims, and defenses (Benoit, Pier, & Blaney, 1997). The second level of these functional valences is policy and character claims (Benoit, Blaney, Pier, 2000). In presidential elections, a majority of verbal content does not discuss policy in political advertisements (Jamieson, Waldman, & Sherr, 2000), although research has shown that campaigns that focus on policy more than character often win (Benoit, 2003). However, some argue that policy and character are interrelated constructs (Hacker, Zakahi, Giles, & McQuitty, 2000).

Acclaims are positive self-representations involving two components: increased responsibility and a positive evaluation of actions (Benoit, 1997). It is important that voters view the qualities or policies being touted as positive and that the candidate is likely to be able to accomplish promised benefits. Addressing policy within an acclaim can relate to past deeds, future plans and general goals. Character acclaims address personal qualities, leadership ability, and ideals.

Attacks are used to increase voters' awareness of the shortcomings the opponent may have (Benoit & Harthcock, 1999). These attacks generally take the form of a description of an

offensive act along with placing the blame on the target for that offensive act (Pomerantz, 1978). The attack must be thought by the candidate to most likely be perceived as negative by voters. The offense could be tied to an action or through an undesirable quality (Benoit, Pier, & Blaney, 1997). Candidates have two ways they can emphasize a negative through attack: increasing negative perceptions of the act and increasing perceived responsibility for the act. Increasing the negative perceptions can be done through seven different techniques: demonstrating the extent of the damage caused as significant, showing the negative effects as long lasting, emphasizing the harms as recent, showing the victims as especially vulnerable, demonstrate an obligation to protect certain groups against the target and his/her actions, show them as being inconsistent, and explain the negative effects the audience will experience. Furthermore, increasing the perceived responsibility for an act involves five potential techniques: the target intended the achieved outcome, it was planned, the actor knew the consequences of the act, the accused had committed similar acts before, and the accused benefited from the outcomes of the actions (Benoit & Wells, 1996). Attacks on policy are also positively related to a candidate's winning more so than attacks on character (Benoit, 2004).

Defenses come in the form of image repair strategies. The strategies of denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness of the event and mortification come into play when using the function of defenses (Benoit, 1995). Other image repair strategies coined by Benoit (1995) are not included in defenses as they are similar to acclaims and attacks. Defenses are meant to make the accusations appear frivolous and not damaging to the reputation of the candidate.

Using a functional approach, acceptance addresses (Benoit, 1999) and keynote addresses (Benoit, Blaney, & Pier, 2000) were examined over time to see where attacks, acclaims, and defenses were utilized. Neither party utilized defenses often (< 1%) in either address. This may be due to the campaign being in the early stages for the general election and neither candidate wanted to be on defense that early. Democrats acclaimed much more often while Republicans utilized attacks more. In the instance of an incumbent running for re-election, the challenger

would also be on the attack more than the incumbent. In more recent elections, presidential candidates are also more likely to call their opponent out by name rather than by party (Benoit, 1999).

Within the context of the various convention addresses, the functions of political discourse can manifest themselves in several different ways. Each speaker will appear at the convention looking to serve a particular role. Different speakers may be tasked with making a speech filled with either attacks or acclaims. This study examined which role was delegated to which speaker. It also examined the impact of different types of elections on the balance of which tactic is used more throughout the convention. Finally, this study also explored the ways in which attacks, acclaims, and defenses factor into the candidate and party brands. By bringing together narrative, issue ownership, and functional theories, this study examined how parties and candidates used their conventions to create a desired brand.

Chapter Three: METHODOLOGY

In order to answer the questions raised in the previous chapter regarding the construction of branding during the major political party convention speeches through narrative, issue ownership, and functions of campaigns, this study employed rhetorical criticism as the method of analysis. The analysis of the study focused on the dominant narratives constructed in the primetime convention speeches. The analysis also applied Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory and Benoit, Pier, and Blaney's (1997) functions of campaign discourse to investigate the political message and argument development posited by these theories as part of the narrative brand. As the overall narrative, issues, and functions of campaign discourse came together to create a narrative brand for the party and candidate, this study examined how the addressed aided in that construction. Examining narratives across time, the study explored whether party and candidate brands remain constant from election to election or if they are much more fluid. Furthermore, the study also indicated the role of each genre of convention speech in constructing the party and candidate narrative brands.

Study Design

This study's data for analysis consisted of the main nightly speeches from each night of the nominating conventions. The main nightly speech was defined as the headlining speaker or speakers for that evening's convention coverage. Based on that definition, the sample is made up of 98 speeches (see Appendix A). In some instances, there were multiple speeches which were presented as the main speech for a particular night, such as when a sitting president introduced the nominee. Also included, were speeches given by a presidential nominee's spouse and nominees for vice president. The inclusion of the main nightly addresses each evening of the convention was chosen as network television coverage most often focused on the headline speaker(s) for each night and this was also when the viewing audience was at its highest. Addresses from both the Democratic and Republican conventions from 1972 through 2016 were examined as part of this study. The modern era of conventions started in 1972 after both parties

moved toward choosing the nominee through the primary election process rather than naming the nominee at the convention. Video and speech transcripts were retrieved from various archives. If a video or transcript was not available through C-SPAN or archived collections related to the speaker, other means such as YouTube and Presidential Library websites were utilized.

Sample

Each convention had different schedules and highlighted speeches, therefore the set of addresses that were included among the 98 speeches that constituted the sample for this study varies by convention. For instance, spousal addresses did not occur at every convention and have only recently been an expectation for the convention (see Appendix A). Additionally, the placement of a former or outgoing president as a major keynote speaker has not been constant, with some former presidents being left off the convention schedule entirely. Therefore, this study analyzed between three and six speeches per convention depending on how a convention was scheduled.

The 1972 conventions both took place in Miami with the Democrats holding their convention on July 10-13 and the Republicans having theirs on August 21-23. The speeches that were analyzed from the Democrats were presidential nominee Senator George McGovern from South Dakota, vice presidential nominee Senator Tom Eagleton from Missouri, and keynote speaker Florida Governor Reubin Askew. George McGovern's wife, Eleanor, did not address the convention. Republicans had an incumbent seeking reelection with Richard Nixon. The Republican convention was analyzed through the speeches from President Richard Nixon, Vice President Spiro Agnew, First Lady Pat Nixon, and keynote speaker Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar.

The 1976 conventions were surrounded by a unique set of circumstances with President Gerald Ford running for four more years as president but having never been a part of a national ticket. Since the party that is out of power has their convention first, the Democrats held their convention on July 12-15 in New York City. Major speeches that were analyzed were given by

presidential nominee Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter, vice presidential nominee Senator Walter Mondale from Minnesota, and keynote speakers Senator John Glenn of Ohio and United States Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas. Rosalynn Carter did not give a speech during the convention. The Republicans followed with their convention on August 16-19 in Kansas City. The speeches that were analyzed were given by President Gerald Ford, vice presidential nominee Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, and keynote speaker Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee. First Lady Betty Ford did not address the convention.

The 1980 conventions were the first conventions as part of the analysis where the Democratic Party was the incumbent party. The Republican convention took place from July 14-17 in Detroit and featured speeches from presidential nominee former California Governor Ronald Reagan, vice presidential nominee and former CIA Director George H.W. Bush, and keynote speaker United States Congressman Guy Vander Jagt of Michigan. The Democrats responded with their convention on August 11-14 in New York City and had major speeches given by President Jimmy Carter, Vice President Walter Mondale, and keynote speeches by Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and United States Congressman Morris Udall of Arizona. Neither party's convention had addresses from the spouse of the nominees.

In 1984, the Democratic Party had a ticket of historic significance by nominating Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro of New York, the first female on a major party presidential ticket, who was nominated for vice president during the Democratic Convention on July 16-19 in San Francisco. The main speakers during that convention were presidential nominee former Vice President Walter Mondale, Ferraro, and keynote speaker New York Governor Mario Cuomo. The Republicans answered on August 20-23 in Dallas with Ronald Reagan's bid for reelection. Speakers included in the analysis were President Reagan, Vice President George H.W. Bush, and keynote speaker Treasurer of the United States Katherine Ortega. The 1984 conventions continued the trend of not featuring a speech by either candidate's spouse.

The 1988 conventions were the first of this analysis where a sitting vice president hoped to become president as Republican George H.W. Bush looked to succeed Ronald Reagan. The Democrats put forth their challenge from Atlanta on July 18-21 with main speeches from presidential nominee and Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, vice presidential nominee Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, and keynote speaker Texas State Treasurer Ann Richards. The Republicans looked to maintain control of the White House and held their convention in New Orleans on August 15-18. The main speeches were given by Vice President Bush, vice presidential nominee Senator Dan Quayle of Indiana, keynote speaker New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean, and the sitting President Ronald Reagan. The 1988 conventions were the last conventions where neither candidate's spouse gave an address.

In 1992, the conventions saw George H.W. Bush look to win reelection over Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton. The Democrats staged their convention on July 13-16 in New York City. Major addresses were given by Clinton, vice presidential nominee Senator Al Gore of Tennessee, and keynote speakers Georgia Governor Zell Miller and former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas. Miller (in 1992 and 2004) and Jordan (in 1976 and 1992) are the only non-candidates to have two addresses included in the sample for analysis. The Republicans had their convention in Houston on August 17-20. President Bush and Vice President Quayle gave addresses accepting their party's nomination for reelection. First Lady Barbara Bush gave a speech in support of her husband's candidacy, and former President Ronald Reagan and Senator Phil Gramm of Texas delivered keynote speeches.

The 1996 conventions featured the first Democratic incumbent seeking reelection since Carter in 1980, and the party had high hopes for a different outcome. The Republicans led with their convention from San Diego on August 12-15 with major speeches from presidential nominee Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, vice presidential nominee former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp, Elizabeth Dole, and keynote speaker Congresswoman Susan Molinari of New York. This marked the first time in the sample that the party holding the first

convention did not hold it in July, closing the gap between the two conventions. The incumbent Democrats held their convention two weeks later on August 26-29 in Chicago. Main speeches were given by President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, First Lady Hillary Clinton, and keynote speaker Indiana Governor Evan Bayh. The 1996 conventions marked the first time spouses of both presidential candidates addressed the assembled conventions and set the expectation that continued going forward.

While the 2000 presidential election may go down in history as one of the more interesting presidential elections due to the protracted court battles after Election Day, the conventions were also interesting as the Republican candidate, George W. Bush, was the son of a former president. The Republican Convention went first taking place on July 31- August 3 in Philadelphia. Speeches were given by presidential nominee Texas Governor George W. Bush, vice presidential candidate and former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney of Colorado, Laura Bush, and keynote speakers General Colin Powell and Senator John McCain of Arizona. The Democratic conventions was held two weeks later in Los Angeles with speeches given by presidential nominee Vice President Al Gore, vice presidential nominee Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, Tipper Gore, and keynote speeches by Congressman Harold Ford Jr. of Tennessee and President Bill Clinton.

The 2004 convention marked the first time someone born outside of the United States would address a convention when Democratic candidate Massachusetts Senator John Kerry's wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, spoke during the convention held in Boston on July 26-29. Heinz Kerry was born in Mozambique, to Portuguese parents giving her dual citizenship in both the United States and Portugal at the time of her address. In addition to the speech by Teresa Heinz Kerry, major speeches were given by presidential candidate Senator John Kerry, vice presidential candidate Senator John Edwards of North Carolina, and a keynote speech by Illinois State Senator Barack Obama. The Republican Convention responded on August 30-September 2 with speeches by President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, First Lady Laura Bush, and

keynote speakers Senator John McCain of Arizona and Senator Zell Miller of Georgia. Miller is the only speaker included in the sample to address both the Republican and Democratic National Conventions (Democrats in 1992 and Republicans in 2004).

For the first time in the history of the modern nominating conventions, the 2008 election saw neither party nominate a sitting president or vice president as their party's nominee. The Democratic Convention took place in Denver on August 25-28 with presidential nominee Senator Barack Obama of Illinois accepting the nomination at the much larger football stadium in Denver in order to accommodate a much larger crowd as opposed to the small arena in which the other days of the convention's proceedings were held. Other major speeches were given by vice presidential nominee Senator Joe Biden of Delaware, Michelle Obama, and keynote speeches by former Virginia Governor Mark Warner and Senator Hillary Clinton of New York. The Republican Convention took place on September 1-4 in St. Paul, Minnesota but was shortened on the first day due to a hurricane that was impacting the southeastern part of the country and party officials wanted to use the delay as a call for support of victims of the hurricane. Speeches were given by presidential nominee Senator John McCain of Arizona, vice presidential nominee and Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, Cindy McCain, and a keynote speech from former New York City Mayor Rudi Giuliani. President George W. Bush was to address the convention on the first night but due to the shuffling of the schedule he was unable to speak live and appeared on video later in the week and therefore his address was not included in this analysis due to this change.

The 2012 conventions had President Barack Obama nominated and seeking to win reelection over former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney. Romney and the Republicans held their convention in Tampa on August 27-30 with Romney accepting the nomination and other speeches given by vice presidential nominee Congressman Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, Ann Romney, and keynote speaker New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. Similar to 2008, the 2012 Republican Convention was delayed due to Hurricane Isaac impacting the Florida coast (Grant, 2012). The Democrats responded with their convention a week later in Charlotte with speeches

by President Obama, Vice President Biden, First Lady Michelle Obama, and keynote speeches by San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro and former President Bill Clinton.

The final set of conventions included in this analysis were held in 2016 when, for the first time a major U.S. political party nominated a woman for the presidency with the nomination of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Republicans had their convention in Cleveland from July 18-21. Major speeches were given by presidential nominee Donald Trump, vice presidential nominee Indiana Governor Mike Pence, Melania Trump, and keynote speaker Ben Carson. The Democratic Party featured a wide range of speakers and therefore had multiple keynote addresses in primetime each night. The main speakers were presidential nominee and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, vice presidential nominee Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia, former President Bill Clinton, and keynote speeches given by Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, and President Barack Obama.

Analysis

This study proceeded with the narrative rhetorical analysis of the texts. Foss (2009) clearly laid out how one would conduct a narrative analysis. First, one must select the artifact to be analyzed. In the case of this study, each speech serves as a single artifact. To conduct the analysis itself, one must identify the objective of the narrative. Within the context of the nominating conventions the ultimate objective is to convince people to vote for that party's presidential nominee. In order to win the support of voters, the party and candidates must create a narrative brand that resonates with the voters. However, there may be supporting objectives that will hopefully lead to the desired end. These objectives could include the development of a sense of similarity between the nominee/party and audience, painting the nominee as a champion that will fight for the average person, or as an instrument of change for which the public feels are needed. Within these potential rhetorical goals, there is a connection with the desired brand that the nominee and supporting speakers seek to create through the overall convention narrative.

The next step of the analysis is to analyze the specific rhetorical devices or features in accomplishing the desired objective (Foss, 2009). In the current analysis, narrative elements will be explored. Features of narratives include the setting, characters, and narrators, retelling of events, relationships, and themes. The setting is the current state of the nation as constructed by the speaker through their narratives. Narrators are classified as the chosen convention speakers. Specific events are often those things that are happening or have happened that the audience will recognize and identify with. Themes are the overarching message that a given narrative seeks to promote. Within convention speeches, narrative themes may include such common political tropes as the American Dream, a strong national defense, American exceptionalism, or discussing a need for change. The themes will play a significant role in the current study's analysis as they may change based on the type of election, whereas other narrative features such as characters, or types of people that the speakers talk about within these narratives, may be more stable as these story elements will generally involve something the nominee did or someone that was met on the campaign trail.

The final step is to assess the narrative (Foss, 2009). This step allows the critic to discover how well the strategies employed worked in responding to one's overall rhetorical objective. Also, within the context of the current study, this step allowed for identification of how well each speech fit within the broader narrative being created throughout a particular convention as well as from one convention to the next. This study identified all of the narratives present in each of the headline speeches and compared them with the contemporary opposing convention, and through conventions over time. This phase of the analysis allowed for an understanding of the main facets of the party and candidate brand, which were created through narratives.

To add more depth to the analysis beyond simple narratives, the analysis of how issues and functions of campaign discourse were integrated into the narrative were also added. Once these two theories are applied, the analysis was combined with the narrative to more fully explain the narrative branding constructed for both the candidates and each major party's nominating

convention. Issues ownership is an integral part of the party brand as there are certain issues that over time have become linked to a particular party as an important issue. For instance, Republicans and Democrats have been able to brand themselves around the social issue of abortion, with the parties successfully labeling themselves as pro-life and pro-choice respectively. Exploring the specific issues that each party emphasized within their conventions demonstrated how the party hoped to brand itself from a political issue perspective. With respect to the functions of campaign discourse, this information is used to identify how the two parties hoped to distinguish themselves from one another. As one party attacked the other either on policy or character, there was an attempt to state that the opposition had certain negative and undesirable qualities as part of their political brand. Similarly, an acclaim hoped to demonstrate a positive quality as part of one's own branding.

Analysis for issues relied on Petrocik's (1996) definitions of major issue categories. The aim of examining these issues as being part of the larger brand was to see which issues were part of the enduring party brand or if any convention demonstrated an effort to steal an issue from the opposing party. By analyzing the speeches for these issues, this study identified key issues that made up the party brand as well as helped identify which speeches aided in promoting those key issues.

The final area of analysis is the functions of campaign discourse. Benoit, Pier, and Blaney (1997) identified three functions of campaign discourse, which include attacks, acclaims, and defenses. All three of these occur in two ways by being related to either policy or character. Attacks are statements made that call into question some facet of the opposition. Policy attacks indicate that the opposition has poor judgment as it relates to issues. Character attacks indicate that the opposition has some personal flaw that makes an individual unfit for office. Acclaims look to bolster a certain aspect of the candidate or party. Policy acclaims seek to demonstrate that the party or candidate has worked to create or strengthen a policy that is popular. Character acclaims often show that the candidate is a person of virtue. Finally, defenses are responses to

attacks. These are much less common within political discourse but do still occur. Policy defenses look to counter argue an attack on a certain policy position. Often this will involve indicating that the attack was misguided or based on inaccurate information. Character defenses seek to minimize the offense that the candidate or party is being accused of.

This study explained party and candidate branding through the modern era of political party nominating conventions. Ultimately, this study explored how the major parties and presidential candidates used their main convention speeches to create or reinforce a party brand through narratives, issue ownership, and the use of functions of campaign discourse. Once the three theoretical pieces of the analysis are combined, this study explained several concepts within candidate and party branding during the nominating conventions. First, what role do the various types of speeches play in constructing the party branding? Second, how does the nature of the election effect the construction of the party branding? Third, are the two parties static in their brands or do they change over time?

In the forthcoming chapters, chapter four discussed the convention to convention narrative brand analysis for the Democratic Party. Chapter five analyzed the convention to convention brand for the Republican Party. Chapter six examined the overall findings and explained how the addresses inform the candidate and party brands.

Chapter Four: DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION BRANDING

Chapters four and five explored the various rhetorical components of the political party and candidate brands as they were presented through the major convention speeches. Chapter four examines the speeches given during the Democratic Conventions. First, the analysis shows how each speech contributes to the overall Democratic brand construction within and across the Democrat's nominating conventions. The analysis also identifies the ways in which party and candidate brands are influenced by the political exigencies surrounding the particular convention. Finally, analysis is offered that explains the ways in which the party and candidate brands may diverge from one another and also how the proffered brands converge with the party's standard-bearer and the party constructed as a unified brand.

The analysis of the brands for each of the candidates and conventions proceeded with a convention-to-convention analysis of the main speeches that made up each of the party nominating conventions. This portion of the analysis identified each addresses' role in creating the party brand. Specific elements of the major convention addresses that were influential in brand development and thus included in this analysis include campaign issues, political candidate and campaign narratives, and Benoit, Pier, & Blaney's (1997) major functions of campaign discourse; attacks, acclaims, and defenses. Once the set of main addresses were analyzed from each convention, the overall party and candidate brands from the respective conventions were identified. This chapter also discusses the evolution in brand identification the Democratic Party experienced during the 12 conventions over the five decades included as part of this study.

1972 Democratic Convention

As the party opposing incumbent Republican President Richard Nixon, the Democrats took to the stage in Miami Beach in early July of 1972 to express their vision for the future of America. The three main convention speeches that were included as part of this convention's analysis were the keynote speech from Florida Governor Reubin Askew, Vice-Presidential Nominee and Missouri Senator Thomas Eagleton, and Presidential Nominee and Arizona Senator

George McGovern. These speeches came together to express hope for a unified, yet diverse party, representing a sorely needed change from the current administration. While these elements were found as common themes in all three speeches, there were also unique traits found in individual speeches which were instrumental in developing the Democratic Party brand at the 1972 convention.

Keynote Speaker Governor Reubin Askew. The convention's keynote speaker, Florida Governor Reubin Askew, spoke of a vision of the Democratic Party whose goal was to move America forward. He compared the nation's current state of affairs to a portrait of what America could be under a McGovern Administration. Within his address, Askew (1972) attacked the Republican Party and President Nixon on a number of issues in order to demonstrate that the path McGovern and the Democrats offer was eminently better for the American people. In order to show voters the Democrats offered a better plan for the public, they first had to be convinced of the need for change. Therefore, the first theme of Askew's address was the necessity for change. Here, Askew argued that the public had begun to question whether "the system" was aligned against them and not working in the interests of everyday people. Askew invoked the outright cynicism felt by many Americans toward their government:

We can hear it in the voices of the people. They're questioning the forces around them today as never before. They're questioning a system that they feel has become so large, so complicated, so unwieldy, that it has gone beyond their reach. A system that seems to have lined all the power of big government, big business, big agriculture, big money, and even big labor against them. (Askew, 1972)

Askew demonstrated that the American public had felt that every facet of American life was working against them. He referred to the federal government as a broken system which was harming Americans and their pursuit of the American Dream. He identified a clear dissonance between the notion of the American Dream and the reality many Americans faced. Askew pointed out that Americans, and Democrats in particular, were feeling left out due to a system that

had taken root in recent years and was working against the people. This dissonance developed a clear need for change, the first major theme of Askew's address.

The next theme present in Askew's speech confronted the perception of a fractured Democratic Party and a need for the Party to unite as one. The Democratic Party was viewed as still fractured and reeling from the riots which occurred at the party's 1968 Convention in Chicago, leading Askew to state that the Democratic Party in 1972 was one that would not bend to the politics of the past. He argued that the current Democratic Party was a new party, one more in tune with the average American. Askew sought to portray the Democrats as a party representative of all Americans rather than a select few when he proclaimed, "This is indeed the most representative convention in our history. It's impossible, in fact, to look upon this group without feeling that one has seen the face of America (Askew, 1972)." Askew pointed to the diversity of the assembled group of people at the convention to illustrate that the Democratic Party was united by building a coalition of many groups of people with varied interests. Askew acknowledged the diverse coalition was tied together for a common cause, yet he also acknowledged that the group had many differences when he asserted, "No one can order you to forget your differences. No one can demand that you set aside your goals. And no one can ask that you forget those principles you hold most dear, and I certainly don't want to try (Askew, 1972)." Askew mentioned the Democratic coalition's underlying differences to show the assembled group that those differences were an asset to the party rather than a liability.

The next theme present in Askew's address was hope. As mentioned earlier, Askew's address to the Convention started with a depiction of a government system no longer working for the American people; and there was a clear need for change in order to provide hope for the nation. Here, Askew found his way to his central theme and purpose by arguing the American people were in great need of a leader that could provide such hope. "At such a time, they need someone to tell them that it's all worthwhile... someone to help them overcome their fears and frustrations, not cater to them (Askew, 1972)." It was interesting that while Askew did not name

the party's nominee directly in his address, in the immediate context of this speech it was clear that the "someone" to whom Askew referenced was George McGovern. After making the case earlier in the speech that the American public had felt left behind by the Nixon Administration, Askew finished by stating that Americans were in need of a leader who could once again make them feel hopeful.

Askew used his speech to first attack Richard Nixon for creating a system that alienated many Americans and left them feeling cynical toward their government. Askew then provided a clear picture of the Democratic Party as one which had learned from its past transgressions and disunity, to a party united through diversity. His address was an attempt to put the past to rest and to demonstrate that the Democratic Party was the party of change our nation needed and its vision was one of hope for the American people.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Tom Eagleton. The Democratic Vice-Presidential Nominee, Senator Tom Eagleton, developed his address in a similar fashion to Askew's keynote address. He spoke of change within the Democratic Party since 1968 and explained how that change was a positive force which would help unite the party going forward. Eagleton also attacked the Nixon Administration and Republicans on several key issues. Eagleton concluded his address by acclaiming the Democratic Party's strengths as a comparison to the attacks he levied against Nixon and the Republicans.

Eagleton's first theme focused on the changes within the Democratic Party in the aftermath of the 1968 Convention. This theme was demonstrated by mentioning changes within the Party leadership: "This has been a year of surprises. Most of the delegates in this hall did not expect to be the political pros of 1972. Most of us did not expect to nominate a man who began with only five percent in the polls (Eagleton, 1972)." Eagleton was quick to point out many of the figures who represented the party establishment in 1968 were now gone and a new generation of Democrats had taken the reigns of the party. He also claimed the diverse crowd assembled in the hall was representative of the nation as a whole and stood as a united party in a similar manner to

Askew. Eagleton proclaimed his hope that the Democratic Party had moved beyond the disunity of the past and had come together for a common cause.

Eagleton also attacked the Nixon Administration and Republicans on several key issues. He stated America under Richard Nixon's leadership had "stalled" on issues such as the Vietnam War, the economy, unemployment, school funding, and preserving the environment. "My friends, America has been stalled for four long years. We've been stalled in a senseless war in Vietnam. We've been stalled economically here at home... We've been stalled in providing adequate funding for our schools (Eagleton, 1972)." Eagleton's use of the word "stalled" in relationship to every major policy area reinforced the notion that the Nixon Administration was making no progress in addressing the issues of greatest concern for Americans. Eagleton also attacked the Nixon administration as being responsible for a rise in distrust and skepticism among the American people, and especially toward those in government who had been so deceitful and corrupt. Eagleton (1972) placed blame for this state of affairs clearly on the Nixon Administration by noting, "so we have an electorate so jaded by gimmickry that their healthy skepticism about politics, indeed their healthy skepticism about politicians has escalated into a total lack of confidence in this Administration."

After describing damage to the polity caused by the Nixon Administration, Eagleton then transitioned to acclaim the McGovern/Eagleton ticket through use of comparison. Eagleton argued that Democrats, and more specifically McGovern, had listened to the needs of the people and were willing to be a voice for the average American: "We know that all is not well, but it is not because, as some would have us believe, that we have lost our way. All we have lost is our leadership (Eagleton, 1972)." Eagleton further claimed America had not lost its way, but rather a vacuum in leadership had created a national distrust and void that only he as vice president and McGovern as president could fix.

Overall, Eagleton used his speech to emphasize three themes. The first was that the Democratic Party had learned and evolved from the fractious party of 1968. The second theme

involved the “stalled” nature of the Nixon Administration who had left the American public cynical and distrustful of its government; and, finally, the third theme focused on the McGovern/Eagleton ticket’s ability to provide open and honest leadership which could unite the American people.

Presidential Nominee Senator George McGovern. Eagleton and Askew clearly built a foundation for McGovern to expand on as he made the case for himself against Richard Nixon. McGovern utilized five major themes in his address to promote his own brand as a political leader and that of the Democratic Party. The first theme he emphasized was change. Next, McGovern focused on the theme of national security and particularly his stance against the Vietnam War. He then developed the notion of party unity as a major theme for Democrats in 1972. The next theme he developed was his principle domestic issue, income inequality. Finally, McGovern ended his address by imploring his fellow Americans to “come home” to the Democratic Party’s American ideals.

McGovern (1972), very early in his address, continued to build upon the theme of change first articulated by Reubin Askew by claiming America was entering a time of change which would not come along often in history. McGovern stated, “We are entering a period of important and hopeful change in America, a period comparable to those eras that unleashed such remarkable ferment in the period of Jefferson and Jackson and Roosevelt (McGovern, 1972).” McGovern inferred that the upcoming election would be one of incredible importance in our nation’s history, and by association that he would stand as a “remarkable” leader much like the extraordinary past presidents to whom he made reference.

McGovern next addressed the theme of national security and the Vietnam War. He started by stating his plan for peace:

I have no secret plan for peace. I have a public plan. And as one whose heart has ached for the past ten years over the agony of Vietnam, I will halt the senseless bombing of Indochina on Inaugural Day. (McGovern, 1972)

Part of the overall McGovern brand was to be seen as the presidential leader strongly opposed to the Vietnam War. His unambiguous statement in his nomination address clearly articulated this stance. While McGovern made his feeling clear on the Vietnam War, he also attempted to brand himself as a leader who would not be entirely opposed to military might by stating, “I give you my pledge that if I become President of the United States, America will keep its defenses alert and fully sufficient to meet any danger (McGovern, 1972).” The preceding passage was McGovern’s attempt at responding to attacks which inferred he sought to dismantle the U.S. military and make America vulnerable to foreign foes. McGovern insisted that he was not opposed to all use of military force, but rather its use should only be deployed when absolutely necessary for the defense of our nation.

To further demonstrate the theme of party unity through diversity, McGovern invoked several prominent members from various coalitions within the party to emphasize that the Democratic Party of 1968, with its unrest and rioting, was now a united party. He mentioned the likes of party leaders Hubert Humphrey, Ed Muskie, Scoop Jackson, Shirley Chisholm, Wilbur Mills, Terry Sanford, Eugene McCarthy, and even George Wallace, among several other Democrats, to show the true diversity of ideas and coalitions found within the party. Indeed, perhaps the most common thread throughout the 1972 Democratic convention was the coming together of a fractured party, which demonstrated the party’s ability to reunite a fractured country. McGovern concluded the unity section of his address by proclaiming “to anyone in this hall who doubts the ability of the Democrats to join together in common cause, I say never underestimate the power of Richard Nixon to bring harmony to Democratic ranks (McGovern, 1972).” McGovern made the case of Nixon’s faults being enough to make the Democratic coalition a united force to prevent the reelection of President Nixon.

The dominant issue theme McGovern developed in his address was that of income inequality. He spoke of income inequality in terms of both wages and tax reform. In regard to wages, McGovern (1972) stated “a program to put America back to work demands that work be

properly rewarded. That means the end of a system of economic controls in which labor is depressed, but prices and corporate profit run sky-high.” On this point, McGovern wished to be seen as the champion workers instead of broader economic growth. While corporate profits may grow, he suggested, those who did the work for these corporations most often failed to experience the fruits of their own labor in terms of increased wages. McGovern addressed income inequality and tax reform as key issues within the Democratic brand.

The tax system today does not reward hard work, it penalizes it. Inherited or invested wealth frequently multiplies itself while paying no taxes at all. But wages on the assembly line or in farming the land, these hard-earned dollars are taxed to the very last penny. (McGovern, 1972)

Once again, McGovern promoted himself as a fighter for the hardworking American people who were taxed on everything they earn, unlike the wealthy who had much of their wealth untouched by taxes.

McGovern ended his address by inviting Americans to “come home.” He began this theme by stating “together we will call America home to the ideals that nourished us from the beginning (McGovern, 1972).” McGovern suggested America had drifted away from its founding ideals of opportunity, fairness and equality for all, and he invited Americans to return “home” to a nation, under his leadership, which would be guided by such principles. McGovern concluded his address with a plea for his fellow citizens to “come home” on several fronts.

From secrecy and deception in high places, come home America. From military spending so wasteful that it weakens our nation, come home America. From the entrenchment of special privileges in tax favoritisms, from the waste of idle lands, to the joy of useful labor, from the prejudices based on race and sex, from the loneliness of aging poor and the despair of the neglected sick, come home America. Come home to the affirmation that we have a dream. Come home to the conviction that we can move our country forward. (McGovern, 1972)

This passage depicted a nation that had lost its way; and over the course of the previous four years was guided by the incumbent Republican president, a nation that had strayed from its founding principles. George McGovern offered himself as the leader in touch with hardworking Americans and as the presidential candidate who would lead citizens home to a land of equality and opportunity for all.

Overall, McGovern emphasized five themes in his nomination acceptance address. He promoted himself as the right man who was capable of creating much needed change in our land. He next discussed the need to reimagine our national security with the ending the Vietnam War while continuing a strong national defense. Next, McGovern addressed Democratic Party unity by highlighting key constituencies within the Party's grand coalition, extrapolating from this unity his ability to unite a divided nation. McGovern then stressed the issue of income inequality as his top policy priority. Finally, he developed the theme of "come home America" to remind the nation of core ideals of equality and opportunity for all, the key vision which would guide a McGovern presidency.

Summary of the 1972 Democratic Convention Branding. The 1972 Democratic Convention, the Democratic Party as well as its presidential nominee, George McGovern, achieved a unified brand image through the development of several key themes. The first theme developed was a narrative of party unity. All three of the convention's main speakers spoke of a now unified party, following the turmoil of the 1968 Democratic convention, with the party's unity built upon diverse coalitions which sought a common goal – the defeat of President Richard Nixon. Each of the speeches spoke often of party diversity and unity, with these contrasting elements displayed at the convention as represented by various party coalitions and their leaders. The next major theme present in all three speakers was change. Each speaker addressed the need for change, yet each a bit differently. Askew pointed to the Nixon Administration as damaging to our nation and its citizens and therefore presented a clear and pressing need for change. Eagleton developed the theme of change around the notion of change which had occurred in the

Democratic Party itself. Finally, McGovern argued that change was coming regardless of who the president might be, yet his vision of change would best enhance American lives and would represent change that remained faithful to our nation's core values. Askew's speech also emphasized the hope for a better life for which many Americans yearned. Eagleton used his address to compare the failures of the Nixon Administration with the positive ideas he and McGovern proposed. McGovern's acceptance address provided policy specifics related to national security and income inequality. Finally, McGovern's theme of "come home America" provided a call for Americans to reject the failed policies and approach to governing offered by the Nixon Administration and return to a vision of America based on fairness and equality for all.

The themes of hope, change, and party unity were each utilized in an effort to show the Democratic Party had learned from its past mistakes and was, once again, a legitimate presidential party ready to lead the nation. The unified coalition of Democrats offered a vision of hope at a time when many of our nation's citizens were in a state of despair. While only a couple of specific issues were emphasized as part of McGovern's acceptance address, including national security and income inequality, the other main speeches presented at this convention were almost entirely devoid of issue discussion. Perhaps this lack of issue development resulted from the desire to unify a party characterized by varied and diverse interests and coalitions, and too much and too specific policy development would likely risk party dissonance. Clearly, the Democratic script of 1972 celebrated who they were rather than what they believed in terms of policy pronouncements. Finally, the Democratic Party wished to be the party of the people and to provide a home all citizens could trust. McGovern's tagline of "come home America" was less about the rather general policy references to which he alluded, but rather a call for Americans to restore their faith in government and in each other by electing George McGovern.

1976 Democratic Convention

The 1976 Democratic Convention was an opportunity for the Democratic Party to capitalize on the diminished Republican brand in the aftermath of Watergate. The political orators

to take on this task were keynote speakers Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas and Ohio Senator John Glenn, Vice-Presidential Nominee Senator Walter Mondale of Minnesota, and Presidential Nominee and Governor of Georgia Jimmy Carter. One of the most notable aspects of this convention was Barbara Jordan's selection as the first woman – and woman of color – to deliver a keynote speech at either major parties' conventions.

Throughout these addresses, several elements of the Democratic Party's brand were developed. The first theme was the demonstration that the party represented a much-needed change from the current Republican regime. Next, Democrats offered themselves as the leaders Americans turn to in times of crisis. Also, the main speeches and speakers of this convention sought to brand Democrats as the party of hope. Finally, Jimmy Carter articulated an issue agenda which served to brand the party's key policy concerns.

Keynote Speaker Congresswoman Barbara Jordan. Barbara Jordan began her speech discussing change, yet Jordan's change was not the same type of change many convention speakers developed as part of their addresses. The change that Jordan spoke of referred to the progress and change in society illustrated by her selection as a keynote speaker. As the first black woman to deliver a keynote speech at a political party's nominating convention, her address as a whole served to brand the Democratic Party as the party of progress and equality. Jordan's presence and voice at the keynote podium also helped to brand the party as one oriented toward listening to women. By featuring a woman in a prime time speaking role at the convention, the Democratic Party demonstrated they were the party who emphasized inclusivity in general and women's rights in particular. In addition to being a woman, the fact that Jordan served as one of the very few African-American members in the U.S. Congress demonstrated even greater diversity within the party. Jordan began her speech by observing the groundbreaking nature of her appearance in the context of the history of the Democratic Convention.

A lot of years have passed since 1832, and during that time it would have been most unusual for any national political party to ask a Barbara Jordan to deliver a keynote

address. But tonight, here I am. And I feel that notwithstanding the past that my presence here is one additional bit of evidence that the American Dream need not forever be deferred. (Jordan, 1976)

Jordan referenced the year of the very first Democratic Convention as a sign of how long it took a Barbara Jordan to be invited to the keynote stage. Her appearance, indeed, was a long time coming and she was acutely aware of her place in history. This historical event was instrumental in branding the Democratic Party as a party willing to move beyond the traditional paradigm of party and political leadership and to make a dramatic, and long overdue, change.

The remainder of Jordan's address focused on the Democratic Party as the party people turn to in times of crisis. Jordan (1976) stated, "Throughout our history, when people have looked for new ways to solve their problems and to uphold the principles of this nation, many times they have turned to political parties. They have often turned to the Democratic Party." Jordan made the case that the Democratic Party brand was one of trusted leadership the American people could count on when problems plagued the nation and world. In discussing why citizens could trust the Democratic Party, she discussed the concept of governing that Democrats hold dear:

Our concept of governing is derived from our view of the people. It is a concept deeply rooted in a set of beliefs firmly etched in the national conscience of all of us... First, we believe in equality for all and privileges for none... We believe that the people are the source of all governmental power; that the authority of the people is to be extended, not restricted... We are a party of innovation. We do not reject our traditions, but we are willing to adapt to changing circumstances, when change we must. (Jordan, 1976)

Jordan noted these several reasons why Democrats could be trusted by the people in times of crisis. She also articulated the philosophy of leadership which guided the Democratic Party and its leaders, and that the Democrats were the type of leaders America so desperately needed.

Barbara Jordan's address featured two facets of the Democratic Party brand. The first key brand component was the theme of change and progress. This brand element was embodied by

Jordan's very appearance as speaker and through her acknowledgement of the historic and groundbreaking nature of her address as an African American woman. The second part of the party brand Jordan emphasized was the leadership qualities and values of the Democratic Party. She pointed out that, traditionally, in times of crisis people had turned to the Democratic Party for national leadership. She listed several guiding features which defined the Democratic Party and enshrined an approach to leadership based on equality and concern for all people as a key element of the Democratic Party brand.

Keynote Speaker Senator John Glenn. John Glenn's keynote speech also built upon some of the same themes as Jordan's address while adding new elements to the argument in favor of Jimmy Carter and the Democrats. Glenn argued Democrats represented the best possible hope for the future and that change was clearly needed in our nation. Glenn began his address by framing the Democratic Party as the party of hope. He focused his speech on the hope the Democratic Party offered to people in an age of despair and at a time when our nation had lost its way in the aftermath of Watergate. This focus also called forth a clear need for change. Unlike Barbara Jordan's theme of change, that her inclusion represented change from the past, Glenn's change focused on future change with the Democratic Party and its leaders guiding the nation to a better place from its current state of affairs. Throughout his address, Glenn also pointed out the public's role in this change. He stated people needed their faith restored in their government, but they also needed government to demonstrate its faith in the people.

The first theme introduced by Glenn as a key element of the party brand was the Democratic Party as the party of hope. Glenn described the Democrats as uniquely positioned to provide hope for people in need.

This party is a great party because of its compassion, and we must wear that compassion like a medal. We are the best hope, the best hope, for those searching for jobs, for senior citizens trying to make a go of it on eroded income, for the sick unable to afford good medical care, for the handicapped and the underprivileged. (Glenn, 1976)

Glenn argued that it was the Democrats who provided hope to those who were struggling, and this hope was founded in compassion for all people. This brand of Democratic hope was described in contrast to the Republican Party and its policies which had made it more difficult for people to live their lives.

In order to enact policies founded in the hope and compassion for all, like Glenn introduced in his first theme, he next pressed the need for change. In making his case for change, Glenn returned to the previous theme of hope.

To make real that hope, we must select new leaders, leaders with vision, leaders who will set a different tone for this nation, a tone of opportunities sought and seized. A tone of national purpose. For ours is a people tired of drifting, a people determined to shape their own future, a people who will not have it any other way. (Glenn, 1976)

Glenn's clear call for a change to new national leadership made explicit that the Democratic Party represented a hopeful change from a failed status quo.

Senator John Glenn used his address to emphasize two key elements of the Democratic Party brand. First, he sought to brand the Democrats as the party of compassion and hope. This was achieved by pointing to the Democrat's desire for helping the many who had been left behind during the last few years of the Republican Administration, and the party's desire to provide a better future, a future of hope, for all people. The second element of Democratic branding was the clear need to change the direction of our nation. Glenn's theme of change was a continuation of change first introduced by Barbara Jordan's change from the past, with Glenn's change focused on future changes needed in a nation where people felt as if they were lost and drifting.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Walter Mondale. Vice-Presidential Nominee Walter Mondale built upon several of the themes present in the two keynote speeches while adding additional elements to the party brand. First, Mondale addressed the theme of hope and built upon the Democrat's brand image as the party of hope. Next, he rather forcefully attacked the Republican administration's record and made the case that the nation should change course

with the Democrats. Finally, Mondale sought to brand the party by offering a vision of Democratic leadership.

Mondale began his address much like John Glenn's keynote speech by speaking of hope, and specifically the hopeful candidacy of Jimmy Carter. Mondale framed Carter's campaign as one centered on the principle of listening to the people. From his connection with and attention to the people, Carter learned that citizens yearned for honesty, decency, and hope in their public servants. As Mondale described:

When Governor Carter announced his candidacy for president 19 months ago, not many thought he had a chance... Governor Carter perceives the underlying intangible issue that is central to this year's campaign. And that is, when he listened to the people, he heard what was really bothering them. And that is that they wanted a government that they could be proud of. A government that would restore honesty and decency and hope in American public life. (Mondale, 1976)

Mondale began this passage by describing the unlikely candidacy of the little-known Carter. He explained how Carter's own hope drove him into the race and helped propel him to the nomination. Mondale then took the very manner in which Carter campaigned to demonstrate the common goodness of the American people and the hopefulness they had in government officials to serve as decent and honest leaders.

Mondale next transitioned to make the case that there was a clear need for change in presidential leadership due to the failures of recent Republican Administrations, and Democrats provided the necessary change. Mondale made the case for change initially by noting the many areas in which Republicans had failed Americans:

Over these last eight years, the Republicans have made it abundantly clear where they want the country to go... They have asked us to accept high unemployment, cruel inflation, high interest rates, a housing depression, and a massive increase in welfare. But

above all, they have tried to paralyze the momentum for human justice in America.

(Mondale, 1976)

In this section of his address, Mondale made it clear that the status quo was harming Americans at every level and there was a strong need for change. In noting reasons why change was needed, Mondale was able to then pivot and discuss the specific change a newly-elected Democratic Administration would provide. He stated, “tonight we Democrats pledge a restoration of a government of compassion because we believe in the dignity of work and the right of everyone to have a job. (Mondale, 1976).” Here, specific policy pronouncements were framed in the ideas of restoration and reform, the theme of change. To emphasize his call for change and the branding of Democrats as the needed change agents, Mondale (1976) stated, “we ask to govern because we are able to look at our problems with fresh eyes. We are a new generation of leadership.” As a new generation of leaders who would govern with fresh eyes, Mondale portrayed Democrats as something new and unlike the nation’s current leaders, as an entity who could legitimately claim the mantle – and brand – of the party of change.

Finally, Mondale spoke of a new vision of leadership and sought to brand the Democratic Party as a force for moral leadership which Americans sought in the aftermath of Watergate. In describing the moral leadership offered by the Carter Administration, Mondale proclaimed:

we have just lived through the worst political scandal in American history and are now led by a president who pardoned the person who did it. There are many important things about America, but it begins with the truth and it begins with obeying the law, and that will be the fundamental principle of the Carter Administration. We pledge an open government; we will let the healing sunshine of full public knowledge restore the faith in the people’s business. (Mondale, 1976)

Here, Mondale branded his Republican foes as uninterested in justice and open government as demonstrated by Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford’s actions while in office. Conversely, Mondale was able to brand Democrats as having a vision of governing grounded in moral leadership.

Overall, Walter Mondale sought to brand the Democratic Party in a number of important ways consistent with previous speakers at the 1976 convention. First, Mondale built upon John Glenn's theme of hope by discussing how Carter's own candidacy, as the unlikely and unknown peanut farmer from Georgia, embodied the very notion of hope. Next, Mondale made the case for change, a rejection of the approach to governing offered by the Republicans and positioned the Democrats as the party of change. Finally, Mondale branded the Democrat's vision of leadership as one of moral leadership, especially when compared to the post-Watergate Republican brand of leadership.

Presidential Nominee Governor Jimmy Carter. Democratic nominee Jimmy Carter echoed many of the themes raised in the other key speeches of the 1976 convention, but as the nominee his acceptance address added more depth to the Democratic story and brand. Carter built on the theme of change and argued that the Democrats stood as the party that would provide needed change. He also built upon Mondale's effort to brand the Democratic Party as having a clear and moral vision of leadership. Finally, Carter branded the Democratic Party as the champion of several important domestic policies.

Carter made the case for change in the land by stating the nation itself was ready for change. Carter followed a similar track to Mondale in portraying the Republicans as responsible for a scandal ridden government. Carter next developed the theme of change by branding himself as not part of the Washington political elite. He (1976) noted, "I have never met a Democratic President, but I have always been a Democrat." With this self-identification, Carter was able to brand himself as an outsider with a new approach to governing, and to also emphasize that it had been many years since a Democratic president had been in the White House. Carter further demonstrated the need for change by comparing how the Republicans had worked with Congress versus his approach to working with the Congress. He (1976) stated, "We need a Democratic President and a Congress to work in harmony for a change, with mutual respect for a change."

Carter highlighted the recent conflict between Republican presidents and the legislative branch, suggesting he would be a much more respectful collaborator with the U.S. Congress, if elected.

While Mondale's address specifically emphasized Jimmy Carter's vision of moral leadership grounded in a concern for the common person, the ever-humble Carter himself spoke of the leadership provided by other Democratic presidents to brand Democrats as the national party which our nation had historically turned to for heroic leadership during difficult times.

Ours is the party of the man who was nominated by those distant conventions and who inspired and restored this nation in its darkest hours—Franklin D. Roosevelt. Ours is the party of a fighting Democrat who showed us that a common man could be an uncommon leader—Harry S. Truman. Ours is the party of a brave young President who called the young at heart, regardless of age, to seek a “New Frontier” of national greatness—John F. Kennedy. And ours is also the party of a great-hearted Texan who took office in a tragic hour and who went on to do more than any other President in this century to advance the cause of human rights—Lyndon Johnson... That is our heritage. Our party has not been perfect. We have made mistakes, and we have paid for them. But ours is a tradition of leadership and compassion and progress. (Carter, 1976)

Without touting his own virtues, Carter argued Democratic presidential leaders had led this nation during difficult times to new heights. He positioned himself as the leader of this great Democratic Party brand. By acknowledging the party had not always been perfect, perhaps as a nod to the Democrats not occupying the White House, he suggested that Democrats had learned from their mistakes, and Carter could lead the party back to power.

Finally, Carter offered a domestic policy agenda to further brand the Democratic Party as the party most concerned with fairness and justice and as the party that would pursue public policies designed to improve the lives of all people. He proclaimed:

It is time for a complete overhaul of our income tax system. I still tell you: It is a disgrace to the human race. All my life I have heard promises about tax reform, but it never quite

happens. With your help, we are finally going to make it happen... Here is something that can really help our country: It is time for universal voter registration. It is time for a nationwide comprehensive health program for all our people. It is time to guarantee an end to discrimination because of race or sex by full involvement in the decision making process of government by those who know what it is to suffer from discrimination... It is time for the law to be enforced... Crime and lack of justice are especially cruel to those who are least able to protect themselves... It is time for our government leaders to respect the law no less than the humblest citizen, so that we can end once and for all a double standard of justice. I see no reason why big-shot crooks should go free and the poor ones go to jail. (Carter, 1976)

Within this passage, Carter mentioned a rather lengthy laundry list of public policies and needed reforms, including taxes, voter registration, health care, ending discrimination, and law and justice. While at first glance these may seem like disparate policy areas, for Carter the need to address these several issues illustrated a distinct element of the Democratic Party brand. Unlike Republicans who favor the “big shots,” it is the Democrats and Carter who would work tirelessly for “those who suffer from discrimination,” “the poor ones,” and “the humblest citizen[s].”

Carter utilized his acceptance address to develop three key pieces of the Democratic Party brand, the 1976 version. First, he attacked Republicans and their recent history in order to frame the Democratic Party as the political brand of change. Next, he positioned himself among other notable Democratic Presidents as a competent and honorable leader. On the question of presidential leadership, Carter made the case that the nation had often turned to Democratic leaders in times of peril, projecting the Democratic brand as one of trustworthiness and of genuine care and concern for the American people. Finally, Carter developed a policy agenda which also emphasized the Democratic brand as champion of the common person and not the elite.

Summary of the 1976 Democratic Convention Branding. Overall, the Democratic Party brand of 1976 was developed through several key themes present in each of the main convention speeches. All four speeches addressed the need for national change and made the case that change was part of the Democratic Party brand. Each speech constructed the change brand a bit differently to emphasize a particular aspect of change the Democrats were offering. Barbara Jordan focused on her historic role as a keynote speaker which demonstrated the type of change sought by the Democratic Party, an inclusive community which welcomed an African American woman to its prime-time podium. John Glenn spoke of change by highlighting the failures of Republican leaders and thus positioning the Democrats as providing a new direction for our nation. Similarly, Walter Mondale spoke of the Democratic Party as a “new generation” of leaders not entrenched in the current broken system. Finally, Jimmy Carter offered himself as a true change agent, one not of Washington and not at all entrapped by the usual ways of governing practiced in our nation’s capital. In the aftermath of Watergate, the 1976 convention also branded its leaders, and particularly its presidential nominee, as having moral vision and compassion. The Democratic Party was also portrayed as the party of hope, especially in a time of despair and great political cynicism throughout the land. Finally, Jimmy Carter offered a policy agenda that clearly labeled the Democrats as the party aligned with the common person, unlike the Republicans who championed the interests of the elite.

1980 Democratic Convention

The 1980 Democratic Convention attempted to make the case for the reelection of President Jimmy Carter in the face of a crumbling national economy and a hard-fought primary challenge from Senator Ted Kennedy. The 1980 convention was headlined by keynote speakers Kennedy and Congressman Morris Udall, Vice President Walter Mondale, and President Jimmy Carter. This convention sought to unify the somewhat divided party, following a challenge to the sitting President from the party’s left wing, in order to maintain control of the White House.

From the major convention addresses, several key themes emerged as part of the 1980 Democratic Party brand. The first element of party brand construction was a discussion of the role the Democratic Party had played in our nation's history, and particularly how the party's history of fighting for the working class remained a hallmark of the party and its agenda moving forward. Next, the several addresses attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with Americans while, again, Democrats were fighting for average Americans. The addresses also emphasized the experience of the Carter Administration as a central reason the nation should stay the course during difficult times. Finally, Jimmy Carter offered a policy agenda as part of the Democratic Party brand of 1980.

Keynote Speaker Senator Ted Kennedy. Ted Kennedy was given a prime speaking role at the 1980 gathering with the hope reuniting the party following a somewhat contentious primary fight. With his speech, given just a few hours after he agreed to formally concede the nomination to the incumbent President, Kennedy developed three key aspects of the Democratic Party brand. Noticeably absent from his address was any praise at all of the current President and the party's nominee. First, Kennedy pointed out the Democratic Party's place in history as a strong and thriving party. Next, he emphasized the theme of hope in order to position the Democrats as the party of hope for our nation and its people. Finally, Kennedy attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with average Americans.

Kennedy's address first provided a history lesson, noting how the Democratic Party had endured longer than any other political party and the party brand represented a compact with the common man and woman.

The serious issue before us tonight is the cause for which the Democratic Party has stood in its finest hours, the cause that keeps our party young and makes it, in the second century of its age, the largest political party in this republic and the longest lasting political party on this planet. Our cause has been, since the days of Thomas Jefferson, the cause of the common man and the common woman. Our commitment has been, since the

days of Andrew Jackson, to all those he called “the humble members of society -- the farmers, mechanics, and laborers.” On this foundation we have defined our values, refined our policies, and refreshed our faith. (Kennedy, 1980)

In this passage Kennedy assured voters the Democratic Party had been and remained steadfast in its convictions to represent the working class, as champion of the average American. It is the Democratic Party, according to Kennedy, that had long fought for policies intended to better the lives of all citizens.

Building on this history, Kennedy also branded the Democratic Party as the party of hope. Similar to manner in which Carter positioned the party’s history in 1976 by citing former Democratic presidents, Kennedy referenced major Democratic Party initiatives that restored hope to the nation in times of peril and despair. Building on this legacy, Kennedy spoke of new hope that defined the Democratic brand.

To all those who work hard for a living wage let us provide new hope that their price of their employment shall not be an unsafe workplace and a death at an earlier age... To all those who see the worth of their work and their savings taken by inflation, let us offer new hope for a stable economy. (Kennedy, 1980)

Here, Kennedy connected several general policy areas with the hope of a better future provided by the Democratic Party.

The final element of Democratic brand construction developed by Ted Kennedy was a full-throttled attack on the Republican Party and its brand, even suggesting that Republicans were attempting to steal the Democratic brand: “We must not permit the Republicans to seize and run on the slogans of prosperity. We heard the orators at their convention all trying to talk like Democrats. They proved that even Republican nominees can quote Franklin Roosevelt to their own purpose (Kennedy, 1980).” In this passage, Kennedy portrayed the Republicans as disingenuous in their concerns for average Americans. At several points in his address, Kennedy quoted Ronald Reagan to demonstrate the hypocrisy of Republicans in trying to co-opt the

Democratic brand. In one such passage, Kennedy (1980) noted, “The same Republicans who are talking about security for the elderly have nominated a man who said just four years ago that ‘Participation in social security should be made voluntary.’ Kennedy concluded his attack of Republicans by reinforcing the Democratic brand of progress and hope in a brighter future.

Ted Kennedy’s attempt to demonstrate unity within the party emphasized three elements of the Democratic Party brand of 1980. The first component of this brand demonstrated the party’s long enduring and unwavering history of commitment to the common person. The next theme branded the Democratic Party as the party of hope, especially in times of national need and crisis. Finally, Kennedy attacked Republicans for attempting to position themselves as a party who cared for the working class and average American, which clearly, according to Kennedy, was the brand image owned by the Democratic Party.

Keynote Speaker Congressman Morris Udall. Morris Udall delivered a more traditional convention keynote address than did Ted Kennedy, as Udall had not been a contender for the nomination. Within his address, Udall built upon two of the themes Kennedy emphasized to build the Democratic Party brand. First, he emphasized the Democratic brand as better suited to provide national leadership than Republicans. Udall also delivered a number of attacks on the Republican Party and its leaders to draw clear distinction between the two party brands. Finally, Udall also expanded on Kennedy’s history of the Democratic Party as an enduring brand.

Udall began his address by developing the brand image of the Democrats as the party that actually helped the American people, juxtaposed with the Republican brand as the party of big business.

Republicans have consistently had the support of the giant multinational and the huge businesses that dominate our economy and our lives... The big conglomerates have always been on the side of the Republicans, but in their hearts, they know it’s the small business people of America who keep our economy going, and they know the truth of the

old joke that if you want to live like a Republican, you had better vote Democratic.

(Udall, 1980)

Udall argued that Republicans seemed more interested in helping big corporations instead of the American people. His attacks were delivered with equal acclaim of the Democratic brand as the party of the people.

Udall further attacked the Republican Party for their lack of diversity. He (1980) stated, “Look at their Detroit convention: overwhelmingly white, 71 percent male, middle-aged and in the \$45,000-a-year bracket.” In contrast with the Democratic brand, the party of great diversity and interests, Udall painted the Republican brand as lacking diversity and appealing to a very narrow constituency. Perhaps in response to the Democrats’ intraparty skirmish – with the Kennedy wing of the party challenging their own President – Udall developed the theme of diversity to argue that while the Democrats’ “big tent” party may sometimes result in occasional infighting, at least the Democratic brand, unlike the narrow-focused Republicans, was one of great diversity.

Udall also built upon the theme invoked earlier by Kennedy of the Democratic brand as the enduring political party throughout American history. Udall’s party history emphasized the areas of more contemporary advocacy and representation for all people by the Democrats.

This party of ours has held power for 32 of the last 48 years because we have stood for three essential things, and you can sum them up on the back of an envelope: One, we have been the party of change during war and depression and crises of all kinds... Two, we have been the party of the disadvantaged in our society... Three, we've been the institution through which the waves of immigrants, the blacks and the Hispanics, the Jews, the Russians, the Germans, the Irish, the Poles have all worked their way into full participation in our national life. (Udall, 1980)

Here, Udall concisely summarized the Democratic ideals which had represented the party brand for nearly 50 years, and he also argued these principles would continue to guide the party in the

years and decades to come. He continued his history lesson of party goals and values to point out that while the Republican opponent Ronald Regan maintained a sizable lead in opinion polls, the Democrats had faced such odds in the past and were victorious. Udall reminded the convention:

or we can follow the other choice, the choice of 1948, when President Truman faced almost certain defeat when there were two independent challenges, one on the left and one on the right. Yet, we rallied around a good, simple, direct and courageous man who knew where he wanted the country to go and who took us there. (Udall, 1980)

By invoking more recent Democratic party history of a time when a former party nominee and incumbent President had overcome long odds to remain in the White House, Udall sought to motivate Democrats who might be discouraged following their primary struggle and were now facing a strong Republican challenger by reminding them that their party, by standing on its principles, had overcome such challenges in the past.

Overall, Morris Udall delivered a speech that extended the Democratic Party brand in two areas that Kennedy had earlier introduced. First, Udall demonstrated the major differences between the Democratic and Republican brands, especially in how the two party's advocated for and identified with the average American citizen. He also invoked party history to both demonstrate the enduring ideals of the party brand and the party's fighting spirit to overcome long odds.

Vice President Walter Mondale. As Vice President Walter Mondale took the stage, his address built upon the themes and brand image developed by both Kennedy and Udall, while the Vice President also developed two additional themes to characterize the Democratic Party. First, Mondale branded the Democratic Party as the party who represented all Americans. Next, he attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with American needs while the Democrats were in tune with citizens' needs. Finally, Mondale argued that the steady and tested leadership of Jimmy Carter was clear evidence to warrant staying the course.

Mondale first emphasized the Democratic Party as a brand representative of the diverse people and interests that made up America. In fact, Mondale argued, when the Democratic Party spoke, it spoke for all of America.

This Democratic Convention is a mirror of all America. Black and white, Asian and Hispanic, native and immigrant, male and female, young and old, urban and rural, rich and poor... When we in this convention hall speak of America, it is America that is speaking. (Mondale, 1980)

Building on previous speakers and branding of the Democratic Party as the party of diversity which represented all Americans, Mondale continued this theme that the Democrats were the party of broad appeal and included people from all walks of life.

The next element of the Democratic Party brand Mondale developed involved comparison by attacking the Republican brand as out of touch with working men and women. Here, Mondale specifically attacked Ronald Reagan's view of the role of government in people's lives.

The Republican nominee for president has a different view of government and let me use his own words that 'The best thing the government can do is nothing.' We disagree. Let him tell the auto workers in Detroit that the right of collective bargaining is nothing. (Mondale, 1980)

Mondale positioned the Republican brand, described by the party's nominee Ronald Reagan, as fundamentally different from the Democratic brand. Mondale further attacked the Republican brand and Reagan as out of touch with ordinary Americans, stating, "The Republican Party has been out of step for more than 50 years and the nominee is more out of it than any of them (Mondale, 1980)." Mondale continued his attacks on the Republican brand and Reagan in particular throughout a major portion of his address where he would name a specific policy important to the American people and then conclude that the Republican nominee was not in support of this policy by shouting the phrase "but not Ronald Reagan." For example, Mondale

claimed, “Most Americans believe in labor law reform to protect rights won by workers in the 1970’s, but not Ronald Reagan (Mondale, 1980).” This pattern of call and response involved the audience tagging each issue claim with the phrase “but not Ronald Reagan” to drive home the idea that Reagan was simply not in line with the prevailing beliefs of many Americans.

Finally, Mondale made the case to stay the course of the incumbent executive based on the proven leadership of President Carter. The branding of Carter as a proven leader was developed within two passages in particular. The first described the type of people President Carter had appointed to the federal bench during his term in office. Mondale (1980) stated, “I would point out that President Carter has appointed more women, more blacks, and more minorities to the federal bench than all previous presidents in American history combined.” By pointing to the diversity of Carter’s judicial appointments, Mondale argued Carter had been a transformative leader when compared to previous presidents. Mondale also made the case to stay the course with Carter by describing the incumbent President’s personal leadership traits. Mondale (1980) stated that the American people “want a president who is steady, who is sober, who is experienced, and who has demonstrated he can keep the peace and that is why they will reelect President Jimmy Carter.”

Vice President Walter Mondale sought to brand the Democratic Party and its presidential leader Jimmy Carter in three ways. First, Mondale described Democrats as representative of the full diversity of America and as speaking the voice of average Americans. Next, he attacked Republicans and Ronald Reagan as out of touch with American ideals and branded Democrats as the party who understood working people and their needs. Finally, Mondale was able to brand President Carter as a proven leader who had accomplished things no other president had before, and as the candidate with the leadership qualities Americans were looking for in a president.

President Jimmy Carter. In making the case for his own reelection, President Carter branded himself and the Democratic Party in three ways. First, he placed himself and the party within the context of history as a strong and competent party throughout the many decades of the

20th century. Next, Carter branded himself as an experienced leader and made the argument to stay the course under his tested and proven leadership. Finally, Carter offered an issue agenda that represented the Democratic Party brand.

In branding the Democratic Party as an enduring party of great leadership, Carter made mentioned of several Democratic presidents as he had done in 1976 then included other prominent party members. Carter positioned the Democratic Party as the home of successful presidential leaders, and also, in the case of Hubert Humphrey, the party of courageous – even if unsuccessful – presidential aspirants. His reference to Brown and Kennedy sought to brand the Democrats as a “big tent” party with leaders representing constituencies within the party who would even challenge their own sitting President for the nomination.

Carter’s next attempt of defining the Democratic Party of 1980 represented his call for Democrats and America to stay the course under his leadership. Carter referenced lessons learned in his first term as president to argue his qualifications to continue as president for the next four years.

And I have now had another kind of total immersion—being President of the United States of America. Let me talk for a moment about what that job is like and what I’ve learned from it. I’ve learned that only the most complex and difficult task comes before me in the Oval Office... I’ve learned that for a President, experience is the best guide to the right decisions. I’m wiser tonight than I was four years ago. (Carter, 1980)

Carter explained that he had learned a great deal during his first term which would serve him and the nation well during a second term. His experience as president, according to Carter, warranted his reelection.

Carter also spoke of his vision of a better and brighter future for the country and did so by comparing his realistic vision to that of the Republican’s “make-believe” vision. He (1980) stated, “The only way to build a better future is to start with the realities of the present. But while we Democrats grapple with the real challenges of a real world, others talk about a world of tinsel

and make-believe.” Carter’s reference to the Republican “world of tinsel and make-believe,” may well invoke for voters a comparison between the tested presidential leadership of Jimmy Carter versus the fantasy world of former Hollywood actor-turned-politician Ronald Reagan. Such comparison aided Carter’s case to stay the course.

Finally, President Carter shared several policy initiatives to build the Democratic Party brand. Carter’s brand priorities were focused in two specific issue arenas, with the first being foreign policy. Here, Carter emphasized the need to maintain a strong national defense in the face of a Soviet threat:

There is no doubt that the United States of America can meet a threat from the Soviet Union. Our modernized strategic forces, a revitalized NATO, the Trident submarine, the Cruise missile, the Rapid Deployment Force—all these guarantee that we will never be second to any nation... We must, and we will continue to build our own defenses. We must, and we will continue to seek balanced reductions in nuclear arms. (Carter, 1980)

By bolstering American defenses as part of a Democratic Administration, Carter attempted to take an issue which was traditionally championed by Republicans and made it part of the Democratic brand. Carter also spoke of his work in promoting peace in the Middle East through the Camp David Accord, which he brokered during his first term. He stated, “Before Camp David, Israel and Egypt were poised across barbed wire, confronting each other with guns and tanks and planes. But afterward, they talked face-to-face with each other across a peace table, and they also communicated through their own Ambassadors in Cairo and Tel Aviv (Carter, 1980).” Carter’s emphasis on a strong national defense to deter Soviet aggression, and also his focus on peacemaking in the Middle East branded the Democratic Party as strong on foreign policy and the party as one to be trusted to lead on the international stage.

In building the Democratic brand image on the domestic policy front, Carter focused his address particularly on energy policy and the economy. He first spoke of his successes in developing a comprehensive energy policy.

We Democrats fought hard to rally our Nation behind a comprehensive energy policy and a good program, a new foundation for challenging and exciting progress. Now, after three years of struggle, we have that program. The battle to secure America's energy future has been fully and finally joined... We've reversed decades of dangerous and growing dependence on foreign oil. We are now importing 20 percent less oil—that is 1 ½ million barrels of oil every day less than the day I took office. (Carter, 1980)

Carter spoke rather glowingly of Democratic successes on the energy front, even following four years of spiraling oil costs, gas shortages, and indeed a full blown “energy crisis” which had unfolded during his first term. He attempted to reassure Americans that he had a plan to address this struggle and the battle would be won should he be given a second term. Carter also addressed the broader national economy in similar terms. While the current situation may not have been positive, Carter assured the American people that things would get better. He addressed the economic uncertainty experienced by many Americans when he stated, “It's time to put all America back to work—but not in make-work, in real work. And there is real work in modernizing American industries and creating new industries for America as well (Carter, 1980).” The modernizing and creating was yet to come, yet Jimmy Carter hoped that Americans would be convinced that the Democratic Party under his leadership with a second term in the White House could deliver on these promises.

Overall, Jimmy Carter's acceptance address for a second term developed three key elements of the 1980 Democratic Party brand. First, he sought to position the party and himself among past eras and strong leaders of the Democratic Party. Next, he branded himself as an experienced presidential leader worthy of voters' trust. Finally, Carter addressed the key foreign and domestic policy areas of national concern, seeking to bolster the Democratic brand by suggesting definite plans were in place to secure our nation and improve the economic conditions of working Americans.

Summary of the 1980 Democratic Convention Branding. The 1980 Democratic Convention was designed to brand the Democratic Party as a capable ruling party in which its presidential leader should be returned to the White House for a second term. Ted Kennedy, Morris Udall, Walter Mondale, and Jimmy Carter each invoked the long history of the Democratic Party as proof of the party's ability to lead the nation in times of adversity. Kennedy, particularly, projected the Democratic brand as the party of hope for all Americans. Additionally, Mondale and Carter both made the case that the past four years had given the Democrats the necessary experience and knowledge to lead the nation, and, therefore, voters should choose to stay the course with the incumbent President. Finally, Carter emphasized the most troubling foreign and domestic policy areas to assure voters that the Democratic Party and a second Carter term was capable of addressing these issues.

1984 Democratic Convention

The 1984 Democratic Convention attempted to bolster the reputation of the party against the wildly popular President Ronald Reagan. Speeches by keynote speaker New York Governor Mario Cuomo, Vice-Presidential Nominee Geraldine Ferraro, and Presidential Nominee Walter Mondale sought to provide contrast to the Republican Administration and attempted to build on a Democratic majority in Congress. The three major speeches developed the 1984 Democratic Party brand and the candidacy of its nominee, former Vice President Walter Mondale.

The party branded itself in a manner similar to previous conventions by attacking the Republican brand as out of touch with the American people and, in contrast, to show that the Democratic Party had historically served as "the party of the people" and the current version would be no different. The 1984 Convention continued the brand image of a party that took seriously the issues of equality through its nomination of Geraldine Ferraro, similar to the party's brand image projected in 1976 with the keynote address delivered by Barbara Jordan. As the presidential party out of power, the Democrats in 1984 argued they were the party of change; and

given the long odds they faced against the popular incumbent president, they also projected an image of underdog tenaciously fighting for the American people.

Keynote Speaker Governor Mario Cuomo. New York Governor Mario Cuomo's keynote address developed three main themes as part of the Democratic Party brand. First, he attacked the Republican Party's as out of touch with the American people while arguing the many ways in which the Democratic Party would help people in need. Next, Cuomo branded the Democrats as the party most capable of solving our nation's problems. Finally, he positioned the current Party brand within the context of American and Democratic Party history.

Cuomo began his address by recalling that "shining city on the hill" which Reagan so often referred to and pointed out that Reagan's "city on a hill" represented a very limited view of America which ignored the people in our nation who did not share in such prosperity.

Maybe, maybe, Mr. President, if you stopped in at a shelter in Chicago and spoke to the homeless there; maybe, Mr. President, if you asked a woman who had been denied the help she needed to feed her children because you said you needed the money for a tax break for a millionaire or for a missile we couldn't afford to use. (Cuomo, 1984)

Cuomo used this poignant passage to illustrate just how out of touch Reagan and the Republicans were when it came to the real lives and daily struggles of many Americans. Cuomo argued the prosperity which Reagan so often touted had not found its way to the average American and this was due largely to the policies championed by the Reagan Administration. In contrast, Cuomo painted a picture of the Democratic Party that cared for all people, no matter their lot in life, and especially the hardworking, middle class of our nation.

Remember that, unlike any other Party, we embrace men and women of every color, every creed, every orientation, every economic class. In our family are gathered everyone from the abject poor of Essex County in New York, to the enlightened affluent of the gold coasts at both ends of the nation. And in between is the heart of our constituency -- the middle class, the people not rich enough to be worry-free, but not poor enough to be

on welfare; the middle class -- those people who work for a living because they have to, not because some psychiatrist told them it was a convenient way to fill the interval between birth and eternity. (Cuomo, 1984)

Here, Cuomo branded Democrats as the party which truly represented all Americans from all walks of life and all corners of the country. He emphasized the clear diversity of the party, demonstrating how “the party of the people” was in tune with the needs of all people.

Next, Gov. Cuomo also branded the Democrats as the party that could fix problems. Cuomo explained that the Democratic Party had successfully applied progressive principles in solving the nation’s most intractable problems over the past 50 years.

Democrats did it and Democrats can do it again... We know we can, because we did it for nearly 50 years before 1980. And we can do it again, if we do not forget that this entire nation has profited by these progressive principles; that they helped lift up generations to the middle class and higher; that they gave us a chance to work, to go to college, to raise a family, to own a house, to be secure in our old age and, before that, to reach heights that our own parents would not have dared dream of. (Cuomo, 1984)

Cuomo used the party’s past policy and legislative record, framed as a “progressive” – and not liberal – approach to governing, to demonstrate how the Democratic Party had taken on and solved problems important to Americans and should be trusted to do so again.

Much of Cuomo’s address was developed through a lens of American and Democratic Party history, in fact suggesting the two were intertwined. As he concluded his keynote address, Cuomo focused particularly on the last half century, branding the Democratic as a “beacon of light” in our nation and throughout the world. Cuomo utilized language similar to Carter in 1976 and 1980 by highlighting revered Democratic leaders of the past. By highlighting the great accomplishments of Democratic presidents throughout the past 50 years, Cuomo sought to project a Democratic brand marked by life and world-changing achievements in the face of great

adversity. The 1984 Democratic Party, according to Cuomo, was like the party of the past; and if given the opportunity to lead once again, would again achieve great things.

Overall, Mario Cuomo used his address to project three key elements of the Democratic Party brand. First, he attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with average Americans and constituted the Democrats as the true party of the people. Next, he positioned the Democratic Party as the party who fixed problems, demonstrated by the many progressive social policies enacted during previous Democratic administrations. Finally, Cuomo made the case that historically Democratic leaders had achieved great things in the past and should be given the opportunity to do so once again.

Vice Presidential Nominee Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro. Congresswoman Ferraro made history when she took the stage to accept her party's nominee as vice president, making her the first female nominee for vice president of either major political party. Her address emphasized three themes as part of the Democratic Party's 1984 brand development. First, she defined Democrats as the party of progress and her nomination was a prime indicator of progress. Next, she portrayed the party as an underdog capable of achieving an electoral upset in the fall. Finally, she made the case for needed change in our national politics and presidential leadership and depicted the Democratic Party as the party of change.

Much like Barbara Jordan's address in 1976, Geraldine Ferraro was breaking yet another barrier for women in politics as the first female candidate for vice president. Her very nomination, she argued, defined the Democratic Party – and brand – as the party who championed women's rights and progress for all women. Ferraro spoke of this progress and feature of the Democratic Party brand when she noted, "By choosing a woman to run for our nation's second highest office, you send a powerful signal to all Americans: There are no doors we cannot unlock. We will place no limits on achievement. If we can do this, we can do anything (Ferraro, 1984)." In this passage, Ferraro extrapolated on her nomination as progress for all women, and clear evidence that the Democratic Party stood for women's rights and equality.

Ferraro also branded the Democratic Party of 1984 as underdogs facing a popular incumbent President, yet with faith in the American people, the Mondale-Ferraro ticket could – and should – still win the election. She pointed to her initial candidacy for the U.S. Congress as an example of facing long odds that resulted in an electoral victory.

When I first ran for Congress, all the political experts said a Democrat could not win my home district in Queens. I put my faith in the people and the values that we shared...In this campaign, Fritz Mondale and I have put our faith in the people. And we are going to prove the experts wrong again. We are going to win. We are going to win because Americans across this country believe in the same basic dream. (Ferraro, 1984)

Ferraro's realism acknowledged the heavy task facing Democrats in the fall of 1984. Still, she provided her own example of victory in the face of long odds as a theme of hope which might encourage voters, particularly the party faithful, to keep fighting even if they thought their vote would not be enough to unseat the incumbent Republican President.

Finally, Ferraro argued for change – a common refrain from the party out of power – and branded the Democratic Party as the party capable of bringing about needed change. In her call for change, Ferraro identified the ways in which the status quo “isn't right” for Americans, concluding Democratic-led change could right these wrongs.

It isn't right that young couples question whether to bring children into a world of 50,000 nuclear warheads. That isn't the vision for which Americans have struggled for more than two centuries... Change is in the air, just as surely as when John Kennedy beckoned America to a new frontier; when Sally Ride rocketed into space; and when Reverend Jesse Jackson ran for the office of President of the United States. (Ferraro, 1984)

In a number of ways, Ferraro described American society as ripe for change, and offered the Democratic Party, led by the team of Mondale and Ferraro, as the agents of change who would address a long litany of social ills.

Overall, Geraldine Ferraro branded the Democratic Party in three distinct ways. First, she argued that Democrats represented the political party of progress, especially as related to women's rights. Next, she branded the party as an underdog capable of pulling off an upset in November. Finally, she claimed that the Democratic Party was the party of change.

Presidential Nominee Vice President Walter Mondale. Walter Mondale's nomination acceptance address was rather straightforward in its branding of the Democratic Party in two fundamental ways. Mondale first described his own personal narrative and values, suggesting that the values which shaped and guided his life were the very values represented in the Democratic Party brand. Mondale also constructed the Democratic Party issue branding.

Mondale began his speech by describing his past and how he was raised. Here, he focused on those values which were instilled in him by his parents, and these values represented American values and brand of the Democratic Party.

My dad was a preacher, and my mom was a music teacher. We never had a dime. But we were rich in the values that were important; and I've carried those values with me ever since. They taught me to work hard; to stand on my own; to play by the rules; to tell the truth; to obey the law; to care for others; to love our country; to cherish our faith. My story isn't unique. (Mondale, 1984)

Mondale's personal narrative, he suggested, was not unlike most Americans. His values, too, were the values of most Americans. Yet, unlike many political elites, Mondale did not grow up in a family of wealth, but a family rich in the traditional values of faith, family, and love of country; with Walter Mondale's personal values being offered as representative the Democratic Party's values and brand image.

Mondale also emphasized several policies as part of the Democratic Party's brand for the 1984 election. First, Mondale pledged that tackling the deficit accumulated by the Republican Administration was his top priority, asserting perhaps his most straightforward claim of the entire address: "By the end of my first term, I will reduce the Reagan budget deficit by two-thirds. Let's

tell the truth. It must be done, it must be done. Mr. Reagan will raise taxes, and so will I. He won't tell you. I just did (Mondale, 1984).” While assuring the American citizenry that he would raise their taxes, a pledge not often – if ever – made by politicians, Mondale used this promise to brandish his image as a truthful leader and the Democratic Party, unlike Republicans, as an honest broker. Mondale’s truth telling, a manifestation of his values, carried great risk as this attempt to build the Democratic Party’s brand driven by concern with fiscal responsibility could easily and likely be interpreted, especially by the opposition, as the party eager to raise your taxes. Education was another key area of policy branding for the Democrats in 1984. Mondale proclaimed: “We will launch a renaissance in education, in science, and learning. A mind is a terrible thing to waste. And this must be the best-educated, best-trained generation in American history. And I will lead our nation forward to the best system that this nation has ever seen (Mondale, 1984).” By making the case he would reinvigorate America’s education system, Mondale built a brand image for the Democratic Party as securing a better future for the nation based upon creating the best educated generation of American citizens.

In the foreign policy arena, Mondale argued that his and the Democratic approach would be fundamentally different than the Reagan Administration, through a foreign policy grounded in a human rights perspective.

I'll press for human rights in Central America, and for the removal of all foreign forces from the region... We know the deep differences with the Soviets. And America condemns their repression of dissidents and Jews; their suppression of Solidarity; their invasion of Afghanistan; their meddling around the world. (Mondale, 1984)

Here, Mondale put forth a foreign policy based less on national security interests and one more interested in combating human rights violations where people of any nation were being repressed. Once again, Mondale’s approach to policy was grounded in his personal values; and the Democratic Party brand took on this image of goodwill and respect for the rights of all which emanated from the party leader’s own personal value system.

Overall, presidential nominee Walter Mondale used his address to develop the Democratic Party brand in two significant ways. The first of which was to show the Democratic Party as the party of the average American concerned primarily with faith, family, and love of country. This brand building was constructed through Mondale's own personal narrative that argued his own upbringing was similar to most all Americans. Mondale also developed the Democratic Party's 1984 issue brand – focusing largely on deficit reduction, education, and human rights – with policy directives also grounded in the nominee's personal value system.

Summary of the 1984 Democratic Convention Branding. During the 1984 Democratic Convention, the three key speeches contained several elements of party brand development. Both Mario Cuomo and Walter Mondale branded Democrats as the party most in tune with the values and needs of the American public. However, each man did so in different ways. Cuomo focused on the Republican brand as out of touch with average Americans and provided a history lesson of the last half-century marked with Democratic Party successes in creating a better society especially for our nation's working class. Mondale, on the other hand, relied on his personal narrative to show how his values and upbringing were in tune with American values. Geraldine Ferraro sought to brand the Democratic Party as the party of diversity and progress, especially as it related to women's rights. She also depicted the Democrats of 1984 as a tremendous underdog who could overcome long odds as she and the party had done in the past. Finally, Mondale developed a Democratic policy brand, again drawn from his personal value system, focused on reducing our nation's deficit, education, as well as human rights based foreign policy.

1988 Democratic Convention

In 1988, the Democrats had high hopes to rebound after losing to Ronald Reagan in 1984 in one of the greatest electoral landslides in our nation's history (Mondale took only his home state of Minnesota and the District of Columbia). Thus, many of the arguments and narratives proffered by the key convention speakers of 1988, mostly newcomers to the national political stage, represented attempts at party rebranding. First, in an effort to recapture the energy of 1976,

the last time Democrats were successful in sending a presidential nominee to the White House, the Democrats in 1988 also turned to a woman from Texas to deliver their keynote address, State Treasurer Ann Richards. Nomination acceptance addresses were given by U. S. Senator Lloyd Bentsen, also of Texas, and Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts for Vice President and President respectively.

Throughout the convention, Democratic Party rebranding took both expected and unexpected forms. First, and perhaps most obvious, was a call for change, with the Democrats offering needed change for the nation. This change component of a party's brand was most frequently articulated by the party out of power; yet the Democratic rebranding of 1988 also contained themes of change within the Democratic Party in addition to the plea for voters to change from Republican to Democratic presidential leadership. Next, as part of the change within the party, the Democrats attempted to offer their own brand of family values as a key element of the Democratic brand. Finally, Michael Dukakis sought to rebrand the Democratic Party of 1988 with a policy agenda in stark contrast to the policies pursued by Republicans during the previous eight years.

Keynote Speaker Texas State Treasurer Ann Richards. Ann Richards' keynote address incorporated three key elements of Democratic Party branding. First, like so many Democrats before her, she argued that the Republican Party was out of touch with average voters and the Democratic Party had a better understanding of the needs and values of ordinary Americans. She then emphasized a need for change and demonstrated how Democratic values represented the type of change most Americans desired. Finally, using her own life story, Richards developed a theme of family values, arguing how such values were important in American culture; and, furthermore, how those values represented an important part of the Democratic Party brand.

Richards began her address by attacking the Republicans as out of touch. She explained that the Republican Party had been working to divide America so that people blamed others for their problems, rather than the Republicans who had been in power.

We've been told that the interests of the South and the Southwest are not the same interests as the North and the Northeast. They pit one group against the other. They've divided this country and in our isolation we think government isn't gonna help us, and we're alone in our feelings. (Richards, 1988)

She followed this charge with an assurance that Democrats cared for all people and would treat all equally: “Now we Democrats believe that America is still the country of fair play, that we can come out of a small town or a poor neighborhood and have the same chance as anyone else; and it doesn't matter whether we are black or Hispanic or disabled or a woman (Richards, 1988).” In her comparison of the two party brands, Richards described the ruling Republican Party as caring for the elite few that pitted the rest of the nation against one another. The Democrats, however, promoted fairness for all which represented all, no matter one's circumstance in life.

Richards followed her stark comparison of the two brands by making the case for change and arguing that Democrats would provide needed change. Like others before her at the keynote podium, Richards invoked change by reminding Democrats of their history and extrapolating on the successes of past party leaders as the warrant for future success. Richards did not refer to past leaders by name as Carter, Mondale, or Cuomo had; but she did refer to the leaders of the era surrounding the Depression and World War II as the type of leader America was missing. These leaders who guided our nation through the Depression and the Great War, both Democratic presidents, united the nation, accomplished great things, and were honest with the American people. Such presidential leadership, according to Richards, was needed.

Richards ended her address by talking about her family and introduced an element of the Democratic Party brand not previously highlighted – that Democrats were also the party of family values:

I'm a grandmother now. And I have one nearly perfect granddaughter named Lily... And as I look at Lily, I know that it is within families that we learn both the need to respect individual human dignity and to work together for our common good. (Richards, 1988)

Richards, as only the second female keynote speaker for the Democrats in the modern nominating era, pointed to the family as the source of our values, where we learn to respect one another and work together, and suggested that the family provided the continuity which united us all. In speaking of her own granddaughter, she further proclaimed,

I just hope that like her grandparents and her great-grandparents before that Lily goes on to raise her kids with the promise that echoes in homes all across America: that we can do better, and that's what this election is all about. (Richards, 1988)

Here, family was central to what Democrats stand for and our life's guiding values originated as family values.

Overall, Ann Richards used her speech to differentiate the two party brands in three ways. First, she portrayed the Republicans as out of touch and the Democrats as uniquely able to answer the challenges facing average Americans. Next, she demonstrated a clear need for change that echoed Democratic leadership of the past. Finally, this grandmother used her own family story to illustrate the values shared by many Americans and the values that represent the Democratic Party.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Lloyd Bentsen. Lloyd Bentsen used four themes in his address by which to develop the party brand. First, he made the case that Democrats, unlike Republicans, were truly representative of Americans. Next, Bentsen continued the theme of change and stated Democrats would succeed in bringing about needed change. Also, he pointed to past party history and success as part of the Democratic brand. Finally, Bentsen too, discussed family values as part of the Democratic brand.

Bentsen began his speech with poetic alliteration to explain how the Democratic Party and brand reflected America:

We are a mirror of America. We Democrats don't march in lock step behind some narrow, rigid ideology of indifference. We are not gray grains of oatmeal in a bland porridge of privilege. Our way, the Democratic way, is to tackle the tough problems. Our way is to search out the honest answers and stand by our principles. (Bentsen, 1988)

Bentsen's claimed the Democratic Party's diversity mirrored that of a diverse nation, which allowed for a call of unity without uniformity. Bentsen himself, a Democrat from the more conservative state of Texas, was not ideologically in step with his more progressive, or liberal, running mate from Massachusetts, Governor Michael Dukakis. Yet, the party's ability to overcome any sort of rigid ideology supposedly mirrors the broad spectrum of political differences found within the nation.

Bentsen also argued there was a clear need for change in our nation and that Democrats were the change agents on which the American public could rely. Prosperity, he argued, had eluded many Americans during the Reagan Administration, stating, "The Reagan-Bush Administration likes to talk about prosperity. But the farmers in Iowa don't hear them. The oil field workers in Texas and Oklahoma and Louisiana don't hear them. The factory workers in John Glenn's Ohio don't hear them (Bentsen, 1988)." After eight years of Reagan-Bush, America was clearly ready for the kind of change the Democrats and Michael Dukakis could provide: "America is ready for the honest, proven, hands-on, real-world leadership of Michael Dukakis backed by the power of a united, committed Democratic Party (Bentsen, 1988)." Again, as the party out of power for eight years, Democrats represented the brand of change, and Lloyd Bentsen described the type of change proffered by the Democrats.

Next, Bentsen expressed the type of political and presidential leadership Democrats would provide. Here, Bentsen particularly focused on the success achieved by Michael Dukakis while governor of Massachusetts: "When the nation's governors were asked: Who among you is the most effective leader? The answer was Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts (Bentsen, 1988)."

As apparently the one bestowed the title of most effective governor in the country, the Democratic standard-bearer would provide prove leadership for the nation.

Finally, much like Ann Richards, Bentsen also used his own family's narrative as grounds for invention to portray himself as an inheritor and example of the American Dream. The success of Bentsen's immigrant family also burnished the Democratic Party brand as the party of immigrants who worked hard and succeeded in America. He shared:

My father is a symbol of what people of courage and vision and daring can achieve in America. He has lived the American dream--the dream we want to come true for our children. Talk about risk-takers. His family came to this country across the ocean, across the prairie, and homesteaded on the plains of South Dakota when the government would bet you 160 acres that you couldn't make it through the winter. (Bentsen, 1988)

By constituting himself as a living example of the American Dream, Bentsen embodied the values of the Democratic Party.

Overall, Lloyd Bentsen used his address to focus on four themes of party brand development. First, he claimed that the Democratic Party, a party of diverse opinions and ideals, was most representative of the American people. Next, Bentsen demonstrated the need for change in our nation and argued Democrats would bring about such change. Also, he discussed the record of Democratic leaders' proven success, and particularly the success of the party's presidential nominee. Finally, he portrayed his family's personal narrative as indicative of the American Dream, a dream best understood and encouraged by the Democratic Party.

Presidential Nominee Governor Michael Dukakis. Michael Dukakis took the stage seeking to make the case that the Democratic Party brand of 1988 provided voters with a welcome change from the past eight years of Republican control. He focused on three areas of party branding. First, he offered his own family as indicative of the family values represented by the Democratic Party. Next, he discussed the kind of change he and the party offered the

American people. Finally, Dukakis presented several policy ideas essential to the Democratic Party brand.

Dukakis began his speech with a telling of his family's history. His personal narrative, as a first-generation American, was quite unlike the story of other modern presidential candidates and one he claimed was indicative of the American Dream and of the Democratic Party brand. Dukakis continued the pattern found in the 1988 convention's earlier addresses by both Ann Richards and Lloyd Bentsen, using one's life story and personal family narrative to represent the values and ideals of the American people. The story of Michael Dukakis and his family was situated as the American Dream narrative, and also portrayed as the story unique to the Democratic Party.

Next, Dukakis spoke about the need for change in the land. Dukakis, like so many others before him, argued for future change grounded in the party's past history of success: "Because it's time to raise our sights, to look beyond the cramped ideals and the limited ambitions of the past eight years, to recapture the spirit of energy and of confidence and of idealism that John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson inspired a generation ago (Dukakis, 1988)." Perhaps Dukakis' specific invocation of Democrats Kennedy and Johnson was a reference intended to work on multiple levels. Certainly, many Democratic candidates and presidents draw on the history of John Kennedy when extoling the virtues of the Democratic Party; yet Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts with his running-mate of Texas, may have especially wished to identify with a previous Democratic president from Massachusetts and vice president from Texas.

Finally, Dukakis described the specific policy agenda that he offered as part of the 1988 Democratic Party brand. The first key policy area related to our nation's budget and job creation:

In nine years, I've balanced nine more budgets than this Administration has and I've just balanced a tenth. And I've worked with the citizens of my state - worked hard to create hundreds of thousands of new jobs and I mean good jobs, jobs you can raise a family on, jobs you can build a future on, jobs you can count on. (Dukakis, 1988)

In touting his ability to balance his own state's budget, Dukakis also positioned the Democratic Party as the party of fiscal responsibility. With record deficits accumulated during the eight years of the Reagan Administration, Dukakis looked to re-frame the Democratic Party away from the branding of "tax and spend" and suggested that Democrats could balance budgets and create good jobs for the American people.

Finally, Dukakis' policy agenda also called attention to key social and environmental issues, including hunger, pollution and the AIDS epidemic:

I want our young scientists to dedicate their great gifts not to the destruction of life, but to its preservation; I want them to wage war on hunger and pollution and infant mortality; and I want them to work with us to win the war against AIDS, the greatest public health emergency of our lifetime, and a disease that must be conquered. (Dukakis, 1988)

Here, the social and public health issues stressed by Dukakis began to more fully reveal Democratic Party values, and especially the role of government in helping create a better society for all, particularly those marginalized and most vulnerable citizens. In describing the role of science to help solve society's pressing problems, Dukakis spoke of the value of life and of winning wars not of military but of epidemiological origin. In fact, on the AIDS front, McKinney and Pepper (1998) pointed out that Michael Dukakis was the very first presidential candidate to dare speak of AIDS in a public address, with the 1988 Democratic presidential nominee arguing that our nation's willingness to tackle this public health epidemic was part of the value of life found within the Democratic Party.

Overall, Michael Dukakis framed the Democratic brand in three ways. First, he discussed his family narrative as an exemplar of the American Dream, and uniquely the Democratic Party dream. Next, he promoted a need for change in the nation's presidential leadership, envisioning particularly the leadership of yet another Boston-Austin political team, that of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. Finally, he discussed policy initiatives that represented the 1988 party brand,

including creating balanced budgets and jobs, and promoted science to preserve life rather than create weapons of destruction.

Summary of the 1988 Democratic Convention Branding. The 1988 Democratic Convention was built upon the exigency of offering a party brand capable of defeating George Bush who had served as vice president in the popular Reagan Administration for the previous eight years. In constructing this brand, each of the three main speakers contributed to its development in several important ways. First, all three of the speakers made the case for change, grounded in past Democratic Party success and the need to return the White House to Democratic leadership. Next, all three candidates also spoke of their families. Ann Richards mentioned her family to demonstrate the type of family values Americans desired and the values for which the Democratic Party stood. Bentsen and Dukakis used their family narratives to depict themselves as the embodiment of the American Dream and to argue the Democratic Party offered the best hope for keeping this dream alive for others. Finally, Michael Dukakis developed a policy agenda which also represented the values of the Democratic Party brand.

1992 Democratic Convention

The 1992 Democratic Party assembled to officially nominate its presidential and vice presidential candidates, having won only a single presidential election in the previous 20 years. The party was faced, yet again, with the need to rebrand itself, while still remaining true to its core constituencies. The 1992 Convention nominated a Southern Governor from Arkansas, Bill Clinton, who selected as his running mate yet another Southerner, Tennessee Senator Al Gore. In addition to Clinton and Gore, the convention keynote speakers included two other Southerners, Georgia Governor Zell Miller and former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

Each of the four addresses contributed to the development of the 1992 Democratic Party brand in a number of important ways. First, several of the speeches called for change from the current Republican approach and brand of governing. The Democrats of 1992 continued to hit upon the theme of The American Dream, and the Democratic Party's brand or version of this

narrative extended to those in our nation who believed this dream unattainable in their lives.

Barbara Jordan, from her lived experiences, spoke of equality for women; and Zell Miller from his vantage point of the typically red state of Georgia spoke of the Democratic brand as a more pragmatic centrist party. Family values continued to gain prominence as part of the 1992 Democratic brand; and, finally, Bill Clinton offered a Democratic issue agenda framed in the notion of a New Covenant for all citizens.

Keynote Speaker Congresswoman Barbara Jordan. Barbara Jordan reprised her role as a keynote speaker for the second time in 1992. In this address, she echoed the sentiments of her speech from 1976 that preceded Jimmy Carter's victory. Jordan's 1992 address spoke to two important elements of the Democrat's branding. First, as she did in 1976, she depicted the Democratic Party as the party of change. In fact, Jordan's 1992 address was titled "Change: From What to What?" and argued that the nation had historically turned to the Democrats when change was necessary. Jordan also developed the Democratic brand as the party that had historically fought for gender equality and women's rights.

She began her address by discussing change, acknowledging that the Democratic Party was a party of change. "We are not strangers to change. 20 years ago, we changed the whole tone of the nation at the Watergate abuses... We have been the instrument of change in the past... We know how to do it (Jordan, 1992)." Jordan's history of Democratic change was presented in a way not previously emphasized by past speakers in earlier conventions. Generally, change had been presented as part of an attack on the opposition party, calling for change from Republican to Democratic presidential leadership. Jordan's change was framed as Democratic success or the instrument of affecting change during times of national crisis.

Jordan also inserted gender equality and women's rights as a key element of the Democratic Party brand, much like she did in 1976. In the latest instance, she was more emphatic that progress on this front was long overdue.

One overdue change, which you have already heard about, is already underway... These women are challenging those councils of political power because they have been dominated by white, male policy makers and that is wrong... And what we see today is simply a dress rehearsal for the day and time we meet in convention to nominate Madame President. This country can ill afford to continue to function using less than half of its human resources, less than half its kinetic energy, less than half its brain power. (Jordan, 1992)

How ironic, speaking at the convention which nominated Bill Clinton, Barbara Jordan's vision that one day a future convention would assemble to nominate a Madame President. Once again, the Democratic Party called upon a female speaker to include the theme of women's rights and gender equality as a key part of the party brand. In fact, this element of the party brand development in the period of the modern convention seemed always left to female convention speakers: first Jordan in 1972 and then again in 1992, and also by Geraldine Ferraro in 1984 and Ann Richards in 1988. While our nation, as Jordan reminded, "could ill afford to continue to function using less than half of its human resources," it seemed the Democratic Party left this argument to be made by its few female leaders and convention speakers.

Overall, Barbara Jordan focused her keynote speech on two themes. The first was to frame the Democratic Party as the party of change, as the political institution that had affected change in our nation during times of great crisis. Jordan also continued her branding of the Democrats as the party seeking gender equality and women's rights.

Keynote Speaker Governor Zell Miller. Zell Miller's keynote address focused on two different facets of Democratic Party branding for 1992. First, he emphasized that the American Dream was on shaky ground and the hope for restoring this dream was Democratic leadership. Miller also spoke of a "new" Democratic Party, unlike the party of the 70's and 80's, but a more "pragmatic" party now in tune with the "centrist" values of the American public. Miller began his speech by invoking the American Dream.

I understand why Bill Clinton is so eager to see the American Dream kept alive for a new generation because I, too, was a product of that dream. I was born during the worst of the Depression on a cold winter's day in the drafty bedroom of a rented house and I was my parent's hope for the future. (Miller, 1992)

Miller, as did past convention speakers, used his own life story as an illustration of The American Dream; and while perhaps less dramatic than Michael Dukakis' "coming to America" story, Miller argued that his own ability to overcome and succeed was what the Democratic Party represented, and that dream remained available for all.

Miller also emphasized a new Democratic Party based on a pragmatic approach to governing guided by centrist political principles. The new brand would not adhere to previous party orthodoxy and would seek to build new governing coalitions. As Miller (1992) explained, "Bill Clinton is a Democrat who has the courage to tell some of those liberals who think welfare should continue forever and some conservatives who think there should be no welfare at all that they are both wrong." Miller attacked those on both the left and right of the political spectrum, with the former including some of the "old" Democratic Party base, and positioned the Democratic brand as seeking the political center, especially during a time when the Republican Party seemed to be drifting more to the right. This rebranding of the party, according to Miller, represented a pragmatic approach to governing which would lead from the center.

Overall, Zell Miller sought to brand the Democratic Party in two ways. First, he reaffirmed the party's commitment to revitalizing the American Dream. Miller next focused on rebranding the Democratic Party as a party more in tune with a majority of Americans who found themselves in the middle of our political spectrum rather than at the far left or right.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Al Gore. Al Gore sought to accomplish two goals with his acceptance address related to the development of party brand. First, he attacked Republicans and the Bush Administration to establish the grounds for change, offering the Clinton-Gore ticket as that needed change. Next, he developed the notion of family values, using

both his family and Bill Clinton's family personal narratives as indicative of the values which would inform their leadership.

Gore began his address by speaking of the growing cynicism in America due to the current Republican Administration being out of touch with American values.

The cynics are having a field day because across this country, millions of American families have been betrayed by a government out of touch with our values and beholden only the privileged few... But you can't kill hope that easily, not here, not in America, where a cynic is just a disappointed idealist in disguise, a dreamer yearning to dream again. (Gore, 1992)

In arguing the current Republican Administration had betrayed Americans, Gore made the case that change was necessary and that needed change could be found in the 1992 Democratic ticket.

The time for a new generation of leadership for the United States of America to take over from George Bush and Dan Quayle. And that means it is time for them to go. In 1992, our challenge is not to elect the last president of the 20th Century, but to elect the first president of the 21st Century, Bill Clinton. (Gore, 1992)

Here, Gore's contrast and call for change between the Democratic brand and the Republicans was one of a generational nature; and without specific reference to the current or "old" George H. W. Bush Administration, the vice presidential nominee was very clear that the Clinton-Gore ticket represented a new generation of leaders for a new century.

Gore also sought to develop the Democratic Party brand as one of family values and did so in two ways. First, he recognized the accomplishments of the two Democratic candidates' spouses, yet not by their own families but for children more broadly.

And we're both proud of our wives, Hillary Clinton and Tipper Gore, two women who have done more for the children of this country in the last 12 years than the last two men who have sat in the Oval Office have done in their lifetimes. (Gore, 1992)

While the accomplishments of Hillary Clinton and Tipper Gore alluded to their policy work in the public arena, the praise of the candidates' wives acknowledged their expertise in caring for children. Gore also described a family tragedy which involved his son being struck by an automobile, and how this experience shaped his views.

When you've seen your six-year-old son fighting for his life, you realize that some things matter more than winning, and you lose patience with the lazy assumption of so many in politics that we can always just muddle through. When you've seen your reflection in the empty stare of a boy waiting for a second breath of life, you realize that we weren't put here on Earth to look out for our needs alone; we're part of something much larger than ourselves. (Gore, 1992)

With this narrative, Gore shared how a family crisis shaped his view of public service. While his caring for his son demonstrated a commitment to family values, he used this story to also justify the need for collective, even governmental, support and assistance especially in times of need.

Al Gore's acceptance address developed two themes as part of Democratic Party branding. The first depicted the Republican Party as "old" and out of touch with American values, with the Democratic Party as the party of change for the next century. Gore then discussed, using his personal family narrative, how his values had been shaped and how those values now guided his approach to public service.

Presidential Nominee Governor Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton's address focused on four elements of the Democratic brand. First, Clinton discussed how he and the Democratic Party were representative of average Americans. Next, Clinton explained how he and the Democrats were committed to family values. Then, Clinton made the case against the Republican brand and Democrats were the true party of change. Finally, Clinton developed several policy areas as part of the party's 1992 brand.

Clinton began his speech by touting his commitment to the middle class: "I am a product of that middle class, and when I am president, you will be forgotten no more (Clinton, 1992)."

Clinton drew on his personal narrative to build his identification with average Americans. He shared that his father died before he was born and how his mother struggled to raise him and his brother as a single parent, working two jobs. He concluded, “You want to know where I get my fighting spirit? It all started with my mother (Clinton, 1992).”

Clinton further spoke of the shaping of his values, and in doing so developed the theme of family values as an important element of the Democratic Party brand. He described the influence of yet another woman in his life, his wife Hillary.

I learned a lot from another person too: a person who for more than 20 years has worked hard to help our children, paying the price of time to make sure our schools don’t fail them... That person is my wife. Hillary taught me. She taught me that all children can learn and that each of us has a duty to help them do it. (Clinton, 1992)

Clinton’s values were shaped largely by the two women most important to him, his mother and his wife; and he continued his talk of family values by more clearly defining what constituted a family.

I want an America where family values live in our actions, not just our speeches. An America that includes every family. Every traditional family and every extended family. Every two-parent family. Every single parent family. And every foster family. I do want to say something to the fathers in this country who have chosen to abandon their children by neglecting their child support: Take responsibility for your children or we will force you to do so. Because governments don’t raise children; parents do. And you should. (Clinton, 1992)

In Clinton’s expanded definition of family, he made clear that families could take many forms and that family values, at least the Democratic Party’s brand, extended to families of all types.

Next, Clinton spoke of The American Dream and the difficulty of so many Americans faced to achieve this dream.

I was raised to believe the American Dream was built on rewarding hard work. But we have seen the folks of Washington turn the American ethic on its head. For too long those who play by the rules and keep the faith have gotten the shaft, and those who cut corners and cut deals have been rewarded. (Clinton, 1992)

Clinton argued that the current political regime, the Bush Administration, was responsible for keeping hardworking Americans from realizing their American Dream led to Clinton's call for change. "So, if you are sick and tired of a government that doesn't work to create jobs... you're just plain old sick and tired of being sick and tired, then join us, work with us, win with us, and we can make our country the country it was meant to be (Clinton, 1992)."

Finally, Clinton developed a policy agenda as part of the 1992 Democratic Party brand. Notably, he began by emphasizing a woman's right to reproductive choices.

I am not pro-abortion, I am pro-choice, strongly. I believe this difficult and painful decision should be left to the women of America... But I am old enough to remember what it was like before Roe v. Wade, and I do not want to return to the time when we made criminals of women and their doctors. (Clinton, 1992)

From there, Clinton described a New Covenant with the American people. The New Covenant involved job creation, access to college, health care access, tax reform which transferred more of the burden to the wealthy, and welfare reform which included a path to jobs for those who were able to work. Clinton argued that his New Covenant sought to restore upward mobility in America, and particularly for those who felt that there was no way out of their current situation. He concluded, "In the end, my fellow Americans, this New Covenant simply asks us all to be Americans again, old fashioned Americans for a new time. Opportunity, responsibility, community (Clinton, 1992)." Clinton's New Covenant sought to brand the Democratic Party as a party who would create opportunity especially for those who felt lost and left behind. His vision or covenant expected responsibility from all while building a national community where all were included.

Overall, Bill Clinton sought to brand the Democratic Party in four different areas. First, he presented the Democratic Party and himself as representative of average Americans. Then, he examined the role of family in his own life as well as in American life and presented the Democratic Party as the party who actually valued families through actions rather than simply talk about family values. Next, Clinton argued that the American Dream was faltering and the Democratic Party would work to restore that dream, especially for those who saw no way out of their current situation. Finally, Clinton offered a New Covenant with the American people, one that provided opportunity, required responsibility, and sought to create a community inclusive of all.

Summary of the 1992 Democratic Convention Branding. Throughout the major speeches delivered at the 1992 Democratic Convention, the party focused on creating a party brand which included several important elements. First, the speeches addressed the need for change in order to restore hope for achieving The American Dream. Barbara Jordan, in particular, discussed gender equality and women's rights as an untapped human resource. Zell Miller branded the Democratic Party as more centrist and pragmatic in comparison to its most recent past. Al Gore and Bill Clinton both discussed family values, drawing on their personal family narratives, and argued the Democratic Party represented the party who truly valued families. Finally, Bill Clinton offered himself as a product of the American middle class, his party as the champion of average working class Americans, and he framed the party's 1992 policy agenda as a New Covenant with the American people.

1996 Democratic Convention

The 1996 Democratic Convention found the Democrats in a position in which they had not been in more than a quarter century, attempting to argue for four more years in the White House. Speeches were given by Indiana Governor Evan Bayh, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and President Bill Clinton. The brand for this convention revolved around staying the course under the leadership of Bill Clinton.

Throughout the convention addresses several themes were presented as part of the Democratic Party branding effort to reelect Bill Clinton. First, the theme of family values was once again offered and expanded upon from the previous Democratic convention, especially with the inclusion of an address from First Lady Hillary Clinton, who focused almost entirely on building and strengthening families. Next, three of the addresses discussed the Democratic record of success over the previous four years and the need to stay the course. Al Gore continued to attack the Republicans as still out of touch when compared to the Democratic brand and policies. Finally, Bill Clinton focused on several policy issues which would define the Democratic Party brand of 1996.

Keynote Speaker Senator Evan Bayh. Evan Bayh of Indiana delivered a keynote address which emphasized two facets of Democratic Party branding. First, he talked about family values and how the Democratic Party's vision of family values was in line with the values of average Americans. Bayh also touted Democratic successes of the past four years as a reason to stay the course.

Bayh began his speech by observing how his role as a parent was far more important than his role as governor. His values, parenting and otherwise, were developed from middle class and middle America upbringing: "I come from here in the heartland, a place where values run deep, and love of family and country is strong; a place where the most important title a man can have isn't governor, but husband, father, son (Bayh, 1996)." Bayh continued to explain – and extol – his family values. "Tonight, I stand between my father and my sons. The dreams our parents had for us are the dreams Susan and I share for our boys. The times are vastly different now. The challenges we face are new, but the values that must guide us are the same (Bayh, 1996)." The Bayh family values were Democratic values; and the Democratic Party continued to develop its brand image as the party of American and family values.

Bayh also touted the many successes of Bill Clinton's first term as the prime evidence the Democrat should remain in office. Clinton's primary concern, Bayh argued, was making lives

better for the American people. He noted, for example, “Since President Clinton took office over 10 million new jobs have been created, four times the number during the previous four years, over a million new jobs in construction and manufacturing alone (Bayh, 1996).” On a litany of domestic policy fronts which improved people’s lives, Bayh portrayed the Democratic President – and party brand – as far preferable to the Republican alternative.

Overall, Evan Bayh’s speech addressed two facets of the Democratic Party’s 1996 branding effort. The first theme involved family values, with Bayh utilizing his own family narrative as indicative of the values held by middle class and “middle America” families, and also the values which represented the Democratic Party. The second Bayh theme stressed was the successes of the Clinton Administration, which proved the case to stay the course and reelect Bill Clinton.

Nominee Spouse First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. Hillary Clinton’s address to the convention focused largely on families with discussion of her own family and family values, and also with discussion of the various public policies that her husband had championed to help families. Both facets of family talk were woven together to build upon the Democratic Party’s brand image as the party of family values.

First, Clinton spoke of the birth of her own daughter, Chelsea, to encourage health coverage that would allow new mothers to remain in the hospital for at least 48 hours following the birth of a child.

Bill was with me when Chelsea was born in the delivery room, in my hospital room, and when we brought our baby daughter home. Not only did I have lots of help, I was able to stay in the hospital as long as my doctor thought I needed to be there. But today, too many new mothers are asked to get up and get out after 24 hours, and that is just not enough time for many new mothers and babies. That’s why the president is right to support a bill that would prohibit the practice of forcing mothers and babies to leave the hospital in less than 48 hours. (H. Clinton, 1996)

Clinton described other “family friendly” policies her husband had implemented or was seeking to implement which would benefit families and children. One such policy was the first piece of legislation her husband signed into law. “The very first piece of legislation that my husband signed had been vetoed twice, the Family and Medical Leave Law... Already it has helped 12 million families, and it hasn’t hurt the economy one bit (H. Clinton, 1996).” Here, Clinton contrasted the competing visions – and brands – of the two political parties, demonstrating that the Republicans twice vetoed this family friendly policy and reinforced the notion that the Democratic Party was truly the party who valued families.

Overall, Hillary Rodham Clinton’s speech addressed the Democratic Party’s commitment to families and strong family values. Clinton discussed her own family and the advantages they had as indicative of the advantages the party and her husband wished to provide all American families.

Vice President Al Gore. Vice President Al Gore’s speech focused on two elements of the Democratic Party brand for the 1996 election. First, he touted successes of the Clinton Administration during the previous four years to make the case to stay the course with Clinton-Gore. The Vice President also painted the Republican Party as out of touch with the American people.

Gore began by acclaiming the Clinton Administration’s accomplishments, demonstrating the Democrats were the party that could achieve success and thus branding the party as the party that gets things done.

Just look at what all of us have created together these last four years: Ten million new jobs, a deficit cut in half, a smaller leaner reinvented government working better and costing less, unemployment and inflation both down, record exports, wages on the rise, an economy moving forward... an America not just better off but better. (Gore, 1996)

Gore recited an extensive list of each piece of legislation that Clinton had signed into law, extolling how each new program, policy, or rule had directly impacted the lives of the American

public. Having fulfilled its first-term promises, Gore argued, the Democrats should be given four more years to continue making American a better place for all.

Next, Gore attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with the needs of American voters and compared the two parties with the Democrats always seeking to move forward for a brighter future while the Republican Party and their nominee, U.S. Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, wished to block progress and positive change. Gore provided this direct comparison:

And the chapters of which we're proudest are the ones where we had the courage to change. Time and again, Americans have seen the need for change, and have taken the initiative to bring that change to life... Always with opponents. Senator Dole was there. We remember that he voted against the creation of Medicare, against the creation of Medicaid, against the Clean Air Act, against Head Start... He even voted against the funds to send a man to the moon. (Gore, 1996)

Here, Gore argued some of our nation's greatest social policy and technological accomplishments had come at the hands of Democratic leadership, while battling the negative resistance of Republicans, particularly the current Republican standard-bearer Bob Dole. The Republican Party and leadership was branded as obstructionist and out of touch while the Democratic Party was branded as the party of progress and having courage to take on monumental changes.

Overall, Gore utilized his speech to develop two facets of the Democratic brand. First, in his plea for voters to stay the course, he highlighted the many successes the Clinton Administration had achieved in the past four years, thus branding the Democrats as a "can do" party of great success for the American people. Gore also sought to brand the Republicans and Dole as out of touch obstructionists and the Democrats as the party of positive change.

President Bill Clinton. President Clinton's acceptance address built upon the three previous speeches by reinforcing two of the themes presented in those addresses while adding an additional theme in his own speech. First, Clinton continued the branding of the Democratic Party as the party of success, and, therefore, America should stay the course under his leadership; and

he also continued with the theme of the Democratic Party as the party of family values. Finally, he introduced a policy agenda as part of the Democratic brand for 1996.

Clinton began his speech by touting his administration's success in making lives better for average Americans, referring specifically to several facets of economic growth.

Look at what happened. Ten million new jobs, over half of them high wage jobs. Ten million workers getting the raise they deserve with the minimum wage law. Twenty-five million people now having protection in their health insurance because the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill says you can't lose your insurance anymore when you change jobs even if somebody in your family's been sick. (B. Clinton, 1996)

Here, Clinton not only demonstrated his worthiness to remain in office based on legislative successes during his first term, but also argued the clear target of his efforts and beneficiaries of these policy initiatives were middle and working-class Americans. Those benefiting from an increase in the minimum wage and health insurance protections could thank the Democratic Party as the party that cared about the real needs of average Americans.

As several of the speakers had done before him at this and the previous Democratic convention, Bill Clinton also spoke of family values drawing on his personal family narrative. Once again, Clinton shared how he had learned important values from his mother.

My irrepressible, hardworking, always optimistic mother did the best she could for my brother and me, often against very stiff odds. I learned from her just how much love and determination can overcome. But from her and from our life, I also learned that no parent can do it alone. (B. Clinton, 1996)

While praising his mother for raising him and his brother "against very stiff odds," President Clinton also pointed to the need for collective – most assuredly government – assistance in raising one's family. He followed this passage by noting, "As Tipper Gore and Hillary said on Tuesday, we have, all of us in our Administration, worked hard to support families in raising their children and succeeding at work (B. Clinton, 1996)." Democratic talk of family values was most

often framed as supporting and assisting families, especially in raising children, through needed public policy and programs.

Finally, Clinton noted several key policy areas he offered as a part of the Democratic Party brand of 1996. The first proposed policy Clinton emphasized was making access to college easier for all:

By the year 2000 the single most critical thing we can do is to give every single American who wants it the chance to go to college. We must make two years of college just as universal in four years as a high school education is today. (B. Clinton, 1996)

Clinton also spoke of the need for a balanced budget while maintaining revered social programs:

Tonight, let us proclaim to the American people we will balance the budget, and let us also proclaim we will do it in a way that preserves Medicare, Medicaid, education, the environment, the integrity of our pensions, the strength of our people. (B. Clinton, 1996)

Unlike his policy agenda from four years earlier, his New Covenant with the American people, his policy agenda for 1996 was largely a string of policy pledges with the assurance that he would keep fighting for the American public.

On the international front, Clinton spoke largely of national security and the need to prevent terrorism. He described his “three-point plan” to fight terrorists: “First, we are working to rally a world coalition with zero tolerance for terrorism... Second, we must give law enforcement the tools they need to take the fight to terrorists... Third, we will improve airport and air travel security (B. Clinton, 1996).” By 1996, international wars and conflicts had been replaced with terrorism as the nation’s key national security issue, and Democratic President Bill Clinton sought to place the combating of terrorists as an important element of Democratic Party branding.

Overall, Bill Clinton built upon key pieces of the Democratic Party’s branding with his second nomination acceptance address. First, he discussed his administration’s many policy successes as his main argument for staying the course for four more years. Next, he emphasized family values and how his upbringing had shaped his governing approach in crafting public

policies that would help make lives easier for families. Finally, Clinton discussed several policies as part of his 1996 policy agenda, including affordable access to college for all, balancing the budget while maintaining vital social programs, and fighting terrorists in the interest of our national security.

Summary of the 1996 Democratic Convention Branding. The Democratic Party's branding in the reelection of Bill Clinton emphasized the theme of family values framed by the policies the Clinton Administration had enacted to ease the burdens on families. Also, each of the key speeches discussed successes of the first term as evidence the nation should stay the course in a second Clinton term. Al Gore was the principal "attack dog" in arguing the Republican Party was the party of the past, as compared to the Democrats, and out of touch with average Americans. Finally, President Clinton developed three key policy areas as part of the party's branding, including increasing access to a college education, balancing the budget while maintaining social programs, and fighting terrorists in the interest of national security.

2000 Democratic Convention

Al Gore entered the 2000 Democratic Convention hoping to ascend to the presidency after spending eight years as Bill Clinton's vice president. By necessity, Gore had to do some rebranding of the party following the recent impeachment of President Clinton. Gore needed to maintain his and the party's appeal to Clinton supporters while still distancing himself Clinton. Even in the best of circumstances, vice presidents who seek the presidency, and particularly those who serve two terms with an incumbent president, often struggle to distinguish themselves from their former presidential boss, and also struggle to craft a compelling appeal that a single party should maintain hold of the White House for a third term. The main convention speakers that aided in the development of the 2000 Democratic Party brand included Congressman Harold Ford Jr., President Bill Clinton, Gore's wife Tipper Gore, Vice-Presidential Nominee Joe Lieberman, and Gore himself.

Throughout the 2000 Democratic Convention, the various speakers served up variations on the brand construction and appeals provided during the previous two conventions, largely with Al Gore inserted in the place of Bill Clinton as the party's chief brand representative. Speakers regaled voters with Democratic successes of the previous eight years and insisted that Gore would continue that success. Also, similar to the previous two conventions, several speakers continued to speak of family values. Harold Ford's primary branding task was to develop Al Gore as presidential leader, speaking largely of Al Gore's personal and leadership qualities. Vice presidential nominee Joe Lieberman, as Gore did when he served in that role, was the chief attack dog of the Republicans and their brand, arguing that the Democratic Party was far preferable for the American people. Finally, Gore himself detailed the Democratic Party's 2000 policy agenda.

Keynote Speaker Congressman Harold Ford Jr. Harold Ford's keynote address developed two key pieces of the Democratic Party's branding in 2000. First, Ford spoke of Al Gore's various leadership qualities. Ford also argued that the Democratic Party had proven itself to be an effective governing party over the course of the previous eight years; and if we returned the nation to a Republican president great damage could be done.

Ford began by describing Al Gore as the type of leader who "stepped up" when many would turn away, referencing the early days of Gore's life in public service to make this point clear: "It was a time when, on the heels of Vietnam and Watergate, young Americans were turning away from public service. But Al Gore didn't turn away. He jumped feet first into public life and was elected one of Tennessee's youngest congressmen ever (Ford, 2000)." Ford went on to describe the qualities we expected in a presidential leader, qualities which described Al Gore. "At this critical time, America needs a leader with the intellect to understand the complexities we face. A leader with experience who can grasp the challenges of our world. At this critical time, America needs Al Gore (Ford, 2000)." Ford branded Al Gore as a leader with the necessary experience, intellect and courage to stand up to the challenges of the presidency.

The second major theme of Ford's address was his "stay the course" appeal based on the Democratic Party's successes of the past eight years. Ford framed Democratic successes in comparison to the Republicans who, he argued, would return our nation to a time of less prosperity and greater struggle for working class families.

Well, eight years and 22 million jobs later, the future is something to get excited about again. But some in the other party would have us go back. Back to a past where prosperity touches only the well-off and well-connected... Al Gore and Joe Lieberman believe the future is for everyone. (Ford, 2000)

Here, the comparison offered of the two party brands made clear that the Democratic brand was the party of the future, would not "go back" to an undesirable past; and also that the Democratic brand of 2000 was inextricably tied to the past eight years, and Gore-Lieberman would continue the policies of Clinton-Gore. This example illustrated the common approach to the Democratic branding of 2000 – to associate with and claim successes of the current Democratic administration without explicitly naming or giving any credit to Bill Clinton.

Overall, Harold Ford promoted the Democratic brand as preferable to the Republican brand in two different ways. First, he indicated that the leadership qualities possessed by Al Gore had been tested and proven through his years of experience, and that Gore was one who had been willing to lead when many were avoiding public life. Ford also branded the Democrats as a successful governing party that favored all Americans rather than the privileged few.

Keynote Speaker President Bill Clinton. As the outgoing president, Bill Clinton utilized his convention speech as a chance to emphasize his own success over the previous eight years, and also presented Al Gore as instrumental in the Clinton Administration's various successes. In short, Clinton's primary purpose was to acclaim his vice president as his natural successor and one who would continue the success of the Clinton presidency.

Clinton began by describing one of the best decisions he had ever made in his political career: "You gave me that chance to turn those ideas and values into action, after I made one of

the best decisions of my life: asking Al Gore to be my partner (Clinton, 2000).” This claim, by framing Al Gore as partner, helped transfer the successes of the Clinton years as Gore’s.

Clinton went on to describe specific instances where Gore was instrumental in helping achieve change, including the Administration’s economic plan.

First, we proposed a new economic strategy: Get rid of the deficit to reduce interest rates. Invest more in our people. And sell more American products abroad. We sent our plan to Congress... In a deadlocked Senate, Al Gore cast the deciding vote. Not a single Republican supported it. (Clinton, 2000)

With his tie breaking vote, Al Gore helped bring about the economic prosperity of the Clinton years; and this legislative victory also provided a clear comparison of the two parties’ brands, with the Republicans portrayed as clearly wrong in their decisions regarding the economy.

Finally, Clinton declared that the Gore-Lieberman ticket would continue the Democratic success of the previous eight years: “Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will keep our prosperity going by paying down the debt, investing in education and health care, moving more people from welfare to work, and providing family tax cuts that we can afford (Clinton, 2000).” In large measure, Bill Clinton’s call to the nation was for four more years of the Clinton presidency and agenda, just with Al Gore in the Oval Office.

Overall, President Bill Clinton focused his speech on branding the Democratic Party as the party that had made life better for Americans over the previous eight years. Al Gore, according to Clinton, had played an instrumental role in creating prosperity for all; and now it was Gore’s turn to lead the nation, to stay the course and continue the successes of the Clinton years.

Nominee Spouse Tipper Gore. Al Gore’s wife, Tipper Gore, gave a short address to the convention crowd which emphasized a key aspect of branding for Gore and the Democrats, family values. She focused her comments first on Al’s deep commitment to his family and how his love of family would translate into care for all American families. She shared, “Many of you

know that faith and family are at the center of Al's life...But I also want you to know that as a husband, father, and grandfather Al has always been there for our family, and he will always be there for your family (T. Gore, 2000).” Clearly, according to the expert testimony of his wife, Al Gore’s family values were American family values; and the Democratic Party, ceding no ground to the Republicans, continued to brand itself as the party of family values.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Joe Lieberman. Joe Lieberman made history when he took the stage as the first Jewish nominee for vice president of either major party. However, this groundbreaking feature of Lieberman’s candidacy was not the focus of his acceptance speech or of the branding he sought to achieve with his address. Lieberman began by talking about his faith and his family to show that his family as just like any other. Lieberman also used love of family to illustrate the Democratic Party’s commitment to achieving the American Dream. Finally, Lieberman used his address to attack the Republican brand and acclaim the Democratic Party as the brand of proven leadership.

Lieberman began his address with discussion of how his family had achieved the American Dream.

In my life, I have seen the goodness of this country through many sets of eyes. I have seen it through the eyes of my grandmother. She was raised in Central Europe, in a village where she was often harassed because of the way she worshiped god. Then she immigrated to America. On Saturdays, she used to walk to synagogue, and often, her Christian neighbors would pass her and say, ‘good Sabbath, Mrs. Manger.’ (Lieberman, 2000)

Lieberman used the transformation in his grandmother’s life, once she came to America, to illustrate three things. First, it showed his deep appreciation for his own family and their immigrant history of coming to America. Next, he demonstrated that tolerance of different faiths had been a part of American history and therefore any concerns about his own Jewish faith would be somehow un-American. Finally, his own family history had its origins in the American Dream

narrative. Lieberman continued his theme of family and the American Dream when speaking of his own parents.

My father lived in an orphanage when he was a child. He went on to drive a bakery truck and own a package store in Stamford, Connecticut. He taught my sisters and me the importance of work and responsibility. With my mother by his side, he saw me become the first person in my family to graduate from college. (Lieberman, 2000)

Through struggle, hard work, and perseverance Joe Lieberman had learned family values through the “eyes of [his] parents,” a family who had lived the true American Dream. Lieberman’s ability to overcome struggles and achieve the high position which he now held further illustrated the Democratic brand as the party of family values committed to all citizens achieving their American Dream.

Lieberman also used his address to compare the competing visions and brands of Republicans and Democrats by contrasting the leaders of the two parties. On dealing with the environment, for example, Lieberman explained:

I think it’s a good thing that our opponent talks about the environment. But I’m sad to say that in Texas, the quality of the air and water is some of the worst in America... For more than 20 years, Al Gore has been a leader on the environment. (Lieberman, 2000)

Lieberman would go on to compare the records of George W. Bush and Al Gore on a number of fronts, with each comparison attacked Bush while acclaiming Gore’s actions as a record of proven leadership.

Joe Lieberman used his vice presidential acceptance address to reinforce two facets of Democratic Party branding. The first involved continuing to build the Democratic brand as the party of family values. Lieberman used his own family’s coming to America and achieving the American Dream narrative as proof Democrats valued all families and would work to help all achieve their American Dream. Lieberman also served in the role of “attack dog” as he framed a

series of attacks on the record and actions of George W. Bush with comparison to the leadership and policy successes of Al Gore.

Presidential Nominee Vice President Al Gore. Al Gore took to the stage with high hopes of becoming president after spending the past eight years as Bill Clinton's vice president. Gore used his address to build the Democratic Party brand in three areas. First, Gore recounted the successes of the previous eight years, attempting to build the Democratic brand by claiming the many successes were part of the long history of the Democratic Party rather than crediting achievements solely to the outgoing President. Gore, like all other speakers at the 2000 convention podium, spoke of his family history in the context of family values, furthering the Democrat's attempt to brand themselves as the party of family values. Finally, Gore provided an issue agenda to serve as the Democrat's 2000 policy brand.

Gore began his address by recounting the successes of the past eight years with Democratic leadership, especially as it related to the economy. "Instead of the biggest deficits in history, we now have the biggest surpluses, the highest home ownership ever, the lowest inflation in a generation, and instead of losing jobs, we now have 22 million good new jobs, higher family incomes (A. Gore, 2000)." Gore went on to speak of how these successes specifically impacted American lives.

Now our budget surplus makes it possible to give a full range of targeted tax cuts to working families; not just to help you save for college, but to pay for health insurance and child care, to reform the estate tax so people can pass on a small business or a family farm, and to end the marriage penalty the right way, the fair way. (A. Gore, 2000)

Throughout his acclaiming of the past eight years' successes, Gore spoke of what "we" had accomplished and of "our" successes, not mentioning his presidential partner, Bill Clinton, by name. These successes were just as much Gore's as they were the president's achievements. Gore was also careful to translate the long list of policy and legislative achievements into tangible improvements in the daily lives of working-class citizens.

Gore's address also contained ample talk of his own family and of values learned to continue the branding of the Democrats as the party of family values. Gore first spoke of his parents and the valuable lessons of family and love they taught him. "And of all the lessons my parents taught me, the most powerful one was unspoken: The way they loved one another... And I learned from them the value of a true, loving partnership that lasts for life (A. Gore, 2000)." Gore's love of family – and turn to politics – continued with his own family: "And then, Tipper and I started our own family. And when our first daughter, Karenna, was born, I began to see the future through a fresh set of eyes... That's why I ran for Congress (A. Gore, 2000)." Gore described his lifetime of commitment to public service, yet this work was guided by his commitment to and love of family. For Gore, his values, also the values of the Democratic Party, were one and the same with his family values.

Finally, Gore provided a policy agenda to represent the 2000 Democratic Party brand. Gore's issue agenda was illustrated through the personal narrative and lives of individuals he met along the campaign trail. He first employed this argument structure to emphasize his commitment to public education and helping kids escape crumbling schools.

I met George and Juanita Gutierrez in San Antonio, Texas. Their daughter Caterina has just started the fourth grade at Davy Crockett Elementary School. The school building is crumbling and overcrowded, with cracked walls and peeling plaster... I will fight to rebuild and modernize crumbling schools and reduce class size... Education may be a local responsibility, but I believe it also has to be our number one national priority. (A. Gore, 2000)

With each issue theme or policy proposal, Gore provided a personal anecdote from Americans he had met on the campaign trail, much like his education narrative drawn from George W. Bush's own Texas, to show that he had listened to the public, understood their needs and would act on their concerns.

Summary of the 2000 Democratic Convention Branding. The Democratic Party at its 2000 nominating meeting sought to brand itself in several important ways with its major convention addresses. The overall focus of the convention was celebrating the past eight years of the Clinton Administration while pivoting to Al Gore as the natural successor to stay the Democratic course. Several of the speeches pointed to Gore's role and close partnership with Clinton in achieving the Democrat's decade of success. Harold Ford also branded the Democratic Party as the party of proven leadership, again suggesting Al Gore would continue the successes of the Clinton-Gore years. Several speeches incorporated the theme of family and values. Tipper and Al Gore spoke of their own families as an indication of the type of family values that had guided their public service and would guide their pursuit of public policy. Joe Lieberman incorporated his family's narrative as achievement of the American Dream and indicative of the Democratic Party's desire for all Americans to achieve their dream. Finally, Al Gore presented several key policy initiatives through the narrative lens of people he had met on the campaign trail, individuals struggling in their everyday lives who would be helped with Gore's election as president.

2004 Democratic Convention

The 2004 Democratic Convention found the Democratic Party seeking to rebound from its narrow loss in 2000 and unseat incumbent President George W. Bush. The 2004 Convention also saw the party attempt to brand itself with a younger generation of leaders by highlighting newcomers to the national stage with keynote speaker Illinois State Senator Barack Obama and with its Vice-Presidential Nominee John Edwards. The convention's other main speeches were delivered by Presidential Nominee John Kerry and his wife Teresa Heinz Kerry. These speeches addressed the Democratic feeling that change was necessary after four years of Bush.

Throughout the key speeches, all arguing that change was necessary after four years of George W. Bush's leadership, several themes were developed as part of the Democratic Party's 2004 branding. In a number of the addresses, personal family narratives, once again, were

provided as examples of the American Dream. Another theme that emerged in several speeches was the depiction of the Democratic brand as the political party of hope for Americans. Barack Obama developed the notions of community and unity as key themes that characterized the Democratic brand. Teresa Heinz Kerry, with her immigrant background, discussed American Exceptionalism in her address. National security played a role in several addresses as the Democrats described their plans in a time of terrorist threat and differentiated their approach to security from the Republican brand. Finally, John Kerry emphasized the need for a change in presidential leadership as the Bush Administration, he argued, had squandered national prosperity created during the Clinton years. Kerry also offered several policy proposals which would characterize the Democratic brand heading into the 2004 election.

Keynote Speaker Illinois State Senator Barack Obama. The largely unknown Barack Obama took the convention stage as part of a movement within the Democratic Party to feature new voices and a generation of new leaders. As a candidate for the U.S. Senate, Obama represented the party's hope for the future. Within his address, he developed three themes which would be incorporated as part of the party's branding, not just for 2004, but for the next decade. First, he offered his own family's multi-racial, multi-cultural history as a narrative of the American Dream. Then, he sought to brand the Democratic Party as an instrument in a divided nation seeking to promote national community and unity. Finally, Obama invoked the theme of hope as a rallying cry for the Democratic Party.

Obama began his address by speaking of his grandparents and parents as proof of his own improbable story of achieving the American Dream.

Through hard work and perseverance my father got a scholarship to study in a magical place: America, which stood as a beacon of freedom and opportunity to so many who had come before. While studying here, my father met my mother... Her father worked on oil rigs and farms through most of the Depression... My parents shared not only an improbable love; they shared an abiding faith in the possibilities of this nation... They

imagined me going to the best schools in the land, even though they weren't rich, because in a generous America you don't have to be rich to achieve your potential... I know that on this night, they look down on me with pride. (Obama, 2004)

The Barack Obama story, with a patriotic grandfather of blue-collar stock, and with parents from two different continents who both shared the redemptive value of education, demonstrated to the nation that personal success and achieving the American Dream was possible even if one did not come from wealth or of elite status. Obama's was an unlikely, yet not unique story; and his presence demonstrated the Democratic Party's celebration of the American Dream as possible for all Americans.

Obama also spoke of national unity and a sense of national community where all Americans, and not just the privileged few, could prosper.

For alongside our famous individualism, there's another ingredient to the American saga.

A belief that we are connected as one people... It's that fundamental belief. I am my

brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper that makes this country work. (Obama, 2004)

Democrats, according to Obama, stood for the "fundamental belief" that we should care for one another, that our country could only come together and prosper if we were willing to transcend our ingrained value of individualism and reach out to help those in need.

Obama concluded his speech by emphasizing the theme of hope. Here, Obama proclaimed that the Democratic Party brand represented hope and called on voters to reject the politics of cynicism offered by the Republicans for a politics of hope provided by Democrats.

Do we participate in the politics of cynicism or the politics of hope? John Kerry calls on us to hope... I'm not talking about blind optimism here, the almost willful ignorance that thinks unemployment will go away if we just don't talk about it... No, I'm talking about something more substantial... The audacity of hope. (Obama, 2004)

Obama's "audacity of hope" provided a clear distinction between the two party brands, with the Democratic Party representing the party of hope for a better America.

Overall, Barack Obama provided three areas of focus in developing the Democratic Party brand. First, he used his personal family narrative as an example of the type of American Dream Democrats championed. Then, he provided a framework for the fundamental values guiding the Democrats, the values of unity and a national community that does not seek to benefit just the few while leaving those disadvantaged behind. Finally, Obama sought to brand the Democratic Party as the party of hope juxtaposed with the Republican Party's brand of cynicism.

Nominee Spouse Teresa Heinz Kerry. John Kerry's wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, broke new ground in convention addresses as she was the first main speaker at a major-party convention not born in the United States. During her address, she reinforced three areas of the Democratic Party brand. First, she promoted the notion of American Exceptionalism in promoting freedom around the world. She also continued the theme of hope first offered by Barack Obama and emphasized the notion that the Democratic Party represented the party of hope in our nation and world. Finally, she discussed the role of national security in the upcoming election and argued the Democratic Party, unlike the current Republican Administration, had the judgment necessary to keep America safe.

Heinz Kerry began her speech by discussing American Exceptionalism and the role Americans must play in maintaining the freedom that our nation's exceptionalism promotes.

There is a value in taking a stand whether or not anybody may be noticing it and whether or not it is a risky thing to do. And if even those who are in danger can raise their lonely voices, isn't it more that is required of all of us, in this land where liberty had her birth? I have a very personal feeling about how special America is, and I know how precious freedom is. (Heinz Kerry, 2004)

Heinz Kerry emphasized the responsibility of citizens living "in this land [of] liberty" to speak up for injustice, even when faced with risk or danger. Our nation's exceptionalism, according to Heinz Kerry, was found in its "precious freedom" and our responsibility to fight for such freedom for all.

Next, Heinz Kerry built upon the Democratic Party's brand image of hope. The specific context of her theme of hope involved her husband providing hopeful leadership: "And the Americans John and I have met in the course of this campaign all want America to provide hopeful leadership again. They want America to return to its moral bearings (Heinz Kerry, 2004)." Under the current Republican regime, America had lost its moral compass and needed the Democrats, led by John Kerry, to restore hope in our land.

Finally, Heinz Kerry combined her themes of American Exceptionalism and hope to argue a Democratic President, John Kerry, was needed to recalibrate our national security policy:

With John Kerry as president, we can, and we will, protect our nation's security without sacrificing our civil liberties. In short, John believes that we can, and we must, lead the world as America, unique among nations, by showing the face, not of its fears, but of our hopes. (Heinz Kerry, 2004)

Heinz Kerry argued that the Democrats, while maintaining American's civil liberties, could also regain its role as the world's leader, not by promoting fear but by promoting hope.

Overall, Teresa Heinz Kerry delivered a different type of spousal address, with her speech not at all focused on the presidential candidate's family and promotion of family values. Instead, Heinz Kerry spoke of three key areas of the Democratic Party brand of 2004. First, she discussed America Exceptionalism and the role of all Americans in promoting freedom around the world. Next, she emphasized the notion that the Democratic Party represents the party of hopeful leadership for the world; and, finally, she called for a change in our national security and stressed Democrats ability to re-establish the U.S. as leader among nations.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator John Edwards. John Edwards, like Barack Obama, represented a new voice in the Democratic Party and a new generation of leadership, especially when compared with his Republican vice presidential counterpart, Dick Cheney, who had been part of Republican administrations since the time of Gerald Ford in the early 1970's. The new representatives of the Democratic Party presented a young and energetic brand image – with

perhaps new ideas – as compared to the Republican Party brand. In his address, Edwards first spoke of his running mate's record of leadership and public service. Edwards also developed other common themes in his address, including family and the American Dream, of the Democratic Party's commitment to those disadvantaged in our society, and, finally, the Democratic Party's vision for our national security.

Edwards began his address by reviewing John Kerry's long career of public service and distinguished leadership, beginning with Kerry's record of military service.

For those who want to know what kind of leader he'll be, I want to take you back about 30 years. When John Kerry graduated college, he volunteered for military service, volunteered to go to Vietnam, volunteered to captain a swift boat, one of the most dangerous duties in Vietnam you could have. As a result, he was wounded, honored for his valor... So when a man volunteers to serve his country, the man volunteers and puts his life on the line for others, that's a man who represents real American values.

(Edwards, 2004)

Kerry's record of military service represented real American values; and while President George W. Bush was never mentioned by name, the depiction of Kerry as military hero provided a stark, if none too subtle, comparison to Bush who did not serve in Vietnam. Indeed, the leader of the Democratic Party would put country ahead of self.

Like many other speakers, Edwards utilized his family's narrative to describe his personal values and offer himself as an example of achieving the American Dream. He attributed much of his success, and values, to his parents.

My father, he worked in a mill all his life, and I still remember vividly the men and women who worked in that mill with him... My mother had a number of jobs... I was blessed to be the first person in my family to go to college. I worked my way through, and I had opportunities beyond my wildest dreams. (Edwards, 2004)

Once again, John Edwards' story of living the American Dream was a key element of the Democratic Party's branding. Specifically, that hard working, blue collar families, with a commitment to education, could succeed in securing the American Dream. The Democratic Party, as demonstrated by so many of its leaders, represented this promise – and reality – for all who hoped for a better life.

During his primary bid for the Democratic nomination, Edwards campaigned on the notion of two Americas: one for the elite and one for everyone else. He incorporated this concept into his convention address:

John Kerry and I believe that we shouldn't have two different economies in America: one for people who are set for life, they know their kids and their grandkids are going to be just fine; and then one for most Americans, people who live paycheck to paycheck.
(Edwards, 2004)

Here, we understood the Democratic Party, unlike Republicans, would work to even the playing field for all Americans.

Finally, Edwards discussed his party's vision for national security as a key element of Democratic branding. With the 2004 election as the first presidential contest to take place following the events of September 11, 2001, both parties sought to gain advantage on the issue of national security in the era of international terrorism. In speaking of our nation's military posture, Edwards proclaimed: "We will have one clear unmistakable message for Al Qaida and these terrorists: You cannot run. You cannot hide. We will destroy you (Edwards, 2004)." Edwards also described our nation's military commitments by noting, "But today, our great United States military is stretched thin. We've got more than 140,000 troops in Iraq, almost 20,000 in Afghanistan... That's why we will strengthen and modernize our military (Edwards, 2004)." While Democrats were often seen as ceding matters of military might and international warfare to the Republicans, it was clear the Democratic Party of 2004, with concerns of terrorism at the forefront, branded itself as the party combating terrorism and strengthening our nation's military

capacity. The somewhat hawkish proclamation of John Edwards, which “You cannot run. You cannot hide. We will destroy you.” positioned the Democrats as aggressively pursuing and eliminating terrorists.

Overall, John Edwards utilized his speech to emphasize four key areas of Democratic Party branding. First, Edwards explained that the Democratic Party had chosen a strong and proven leader who was committed to a lifetime of public service. Next, he used his family narrative as an example of the values needed to achieve the American Dream. Edwards also integrated his two America’s theme from his primary bid to argue the Democratic Party, unlike Republicans, would work to achieve a better life for all. Finally, Edwards sought to brand the Democrats as the party who would maintain a strong military to wage our nation’s war against terrorism.

Presidential Nominee Senator John Kerry. John Kerry began his acceptance address by declaring he was “reporting for duty (Kerry, 2004)” to set the tone that this former military hero, seeking to unseat a President who had avoided military service, was ready to take up his new assignment as our nation’s Commander-in-Chief. Again, the post 9/11 period in American politics had clearly influenced the usual branding of the Democratic Party. Throughout his address, Kerry developed four key themes of the Democrat’s 2004 party brand. First, he used his family narrative to indicate the importance of service which was instilled in him at an early age. Next, he developed the usual need for change theme proffered by the party seeking to unseat an incumbent president. Kerry also expanded on Democrat’s branding surrounding national security and terrorism. Finally, Kerry discussed several key policies that would be part of the party’s 2004 issue brand.

Kerry used his family narrative to show the legacy of public service he grew up with and how this informed his own commitment to service. Kerry spoke of both of his parents’ commitment to service.

I was born in Colorado, in Fitzsimmons Army Hospital, when my dad was a pilot in World War II... She was my den mother when I was a Cub Scout and she was so proud of her fifty-year pin as a Girl Scout leader... When I was a young man, he was in the State Department, stationed in Berlin when it and the world were divided between democracy and communism. (Kerry, 2004)

Kerry's record of family service provided a useful training ground for his own commitment to public service; and the value of serving others he learned from his parents was a qualification desirable for presidential service.

Kerry also made clear the need for change in the White House. By painting a picture of America in crisis, Kerry implored the nation that "we can do better."

My fellow Americans, this is the most important election of our lifetime. The stakes are high. We are a nation at war, a global war on terror against an enemy unlike any we have ever known before. And here at home, wages are falling, health care costs are rising, and our great middle class is shrinking... We can do better and we will. We're the optimists.

For us, this is a country of the future. We're the people that can do it. (Kerry, 2004)

Here, Kerry provided a clear comparison of the nation under the current Republican leadership, and the opportunity – with the Democrats – to do better.

Kerry next continued to expand the Democratic Party brand through the party's commitment to a strong military and commitment to our national security and winning the ongoing war on terrorism. In describing his plan to strengthen our armed forces, Kerry announced:

We will add 40,000 active duty troops, not in Iraq, but to strengthen American forces that are now overstretched, overextended, and under pressure... I will fight a smarter, more effective war on terror. We will deploy every tool in our arsenal: our economic as well as our military might; our principles as well as our firepower. (Kerry, 2004)

The military hero John Kerry pledged that he “would fight a smarter, more effective war on terror” – smarter and more effective than the current Commander-in-Chief Bush. The emphasis Kerry placed on building and strengthening American military forces and on “deploy[ing] every tool in our arsenal” to fight the war on terror highlights the Democratic Party’s need to incorporate military strength and aggression in fighting terrorism as a key element of the party’s post 9/11 brand.

Finally, only after the development of his military and war on terror plans, John Kerry also noted several additional issues included as part of the Democrat’s 2004 policy agenda. Each of the policies were discussed in the frame of a citizen’s personal life or narrative, concluding that help was on the way once John Kerry and the Democrats were returned to the White House. In speaking of lost jobs, for example, Kerry shared:

What does it mean in America today when Dave McCune, a steel worker I met in Canton, Ohio, saw his job sent overseas and the equipment in his factory literally unbolted, crated up, and shipped thousands of miles away along with that job? What does it mean when workers I’ve met had to train their foreign replacements? America can do better... help is on the way. (Kerry, 2004)

Kerry used this same pattern of personal narrative to discuss citizens’ struggles with health insurance, protecting pensions and retirement funds, air pollution, and fighting poverty. In each case, Kerry concluded that America could do better, and help was on the way.

Overall, John Kerry used his address to develop four main themes as part of the Democrat’s 2004 branding. First, he utilized his personal family narrative to describe a family of public servants, with John Kerry the next in line for presidential service. Also, he discussed the need for change in our national leadership. Next, he expanded on previous speakers’ attempts to brand the Democratic Party as the party of national security, military strength and executing an aggressive war on terrorism. Finally, Kerry discussed several key policies by using the personal

narratives of citizens, the struggles they experienced in their daily lives, but with “help on the way” once John Kerry made it to the White House.

Summary of the 2004 Democratic Convention Branding. The 2004 Democratic Party branded itself through its key convention speeches in several ways. One theme that reoccurred had the speaker recounting their own family narratives, often narratives of struggle and overcoming great odds, yet in the end succeeding and achieving the American Dream. The moral of this story was that anyone, through hard work, the right values and perseverance, could also succeed. Several of the addresses also sought to brand the Democratic Party as the party of hope. With America at its darkest hour fighting against world terrorism, Democrats offered the nation and the world a shining ray of hope for a better America and safer world. In the aftermath of September 11, the Democratic Party depicted itself as the party of a strong military, engaged national security and eager to wage the war on terror. Barack Obama emphasized the idea of unity in national community and willingness to care for one another as a key feature of the Democratic brand; and Teresa Heinz Kerry invoked the frame of American Exceptionalism to extend the call of our citizens’ service to others to include all those who yearn for freedom around the world. Finally, John Kerry added several key domestic policy issues to the Democrat’s 2004 issue brand.

2008 Democratic Convention

The 2008 Democratic Convention built off of the attempt of a “changing of the guard” that occurred during the 2004 Democratic meeting. In 2004, Barack Obama was a candidate running for his first term in the U.S. Senate. Just four years later, he accepted the nomination for president as the first African-American to be nominated by a major party. In addition to Obama’s acceptance speech, major addresses were given by keynote speakers Virginia Governor Mark Warner and Senator Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama, and Vice-Presidential Nominee Joe Biden.

The party used several speeches to advance its brand in a number of important ways. First, several of the speeches continued to develop narratives of the American Dream as a key

part of Democratic branding. With the Democratic Party once again out of power, many speeches also addressed a need for change in the White House with the Democrats providing the needed change that would move America into the future. Several speeches also addressed the Democratic Party and Barack Obama's record of service and success in creating better lives for Americans. Finally, Obama offered a policy agenda as part of the Democrat's 2008 party brand.

Keynote Speaker Governor Mark Warner. Governor Warner used his address to develop three themes as part of the party's brand. First, he discussed his personal narrative as an example of the American Dream and the Democratic Party as uniquely capable of restoring that dream for all. Next, he branded the Democrats as the party of the future while indicating that the Republicans were the party of the past. Finally, he emphasized the Democratic Party's record of success offering as evidence his accomplishments as Virginia Governor.

Warner began his address by talking about his personal family narrative, providing this story – as so many other convention speakers had before him – as an example of the American Dream, a dream that the Democrats and Barack Obama would restore for all of America.

I was the first in my family to graduate from college... After I graduated law school, it didn't take long to realize America really wouldn't miss me as a lawyer. So I started a business... There's only one country in the world where I could have received that education... and that's this country: the United States of America. At our best it's not your lineage or last name that matters... In America, everyone should get a fair shot... And Barack Obama is running to restore that fair shot for every American. (Warner, 2008)

Perhaps not nearly as dramatic as Roosevelt's "new deal," or even Harry Truman's "fair deal," Warner used his narrative of success as an example of Barack Obama's "fair shot." Here, like Warner, if Americans worked hard, got an education, and perhaps "with luck," they too would have a shot at the American dream, no matter their "lineage or last name."

Warner next shifted to branding the Democratic Party as the party of the future. Here, he argued it was not political ideology driving the election, but rather the decision to move forward or go backwards.

Because this election isn't about liberal versus conservative. It's not about left versus right. It's about the future versus the past. In this election, at this moment, in our history, we know what the problems are. We know that at this critical juncture we have only one shot to get it right. And we know that these new times demand new thinking. (Warner, 2008)

The Democrats, according to Warner, represented the party of "new thinking" and the party of the future, versus the Republicans as the party of the past unable to adapt to the new realities our nation was facing.

Finally, Warner recounted his own success while Governor of Virginia as an example of effective Democratic leadership. "We made record investments in education and job training. We got 98 percent of our eligible kids enrolled in our children's health care program. We delivered broadband to the most remote areas of our state (Warner, 2008)." Warner depicted the Democratic Party as one of achievement, capable of getting things done to improve the lives of Americans when given the opportunity to lead.

Overall, Mark Warner utilized his speech to brand the Democratic Party in three ways. First, he used his personal narrative of living the American Dream as argument that Barack Obama and the Democrats would work to restore this dream for all. Next, Warner framed the election as a battle of returning to the past, with the Republicans, versus moving forward to the future with the Democratic Party. Finally, he used his record in Virginia as an indication of what Americans could expect if they allow Democrats to lead again.

Keynote Speaker Senator Hillary Clinton. As Barack Obama's main primary opponent, Hillary Clinton's role at this convention was to reunite the party after a divisive primary campaign. Within the context of that goal, Clinton emphasized two key areas of

Democratic brand development. First, she discussed a clear need for change with the Democratic Party providing the necessary change. She also presented the Democrats as the party of the people and touted Barack Obama's record of working on behalf of all people.

Clinton began her address by focusing on the need for change, arguing the Democratic Party provided the change Americans most needed. First, she described what the past eight years had brought the American public.

Jobs lost, houses gone, falling wages, rising prices. The Supreme Court in a right-wing headlock and our government in a partisan gridlock. The biggest deficit in our nation's history. Money borrowed from the Chinese to buy oil from the Saudis. Putin and Georgia, Iraq, and Iran. (Clinton, 2008)

With a recitation of the many maladies which had befallen our land, Clinton was framed America as in desperate need of change. She next argued change would not come easy but would only come with the election of a Democrat. "This won't be easy. Progress never is. But it will be impossible if we don't fight to put a Democrat in the White House (Clinton, 2008)." Here, Clinton succinctly branded the Democratic Party as the party of change, noting both the necessity for change and the form that change must take, returning a Democratic president to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Clinton next described Barack Obama's record of working for the people as proof the Democratic Party was the party that put people first. In discussing Obama's early career as a community organizer, which gave him insight into the needs of the working class, she noted: "Barack Obama began his career fighting for workers displaced by the global economy... He knows government must be about 'we the people' not 'we the favored few (Clinton, 2008).'" Again, according to Clinton, Democrats worked for and represented not just the elite or "favored few," but rather all citizens – "we the people" – and particularly those Americans who may be struggling and in need of help.

Hillary Clinton's presence and strong endorsement of Barack Obama was needed to emphasize party unity. Her address developed two key facets of the Democratic Party brand. First, she made a strong case that after eight years of Republican rule there was a clear need for change in the land and Democrats would provide the desperately needed change. Clinton also developed the Democratic brand as the party which sought a better life for all people rather than a party, like the Republicans, who favored the privileged few.

Nominee Spouse Michelle Obama. Michelle Obama's address focused entirely on her husband as she presented two different pictures of Barack Obama, one as husband and family man followed by Obama's life of public service dedicated to helping others. Both portraits were designed to praise her husband and made the case that the nation should turn to her husband as the leader of our nation.

Michelle Obama began with a discussion of the similarities between her family and Barack's family, sharing that the type of values their families had instilled in them were the values they were passing along to their daughters.

He was raised by grandparents who were working class folks just like my parents, and by a single mother who struggled to pay the bills just like we did... And Barack and I were raised with so many of the same values: that you work hard for what you want in life; that your word is your bond and you do what you say you're going to do; that you treat people with dignity and respect, even if you don't know them, and even if you don't agree with them. (M. Obama, 2008)

The values that Michelle and Barack Obama were raised by, the very same values they used in raising their own daughters, were the values they wished for all children of our nation. Once again, the Obama's personal narrative of life success provided a blueprint for all citizens to employ in achieving their dreams, in realizing their own version of the American Dream. Obama also spoke of her husband's lifelong commitment to public service:

Because I believe that each of us, no matter what our age or background or walk of life, each of us has something to contribute to the life of this nation... It's what he did all those years ago, on the streets of Chicago, setting up job training... and after school programs... working block by block to help people lift up their families. (M. Obama, 2008)

Here we find once again, drawn from his personal story, that Barack Obama was worthy of the high office of President of the United States as he had devoted his entire life helping others create a better life for themselves. Barack Obama's community organizing "on the streets of Chicago" became an often-used reference for his qualifications to be president, with emphasis on his commitment to helping those in need.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Joe Biden. Biden's address was largely a variation on themes heard in previous speeches as he sought to reinforce three major elements of the Democrat's 2008 branding. First, Biden, like so many speakers before him, utilized his personal family narrative as an illustration of achieving the American Dream. Next, he spoke of the need for change and presented Barack Obama and the Democratic Party as the very change our nation needed. Finally, again as others had done, Biden spoke of Barack Obama's dedication to public service.

Biden began his speech by describing his own upbringing and the values he learned from his parents.

My mother's creed is the American creed: No one is better than you. Everyone is your equal, and everyone is equal to you. My parents taught us to live our faith and treasure our families. We learned the dignity of work, and we were told that anyone can make it if they just try hard enough... And for those of us who grew up in middle-class neighborhoods like Scranton and Wilmington, that was the American Dream. (Biden, 2008)

Here, we find Biden's version of pursuing and achieving the American Dream, a narrative not much different from previous speakers: a love of faith and family and a commitment to hard work as the sure path to achieving this dream. Leaders of the Democratic Party, and their spouses, seemed to all hail from the middle and working class; and guided by strong families and family values. These individuals provided a model for achieving the American Dream.

Next, Biden transitioned to discussing the need for change in our nation, and specifically how Democratic leadership was needed to help citizens realize the American Dream.

Today that American Dream feels like it's slowly slipping away. I don't have to tell you that. You feel it every single day in your own lives. I've never seen a time when Washington has watched so many people get knocked down without doing anything to help them back up. (Biden, 2008)

With Americans feeling left behind by the past eight years of Republican leadership, Biden made clear the change that was needed: "We don't have to accept the situation we cannot bear; we have the power to change it. And changing it is exactly what Barack Obama will do (Biden, 2008)."

Finally, Biden continued to make the case that Barack Obama's lifetime of public service was indicative of the type of selfless leadership that Obama and the Democrats would bring to the White House:

With all of his talent and promise, he could have written his own ticket to Wall Street. But what did he choose to do? He chose to go to Chicago, the south side of Chicago. There in the south side, he met women and men who had lost their jobs. Their neighborhood devastated when the local steel plant closed. Their dreams had to be deferred, their self-esteem gone. And, ladies and gentlemen, he made their lives the work of his life. (Biden, 2008)

Barack Obama was constructed as the embodiment of the Democratic Party. His public service transcended self-interest and gain, dedicating his efforts to helping those less fortunate, those

whose lives had been destroyed and needed rebuilding. As President, Obama would continue to make the lives of all our nation's citizens the work of his life.

Joe Biden emphasized three key themes as part of the Democratic Party's 2008 branding. First, he discussed his family narrative as indicative of the type of values he possessed, and that others should possess, to achieve the American Dream. Next, Biden discussed the need for change with Barack Obama and the Democratic Party presented as the solution which would bring about change. Finally, Biden spoke of Obama's public service record to demonstrate that Democrats were the party of selfless service and most in tune with the needs of working class and struggling Americans.

Presidential Nominee Senator Barack Obama. Obama's acceptance address was given not in the convention hall where all other speeches had been delivered, but instead at a nearby outdoor football stadium, Invesco Field in Denver, CO, where a crowd of some 80,000 supporters were assembled. Obama's address demonstrated his massive public appeal, and also his connection with middle-class "working families" which were central to his campaign and address. Throughout his speech, Obama developed two key themes as part of the Democratic Party's 2008 brand. First, as the presidential party that had been out of power for the past decade, he discussed the need for change in our nation and the Democrat's ability to provide change. Obama also discussed several key policies which featured prominently in the party's branding.

Obama began his speech by making the case for change, recounting how the previous eight years had been disastrous for many Americans.

Tonight more Americans are out of work and more are working harder for less. More of you have lost your homes and even more are watching your home values plummet...

These challenges are not all of government's making. But the failure to respond is a direct result of broken politics in Washington and the failed policies of George W. Bush.

(B. Obama, 2008)

Obama clearly laid these problems at the doorstep of Republicans, and particularly the incumbent Republican President. The Democratic nominee would go even further in calling on Republicans to take responsibility for their failed policies: “Well it’s time for them to own their failure. It’s time for us to change America. You see, we Democrats have a very different measure of what constitutes progress in the country (B. Obama, 2008).” Obama’s pivot from blaming the Republicans and calling for change proceeded to a rather detailed description of policy correctives that would be pursued by the Democrats and an Obama Administration. Having left to previous speaker’s discussion of his personal biography and family history, and also his history of public service, Obama’s address was largely a policy agenda for fixing the various problems created by the Republicans. The first policy area Obama emphasized was energy independence.

Washington’s been talking about oil addiction for the last 30 years, and John McCain has been there for 26 of them. In that time, he’s said no to higher fuel-efficiency standards for cars, no to investments in renewable energy, no to renewable fuels... I’ll help our auto companies retool, so that the fuel-efficient cars of the future are built right here in America... And I’ll invest 150 billion dollars over the next decade in affordable, renewable sources of energy... an investment that will lead to new industries and 5 million new jobs that pay well and can’t ever be outsourced. (B. Obama, 2008)

Here, Obama turned his attention and attack on his opponent, Senator John McCain, who Obama depicted as “Senator No” in solving our nation’s energy problems. He also developed the idea that Senator McCain had been part of the problem, for 26 of the last 30 years, while Obama’s ideas of the future – emphasizing clean technology, harnessing nuclear power, cars of the future – reinforced the notion that Obama was a “new generation” leader of the future to McCain’s past vision of no solutions.

Obama next focused his attention on economic issues and provided an economic plan that addressed tax reform, bankruptcy laws, equal pay, and affordable health care.

Now is the time to finally keep the promise of affordable, accessible health care for every single American... Now is the time to change bankruptcy laws, so that your pensions are protected ahead of CEO bonuses; and the time to protect Social Security for future generations. And now is the time to keep the promise of equal pay for an equal day's work... I'll pay for every dime by closing corporate loopholes and tax havens that don't help America grow. But I will also go through the federal budget, line by line, eliminating programs that no longer work... because we cannot meet 21st century challenges with a 20th century bureaucracy. (B. Obama, 2008)

Obama's ideas for the 21st century included his signature policy promise, that of "health care for every single American," and other initiatives designed to help those who were struggling with various types of financial security. He next turned his attention to foreign policy and national security, pledging:

I will end this war in Iraq responsibly, and finish the fight against Al Qaida and the Taliban in Afghanistan. I will rebuild our military to meet future conflicts. But I will also renew the tough, direct diplomacy that can prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and curb Russian aggression. (B. Obama, 2008)

Barack Obama's nomination acceptance address was notable in its detailed issue development and long list of policy initiatives that a President Obama would pursue. While most acceptance addresses are much more epideictic in nature, celebrating our nation's communal values, these addresses tended to speak in more general terms regarding specific policy proposals. The Democrat's 2008 convention and branding of the party and its presidential nominee left much of the praise of shared values, particularly pursuit of the American Dream, and praise of the values and character of the nominee, to its keynote and other surrogate speakers. Barack Obama's nomination acceptance address was a call for change, and a call for the Republicans to own the problems they had created or refused to solve, with Obama providing rather detailed policy development of the issues facing our nation and that he would work to solve once in office.

Summary of the 2008 Democratic Convention Branding. The five addresses given during the 2008 Republican convention created a cohesive party brand image which echoed throughout each speech. The first brand element developed was the Democrat's championing of the American Dream. Several speakers used their personal or family narratives to illustrate their own struggles and achievement of the American Dream, and as pledge that the Democratic Party was committed to restoring this dream for all Americans. The theme of change was also articulated throughout each of the convention's addresses. The change theme was most often framed as changing from the problems of the past, created or allowed to continue by the Republicans, to solutions for a brighter future provided by the Democrats. There was also an emphasis on Democrats' record of effective public service, particularly of Barack Obama's service as a community organizer in Chicago, and Democrats' commitment to improving the lives of middle and working-class Americans. Finally, Barack Obama provided a detailed policy agenda he would pursue as President, compared to the policy failures of Republican leaders.

2012 Democratic Convention

The 2012 Democratic Convention was a somewhat unusual moment for the Democratic Party, that of making their case that the nation should "stay the course" with the incumbent Democratic President Barack Obama. In fact, the last time the Democrats had to make such a case was in 1996 with the re-election of Bill Clinton. Perhaps to remind the nation and party that Democrats could and should successfully serve consecutive terms, former President Bill Clinton was a featured speaker at the 2012 convention. San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro delivered a keynote speech, highlighting yet another rising star of the party – much like Barack Obama's keynote address in 2004 – and also to highlight the diversity of the Democratic Party. The other featured speakers included First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and President Barack Obama.

Throughout the five speeches several key themes appeared as part of the Democrat's 2012 re-election branding. First, most of the speeches highlighted successes of the previous four

years and made the argument to stay the course under Barack Obama's proven leadership. Next, many speeches attacked Republicans as out of touch while acclaiming Democrats as in tune with the needs of average Americans. Castro and Michelle Obama discussed their family narratives in the context of values and the American Dream. Michelle Obama continued to emphasize her husband's past work as a community organizer and the influence of this role on his current job. Bill Clinton placed Obama's first term in comparison to his own presidency in order to demonstrate the history of Democratic administrations and particularly the success of Obama's four years in office. Finally, Obama added key policy initiatives as part of his re-election branding effort.

Keynote Speaker San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro. Castro used his keynote address to develop two key elements of the Democratic Party's branding. First, Castro used the rather common convention address trope of projecting his family's personal story as a version of the American Dream narrative. Castro also attacked the Republican brand while acclaiming the Democratic Party brand.

Castro began his speech by discussing his grandmother's unlikely journey to the United States, a journey that culminated in Castro becoming mayor of the very city to which she immigrated.

My grandmother was an orphan. As a young girl, she had to leave her home in Mexico and move to San Antonio, where some relatives agreed to take her in. She never made it past the fourth grade... By the time my brother and I came along, this incredible woman had taught herself to read and write in both Spanish and English... My grandmother didn't live to see us begin our lives in public service. But she probably would have thought it extraordinary that just two generations after she arrived in San Antonio, one grandson would be the mayor and the other would be on his way, the good people of San Antonio willing, to the United States Congress. (Castro, 2012)

Castro used his grandmother's life to show the promise of the American Dream for many immigrant families. Once again, a Democratic Party leader demonstrated that through hard work and perseverance, even the most vulnerable in our society – those individuals championed by the Democratic Party – could achieve their own American Dream.

Castro also used his address to attack Republican policies and brand as harmful to average Americans while acclaiming the Democratic brand. Castro focused his attacks particularly on economic issues.

We know that in our free market economy some will prosper more than others. What we don't accept is the idea that some folks won't even get a chance... The Romney-Ryan budget doesn't just cut public education, cut Medicare, cut transportation, and cut job training. It doesn't just pummel the middle class, it dismantles it. (Castro, 2012)

In contrast to the Republican's cutting, pummeling, and dismantling the middle class, Castro provided a glimpse of the Democrat's treatment of middle and working class America: "When Detroit was in trouble, President Obama saved the auto industry and saved a million jobs... He made a historic investment to lift our nation's public schools and expanded Pell grants so that more young people can afford college (Castro, 2012)." On economic issues related to middle class success, Castro provided voters with a stark comparison of the two parties. While Republicans sought to dismantle the middle class, Democrats, led by Barack Obama, were saving millions of jobs, investing in public schools and making college more affordable. Julian Castro branded the Democratic Party in two important ways with his keynote address. First, he used his grandmother's narrative to show an immigrant's story of fulfilling the American Dream. Castro also highlighted the Democratic Party's commitment to the middle class, while attacking Republicans for seeking to destroy working and middle class America.

Keynote Speaker President Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton came to the 2012 convention as a former president tasked with situating President Barack Obama within the context of successful presidents, and also to urge Americans to stay the course with the incumbent Democratic

President. Clinton made the case for Obama's reelection by emphasizing three elements of the Democratic Party brand. First, he compared the Republican and Democratic philosophies to governing, attacking the Republican approach while acclaiming the Democratic way. Next, Clinton examined the successes of the previous four years to show that Barack Obama had proven himself an effective leader that Americans should return to the White House. Finally, Clinton used his own record as President as an indication of what Americans could expect from a second Obama term. Clinton's focus on this front was to demonstrate a history of success with Democratic Presidents.

Clinton began his address by comparing Republican and Democratic philosophies for governing the nation. He exclaimed, "You see, we believe that 'we're all in this together' is a far better philosophy than 'you're on your own' (Clinton, 2012)." Clinton's very basic comparison of the two parties' philosophies succinctly captured the Democratic brand of uniting and helping one another versus the Republican's brand of looking out for one's self and promoting self-interests.

Clinton also sought to tout the Democratic Party as the party of proven leaders. He spoke first of Barack Obama's successes as President, and also his own successes as a two-term President. Clinton first made his case that America should stay the course with Obama.

He inherited a deeply damaged economy. He put a floor under the crash. He began the long, hard road to recovery and laid the foundation for a modern, more well-balanced economy that will produce millions of good new jobs, vibrant new businesses and lots of new wealth for innovators. (Clinton, 2012)

Under Barack Obama's leadership, our "deeply damaged economy" was on its way back to prosperity; and this was just one of many reasons Clinton claimed Obama deserved a second term.

Clinton assured voters, based on his own success as President, which the nation, under Obama's leadership, was on the right path. Clinton's "expert testimony" was designed to assure

voters that things were headed in the right direction and the nation should just stay the course for four more years.

I had the same thing happen in 1994 and early '95. We could see that the policies were working, that the economy was growing. But most people didn't feel it yet. Thankfully, by 1996 the economy was roaring, everybody felt it, and we were halfway through the longest peacetime expansion in the history of the United States... He has laid the foundation for a new, modern, successful economy of shared prosperity. And if you will renew the president's contract, you will feel it. (Clinton, 2012)

Perhaps like no other Democrat could do, as the only living two-term Democratic President who could vouch for the current incumbent, Bill Clinton made the case, using his own success, that Barack Obama too would succeed if given a second term.

Bill Clinton's address was designed to develop the Democratic Party's brand in three ways. First, he attacked the Republican brand as each man – mostly – for himself, “you're on your own;” and acclaimed the Democratic brand as united in a common goal, “we're all in this together.” Clinton also made the case that the nation should stay the course with an Obama second term, drawing on his own successes as a two-term President to assure voters the nation was headed in the right direction.

Nominee Spouse First Lady Michelle Obama. Michelle Obama's spousal address in 2012 was much like her address of 2008. She first discussed the Obama's family stories as an example of the American Dream narrative. Next, she discussed her husband's lifetime of service as an example of the Democratic Party's ideal of selfless service.

Obama began by recounting that she and her husband had similar family backgrounds and similar family values that accompanied their upbringing.

You see, Barack and I were both raised by families who didn't have much in the way of money or material possessions but who had given us something far more valuable: their

unconditional love, their unflinching sacrifice and the chance to go places they never had imagined for themselves. (M. Obama, 2012)

Next came the conclusion that families guided by such values would, in the end, realize the American Dream.

They simply believed in that fundamental American promise that, even if you don't start out with much, if you work hard and do what you're supposed to do, then you should be able to build a decent life for yourself and an even better life for your kids and grandkids. (M. Obama, 2012)

Once again, citizens were reminded that through hard work and doing "what you're supposed to do," even those with little "money or material possessions" could achieve "that fundamental American promise," the American Dream. Michelle Obama actually went a bit further than others in specifying this elusive dream, which is defined as a "decent life for yourself and an even better life for your kids and grandkids."

Michelle Obama also reminded citizens of her husband's lifetime of service, and how his days as a community organizer still guided his philosophy of serving and leading.

He is the same man who started his career by turning down high paying jobs and instead working in struggling neighborhoods where a steel plant had shut down, fighting to rebuild those communities and get folks back to work... because for Barack, success isn't about how much money you make, it's about the difference you make in people's lives. (M. Obama, 2012)

Even though he occupied the highest office in the land, Barack Obama "is the same man" who cared about those struggling to find jobs. Obama, and the Democratic brand, did not care about "how much money you make," but rather about making a "difference... in people's lives."

Michelle Obama's address sought to brand the Democratic Party in two ways. First, she used personal family narratives to discuss the values both Barack and Michelle learned while growing up, values that were necessary for realizing the American Dream. She also continued her

construal of Barack Obama as a selfless public servant, indicative of a fundamental value of the Democratic Party.

Vice President Joe Biden. In his address, Joe Biden described Barack Obama's tested leadership of the past four years as primary reason to stay the course for a second Obama-Biden term. He also attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with American voters, while the Democratic brand represented the party of the future.

Biden began by acclaiming Democratic successes of the past four years, focusing on two areas of success including the economy and the war on terror. When speaking of the economy, Biden focused particularly on the auto industry.

In the first days, literally the first days that we took office, General Motors and Chrysler were literally on the verge of liquidation. If the president didn't act, if he didn't act immediately, there wouldn't be any industry left to save... Conviction, resolve, Barack Obama. That's what saved the automobile industry. (Biden, 2012)

Here, Biden provided a clear case of Barack Obama's tested and proven leadership. With no time whatsoever for a learning curve, in just the first few days upon taking office, Obama drew upon his "intuitive understanding", "conviction and resolve," to save the U.S. automobile industry. Biden also described Obama's proven leadership in the international and national security arenas.

Barack understood that the search for Bin Laden was about a lot more than taking a monstrous leader off the battlefield... It was about healing an unbearable wound, a nearly unbearable wound in America's heart... Because of the calls he made, because of the determination of American workers and the unparalleled bravery of our special forces...

Osama Bin Laden is dead and General Motors is alive. (Biden, 2012)

In this rather interesting – somewhat odd – confluence of Osama Bin Laden with General Motors, we learned of Barack Obama's brave heart and as a leader with courage and determination to make the tough calls, whether in the field of military combat or in factories and boardrooms of America.

Biden also attacked the Republican brand as he compared the two parties' policies and approaches to governing, demonstrating key differences in the two brands. Each attack on a Republican idea or action was paired with an acclaim of how the Democratic President and/or Party would do the right thing. Speaking of taxes, Biden exclaimed:

Governor Romney believes it's ok to raise taxes on middle classes by \$2000 in order to pay for another, literally another trillion-dollar tax cut for the very wealthy. President Obama knows that there's nothing decent or fair about asking people with more to do less and with less to do more. (Biden, 2012)

Biden provided a litany of comparisons, including child immigrants brought to America by their parents, equal pay, and the outsourcing of jobs. On each issue, Republican actions and policies were found to cause harm or pain to citizens while the Democrats offered solutions to help those struggling or hurt by unfair government practices.

Joe Biden used his address to develop two common themes as part of the Democratic brand. First, he extolled the proven leadership of Barack Obama as evidence the nation should stay the course for four more years. Biden also attacked Republican policies and brand as unfair and hurtful, especially for middle and working-class Americans, while showing the Democratic brand and policies as far preferable.

President Barack Obama. President Obama's nomination acceptance address first discussed his record of proven leadership over the past four years. Next, he attacked the Republican brand as out of touch with the needs of middle and working-class citizens while promoting the Democratic brand as working on behalf of average Americans. Finally, Obama offered two policy initiatives which would be incorporated as part of the Democrat's 2012 issue brand.

Obama began his address by talking about his record of proven leadership, particularly in the area of national security.

You know, in a world of new threats and new challenges, you can choose leadership that has been tested and proven. Four years ago, I promised to end the war in Iraq. We did. I promised to refocus on the terrorists who actually attacked us on 9/11, and we have. We've blunted the Taliban's movement in Afghanistan; and in 2014, our longest war will be over. A new tower rises above the New York skyline, Al Qaida is on the path to defeat and Osama bin Laden is dead. (B. Obama, 2012)

Here, Obama's victories and promises kept on the national security and terrorism front were presented as Exhibit A in his case for re-election.

Obama also attacked the Republican brand through direct comparisons to Democratic successes. On Republican and Democratic approaches to tax cuts, Obama explained:

They want your vote, but they don't want you to know their plan. And that's because all they have to offer is the same prescriptions they've had for the last 30 years. Have a surplus? Try a tax cut. Deficit too high? Try another... Now I've cut taxes for those who need it; middle class families, small businesses. But I don't believe that another round of tax breaks for millionaires will bring good jobs to our shores, or pay down our deficit...

We have been there, we've tried that, and we're not going back. (B. Obama, 2012)

To reinforce his notion of forward movement with the Democrats, versus the backward policies of the Republicans, Obama concluded each of his litany of comparisons with the pledge, "we're not going back."

Finally, Obama discussed the policy initiatives he would pursue in a second term. His prime domestic agenda item included the enhancement of science education and greater access to college education for the working class. He asked citizens to join this effort:

Help me recruit 100,000 math and science teachers within 10 years and improve early childhood education. Help me give two million workers the chance to learn skills at their community colleges that will lead directly to a job. Help us work with colleges and

universities to cut in half the growth of tuition costs over the next 10 years. (B. Obama, 2012)

Obama also emphasized tax reform as a key policy in a second term.

I want to reform the tax code so that it's simple, fair, and asks the wealthiest households to pay higher taxes on incomes over \$250,000, the same rate we had when Bill Clinton was president, the same rate we had when our economy created nearly 23 million new jobs, the biggest surplus in history and a whole lot of millionaires to boot. (B. Obama, 2012)

Throughout Obama's policy initiatives the focus was on help to the middle and working class, perhaps the most consistent theme found in all of the Democrats' branding. The Democratic Party was led by those who had come from the working and middle class – those who had achieved the American Dream themselves – and the party's policies were designed to aid these citizens.

Overall, Barack Obama used his address to enhance the Democratic Party brand in three key ways. First, he proclaimed himself a tested and proven leader who had achieved great successes in his first term and deserving of a second. Next, he attacked the Republican Party brand as out of date and only interested in tax cuts largely for the wealthy, no matter the country's economic condition. Finally, Obama emphasized two key policies for his reelection campaign, including education and tax reform.

Summary of the 2012 Democratic Convention Branding. Throughout the 2012 Democratic Convention the main speakers developed several themes related to the party's branding. Julian Castro and Michelle Obama used family narratives to discuss American values in pursuit of the American Dream. Many of the speeches attacked the Republican brand as out of touch and promoted the Democratic brand as interested in helping average Americans. Several speeches recounted the past four years in order to show Barack Obama as a proven leader worthy of return to office. Finally, President Obama emphasized education and tax reform as two policies of focus for the 2012 Election.

2016 Democratic Convention

The 2016 Democratic Convention convened with a somewhat fractured party following a divisive primary battle between the former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Senator Bernie Sanders. The convention was meant to highlight the need for party unity and also to keep the Democratic Party in the White House for a third term, which historically voters have done on a very few occasions. This convention featured the largest roster of major speakers in the history of the modern nominating convention, with a total of six speakers: Keynote speakers Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senator Bernie Sanders, outgoing President Barack Obama, former President and candidate spouse Bill Clinton, Vice-Presidential Nominee Tim Kaine, and Presidential Nominee Hillary Clinton.

The six main addresses built upon previous party branding in many ways. First, the notion that the Democratic Party and its nominee were proven leaders was present in most of the addresses. Family and the American Dream were part of the addresses given by Bill Clinton and Warren. Warren also attacked the Republican brand as out of touch and wrong for America. Hillary Clinton integrated her campaign slogan, “Stronger Together,” as part of her party branding effort. Clinton also highlighted her role as the first female nominee for president to emphasize the Democrat’s branding as the party for women’s equality. Finally, she discussed several key policies initiatives as part of Democrat’s 2016 issue brand.

Keynote Speaker Senator Elizabeth Warren. Elizabeth Warren delivered the first of several keynote addresses to the convention, with each speech focusing on different aspects of the party’s brand. Warren’s speech focused on two themes of the Democratic brand. First, she discussed her family narrative as an example of the American Dream, like so many other Democratic Convention speakers had done before her. Next, she also attacked the Republican brand as a party seeking to dismantle many of the things the Democratic Party had achieved for middle and working class America.

Warren started by discussing her own family's narrative as an example of the American Dream.

I grew up in Oklahoma. My daddy ended up as a maintenance man, and my mom worked for minimum wage at Sears... The way I see it, I'm a janitor's daughter who became a public school teacher, a professor, and a United States Senator. America truly is a country of opportunity. (Warren, 2016)

Again, the Democrats put forward a leader of their party who hailed from working class roots and through hard work achieved the American Dream.

Warren next turned her attention to attacking Republicans, and more specifically Republican nominee Donald Trump, as the party which favored only the rich while working to dismantle policies that aid those in need. She exclaimed:

Donald Trump has no real plans for jobs or for college kids or for seniors, no plans to make anything great for anyone except rich guys like Donald Trump. Just look at his ideas. Donald Trump wants to get rid of the federal minimum wage. Donald Trump wants to roll back financial regulations and turn Wall Street loose to wreck our economy again. (Warren, 2016)

Warren's attacks on Trump and the Republicans provided a stark comparison between the two parties. The Republicans were concerned primarily with making life better, richer, for the wealthy, at the expense of those struggling to make ends meet. Democrats, however, understood the needs and struggles of average Americans, as evidenced by the fact the party's leaders – like Elizabeth Warren – came from the great working and middle class. The Democratic Party had championed and fought for those policies designed to aid working class citizens, policies which would be in jeopardy should Donald Trump be elected.

Overall, Elizabeth Warren used her address to emphasize two elements of Democratic Party branding. First, she used her personal narrative as an example of realizing the American

Dream. She also attacked Donald Trump and Republicans as out of touch with average Americans and branded Democrats as the anti-Trump party.

Keynote Speaker Senator Bernie Sanders. Bernie Sanders took the stage at the convention hoping to unite his vocal and sizable group of supporters behind Hillary Clinton after a long and contentious primary campaign. Sanders focused on one main theme in his address, that of party leadership and particularly the record of leadership exhibited by Secretary Clinton throughout her long career of public service.

Sanders began by describing the leadership provided by the Obama Administration: “We have come a long way in the last seven and a half years and I thank President Obama and Vice President Biden. I thank them for their leadership in pulling us out of that terrible recession (Sanders, 2016).” Next, Sanders quickly pivoted to praise of his primary opponent, acclaiming Hillary Clinton’s long record of public service and proven leadership.

I have known Hillary Clinton for 25 years. I remember her, as you do, as a great first lady who broke precedent in terms of the role that a first lady was supposed to play as she helped lead the fight for universal health care. I served with her in the United States Senate and know her as a fierce advocate for the rights of children, for women, and for the disabled. (Sanders 2016)

Throughout his address, Sanders spoke in very positive terms regarding Clinton’s leadership and legislative accomplishments, particularly of instances in which the two had worked together in the U.S. Senate. While Sanders’ supporters may not all have been convinced to line up behind the Democratic nominee, Bernie Sanders delivered a clear endorsement of his primary foe.

Keynote Speaker President Barack Obama. President Obama addressed the Democratic convention for the last time as president. During his address, he developed two key facets of the party’s brand. First, he framed the successes his Administration as Democratic Party successes. Then, he discussed Hillary Clinton’s proven record of leadership as evidence for her succeeding him in the Oval Office.

Obama began his address by recounting the long list of accomplishments from the past eight years of Democratic rule.

After the worst recession in 80 years, we've fought our way back. We've seen deficits come down, 401(k)s recover, an auto industry set new records, unemployment reach eight year lows, and our businesses create 15 million new jobs. After a century of trying, we declared health care in America is not a privilege for a few, but a right for everybody. After decades of talk, we finally began to ween ourselves off foreign oil, and doubled our production of clean energy. (Obama, 2016)

Obama's "we" in the many successes of the past eight years was the Democratic Party. He spoke of Democrats in Congress who fought for legislative victories, sometimes with no Republican support, and also of Democratic voters mobilizing and electing Democratic leaders who were willing to fight and win legislative battles. Barack Obama's "swan song" to the Democratic Party was not to relish in his accomplishments, but to brand his Administration's successes as Democratic successes.

Obama next shifted to discussing the proven leadership of Hillary Clinton. With her long resume of public service, Obama provided specific examples of her experience and leadership.

She's still got the heart she showed as our first lady, working with Congress to help push through a children's health insurance program that to this day protects millions of kids.

She's still seared with the memory of every American she met who lost loved ones on 9/11, which is why, as a Senator from New York, she fought so hard for funding to help first responders; why, as Secretary of State, she sat with me in the Situation Room and forcefully argued in favor of the mission that took out Bin Laden. (Obama, 2016)

Much like Bernie Sanders, Obama was able to draw on first-hand knowledge of Clinton's experience and accomplishments as he presented her as the obvious successor to continue his own legacy of presidential leadership and accomplishments. Barack Obama used his address to present the Democratic Party as the party of successful leadership throughout the past eight years. Obama

also served as chief character witness in making Hillary Clinton's case to succeed him as President.

Nominee Spouse President Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton addressed the 2012 convention not as a former president, but as the spouse of the presidential nominee. His address would, however, allow him to take on the dual role of former president and nominee spouse in order to expand on several facets of the Democratic brand. First, he discussed his wife's lifetime of public service. Next, in line with all other spousal addresses, Clinton discussed the Clinton family and family values. Finally, the former president described his wife as a proven leader who was ready to assume the tremendous responsibilities of the presidency.

Clinton began his address with discussion of his wife's lifetime of public service. While other speakers touted Hillary Clinton's experience gained through her formal roles in elected or appointed office, Bill Clinton noted his wife's public service even before she became First Lady. He described her work while he served as Governor of Arkansas: "She also started the first legal aid clinic in northwest Arkansas, providing legal aid services to poor people who couldn't pay for them (B. Clinton, 2016)." The various examples Bill Clinton provided of Hillary Clinton's little known public service before her time in Washington, DC had her assisting children and the poor, examples of work which demonstrated her commitment to helping others when there was little recognition or public reward.

Bill Clinton next turned to a discussion of the role family had played in their lives. He described his wife as a dedicated wife and mother.

Hillary first and foremost was a mother. She became, as she often said, our family's designated worrier, born with an extra responsibility gene. The truth is we rarely disagreed on parenting, although she did believe that I had gone a little over the top when I took a couple of days off with Chelsea to watch all six *Police Academy* movies back-to-back. (B. Clinton, 2016)

As our first female presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton was often criticized as “cold” or somehow too “masculine” in her quest for political power. Yet, Bill Clinton described his wife as the “worried” mother, someone who cared for her family as much as any parent would. Finally, Bill Clinton described his wife as a strong and proven leader.

Her early years were dominated by 9/11, by working to fund the recovery, then monitoring the health and providing compensation to victims and first and second responders... In 2003, partly spurred on by what we were going through, she became the first senator from New York ever to serve on the Armed Services Committee. (B. Clinton, 2016)

By drawing on Hillary Clinton’s years in the U.S. Senate, as a member of the Armed Services Committee and particularly her response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Bill Clinton was able to bolster his wife’s *bona fides* in military affairs and international terrorism, areas of expertise which may not be readily afforded our nation’s first female Commander-in-Chief.

Bill Clinton’s address focused on three key areas of the Democratic brand. First, he emphasized his wife’s lifetime of public service to emphasize the Democratic Party’s commitment to helping those in need. Next, he discussed the Clinton family and family values, particularly the nurturing and maternal role his wife played in the Clinton household, perhaps to combat her image as the much too cold and calculating – female – political leader. Finally, he reinforced his wife’s tested and proven leadership, especially in the areas of military affairs and terrorism.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Tim Kaine. Tim Kaine’s acceptance address described his own record of proven leadership; and he also discussed the leadership of his running mate, Hillary Clinton. Kaine began his address by describing his history of public leadership, first as Virginia governor before transitioning to his time in the U.S. Senate.

I was a hard times governor. I had to steer my state through the deepest recession since the 1930’s... We invested in our people expanding pre-K and higher ed., because we all

know in this room that education is the key to all we want to be, all we want to be. And now I have the honor of representing my commonwealth in the U.S. Senate. I worked on the Armed Services and Foreign Relations committees to keep us safe at home and strong in the world. (Kaine, 2016)

Kaine's leadership biography also incorporated his public policy portfolio, including his commitment to education and military and foreign affairs.

Kaine next discussed the proven leadership of Hillary Clinton. Like Obama and Bill Clinton, Kaine also focused on Clinton's leadership in the U.S. Senate and as Secretary of State:

She battled congressional Republicans to care for the first responders who went into the Towers, who went into the Pentagon and saved the victims from those terrorist attacks.

As Secretary of State, she implemented tough sanctions against Iran to pave the way for a diplomatic breakthrough to curtail a nuclear weapons program. (Kaine, 2016)

Once again, Hillary Clinton was depicted as a strong leader and a fighter – she was “tough,” she “battled” and “fought” – especially in matters dealing with terrorist attacks and with one of the Axes of Evil, Iran. Indeed, the various testimonials provided by her Democratic colleagues depicted Hillary Clinton as a “tough” leader ready and willing to keep the American people safe.

Presidential Nominee Secretary Hillary Clinton. Hillary Clinton addressed the Democratic convention as the first female nominee for president from either major political party. Her speech developed five themes by which she sought to brand the Democratic Party she now led. First, she integrated her campaign slogan, “Stronger Together,” as part of the Democratic brand. Next, she emphasized her lifetime of service as demonstration of Democrats' commitment to serving others. She also touted her record of proven leadership as evidence she would continue strong Democratic leadership in the White House. She also sought to brand the Democratic Party as the party of equality and women's rights. Finally, she offered a policy agenda to represent the Democrats' 2016 issue brand.

Clinton sought to integrate her campaign slogan, “Stronger Together,” as a key element of the Democratic Party brand by emphasizing several enduring beliefs of the party. The notion of “Stronger Together” was more than a campaign slogan but rather an expression of the party’s guiding principles. She explained:

None of us can raise a family, build a business, heal a community, or lift a country alone... That’s why stronger together is not just a lesson from our history. It’s not just a slogan for our campaign. It’s a guiding principle for the country we’ve always been and the future we’re going to build. (H. Clinton, 2016)

Clinton’s “Stronger Together” was another instantiation of the Democratic principle of “we’re all in this together,” or even perhaps Hillary Clinton’s earlier dictum, “It takes a village.” Whichever phrase was the desired slogan of a particular Democratic candidate or campaign, this party stood for shared sacrifice and common effort. Our national success, according to the Democratic brand, occurred when Americans shared a common purpose and commitment to one another.

Clinton also discussed her lifetime of public service, which she described as the driving force which taught her action was necessary to affect positive change in the lives of others.

I went to work for the Children’s Defense Fund, going door-to-door in New Bedford, Massachusetts on behalf of children with disabilities who were denied the chance to go to school. I remember meeting a young girl in a wheelchair on the small back porch of her house... It became clear to me that simply caring wasn’t enough. To drive real progress, you have to change both hearts and laws... And our work helped convince Congress to ensure access to education for all students with disabilities. (H. Clinton, 2016)

With each of Clinton’s public service vignettes, she identified a problem and described the needed solution and resultant actions which addressed the problem. Hillary Clinton, branded herself as a problem solver who knew how to affect needed change.

Clinton also discussed her record of leadership while in Washington, DC. She focused initially on her role as Secretary of State and the night Osama bin Laden was killed: “I was still

thinking of Lauren, Debbie, and all the others ten years later in the White House Situation Room when President Obama made the courageous decision that finally brought Osama bin Laden to justice (H. Clinton, 2016).” Here, Clinton referenced individuals who died in the 9/11 attacks, and her role in bringing to justice the mastermind of those attacks, Osama bin Laden. Once again, Hillary Clinton’s proven record of national political leadership most often focused on her decisions and participation in matters dealing with terrorism and military affairs, to reinforce the notion that she was capable and ready to serve as our nation’s next Commander-in-Chief.

Next, Clinton observed the monumental occasion of her nomination as the first woman of a major political party for the presidency of the United States. This achievement, Clinton notes, is a victory for all women, indeed for all citizens.

Tonight, we’ve reached a milestone in our nation’s march toward a more perfect union:

The first time that a major party has nominated a woman for president... Happy for grandmothers and little girls and everyone in between. Happy for boys and men, too, because when any barrier falls in America, for anyone, it clears the way for everyone.

When there are no ceilings, the sky’s the limit. (H. Clinton, 2016)

Here, Clinton credited this victory to the Democratic Party, “the first time that a major party has nominated a woman for president,” bolstering the Democratic brand as the party of equality and champion of women’s rights. Notice, too, Clinton’s application of her guiding principle, “Stronger Together,” in her interpretation of this victory – not just for women, but for all citizens, “because when any barrier falls in America, for anyone, it clears the way for everyone.”

Finally, Clinton emphasized several key policies as part of the Democrat’s 2016 issue brand. She first spoke of campaign finance and voting reform: “We need to appoint Supreme Court justices who will get money out of politics and expand voting rights, not restrict them. And we’ll pass a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United (H. Clinton, 2016).” Next, Clinton discussed the need for immigration reform: “Comprehensive immigration reform will

grow our economy and keep families together, and it's the right thing to do (H. Clinton, 2016)."

Clinton also pushed for a new jobs program that focused on infrastructure improvements:

In my first 100 days, we will work with both parties to pass the biggest investment in new, good paying jobs since World War II... If we invest in infrastructure now, we'll not only create jobs today, but lay the foundation for the jobs of the future. (H. Clinton, 2016)

Clinton's policy initiatives further illustrated the Democratic brand of we're "Stronger Together," or "we're all in this together." From expanding voting rights to enfranchise more citizens, to limiting "big money" in politics to allow greater citizen involvement in the political process, to reforming immigration policies that would keep families intact, and providing jobs for all, Clinton's policy agenda was one of inclusion of all and helping our most vulnerable citizens.

Overall, Hillary Clinton focused on five key themes in her development of the Democrats' 2016 party brand. First, she integrated her campaign slogan of "Stronger Together" as part of the party's guiding philosophy. Next, she talked about her lifetime of service to illustrate what had shaped her focus in public life. She then pulled from her decisions and actions as a public official to argue her fitness as leader of the Democratic Party and the nation. Clinton also observed her nomination as the first women presidential candidate as an indication of the opportunity for all promoted by the Democratic Party. Finally, she introduced several policies as part of the party's 2016 issue brand.

Summary of the 2016 Democratic Convention Branding. The Democratic Convention focused on several key areas of party brand development for the 2016 Election. First, the party was branded as a party of public service and proven leadership. Two speakers also focused on family values and their role in achieving the American Dream. Elizabeth Warren attacked Donald Trump and Republicans as out of touch with average Americans and branded Democrats as the anti-Trump party. Hillary Clinton incorporated her slogan of "Stronger Together" as a component of the party's guiding philosophy. She also marked the occasion of her nomination as an

achievement of equal rights for all due to the Democratic Party's commitment to equality.

Finally, she offered several key policies as part of the Democrat's 2016 issue agenda.

The Democratic Party utilized their convention speeches to construct their branding.

Chapter six will explain how each convention was involved in constructing the overall enduring party branding and the role of each speech in contributing to the convention branding. Chapter five examined the convention addresses presented by the Republican Party.

Chapter Five: REPUBLICAN CONVENTION BRANDING

Chapter four's analysis focused on the branding of the Democratic Conventions, chapter five examines the branding created through the speeches given during the Republican Conventions. Within this chapter, the analysis demonstrates the ways in which the Republican Party and candidate brands differ from the Democrats. This chapter also examines the evolution of the Republican Party over the course of the five decades included as part of this analysis.

1972 Republican Convention

While the Democratic Party was focusing on rebranding itself as a unified, big tent party, the Republicans were hoping to demonstrate that the Nixon Administration was doing good work and should be given another four years. The four major speakers at the Republican's 1972 convention included Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar, Pat Nixon, Vice President Spiro Agnew, and President Richard Nixon. The main theme throughout the convention focused on the case for staying the course.

Keynote Speaker Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar. Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar's keynote speech contained one facet of the Republican Party brand, attacking the Democratic Party as radical and out of touch while the Republican Party is in tune with the needs the American People. The first part of this was the clear attack against Democrats. In what would become a dominant theme for the Party Lugar charged the Democratic nominee with radical, almost un-American ideas. Secondly, this branding argues who Republicans are and what they will do. These attacks and acclaims occur throughout the speech as the address was structured to demonstrate a clear comparison of the two party brands. The primary focus of Lugar's speech was to point out what the Republican Party would not do in a second Nixon term compared to what the Democrats would do if they won the election.

The first part of Lugar's speech attacked Democrats as radicals and reactionaries. Lugar specifically pointed to the potential election of McGovern as particularly dangerous. "We think the opposition candidate for president threatens radical change in each of these areas. Through

deliberate or inadvertent action, he must be defeated resoundingly to prevent unparalleled disaster at home and abroad (Lugar, 1972).” The Republicans viewed the brand created by McGovern and the Democrats as radically different and therefore dangerous to the nation and the world.

Continuing his address Lugar made acclaims about Republican ideals by pointing to policies that they would undertake, while simultaneously attacking Democrats at the same time:

We will not adopt isolationism. We will not forget our allies and then pretend we can come home to America to enjoy ourselves free from care or concern about the world. We will not cripple our Army, our Navy, our Air Force and then pretend we are still strong and able to defend our country and assist our allies... (Lugar, 1972)

Lugar very clearly stated that the Republicans would maintain a strong national defense to protect the nation and her allies. He went further:

In serving the United States of America, we will not confiscate the property that hardworking parents seek to pass on to their children... We will not perpetuate welfare into a way of life. Nor will we promise \$1000 a year out of someone else’s pocket for each man, woman, and child... We will not allow the fiction that a central government knows what’s best on all subjects and attempt to dictate local policies in matters of local education, safety, transportation, and environment. (Lugar, 1972)

These issues were discussed as clear attacks against Democrats while also acclaiming where Republicans stand as a party. Lugar (1972) closed his speech by once again following the theme of attacking Democrats while also extolling the virtues of Republicans by stating, “The Republican Party has not been captured by a minority wing of radicals and reactionaries. We are a party inspired by Lincoln.” While this was similar in the type of attack Lugar had utilized throughout, it was not tied to any particular issue but rather an attack on the full brand of the Democratic Party. At the same time, it assailed the Democrats as having been taken over by some of its most radical members, especially McGovern, it also noted that the Republican Party was the party of Lincoln and it had not strayed from the ideals expressed by Lincoln. It is very clear that

Lugar's address was meant to attack Democrats, and in those attacks, acclaim Republicans and Republican ideals as the virtuous brand.

Nominee Spouse First Lady Pat Nixon. Richard Nixon's wife, Pat, while speaking at the convention, offered only brief remarks rather than a full convention address. She first mentioned how unusual it was for her to be in the spotlight as she preferred to "stay in the wings" and outside of the glare of presidential politics. Her acknowledgement of the unusual nature of her appearance was meant to underscore the importance of the election. Nixon was popular with groups that were potentially not as enthusiastic about her husband. So, by giving her a moment to thank those groups, she was able to rally them behind her husband. Her appearance was well received, at least by those in the convention hall with the crowd's ovation lasting longer than her address. In response to the reception she received, Nixon made sure to thank everyone for their support, specifically calling out to the young people in the audience. "I want to thank all of you for your friendship and wonderful support. I shall remember it always. And thanks to the young people for the great welcome (P. Nixon, 1972)." By strategically recognizing the young people as part of the ovation she received, Nixon indicated that the Republican Party was a party that had many active young people. Traditionally, young people have been framed as Democrats and this statement was meant to draw attention to the youth within the Republican Party. Overall, Pat's very short, yet well-received speech, stressed a hoped for appeal to younger voters.

Vice President Spiro Agnew. Vice President Spiro Agnew's address presented three main themes throughout his address. The first theme contained a broad policy focus. The second theme was national unity. The final theme of Agnew's speech focused on the steadfast leadership that had been provided by President Nixon over the previous four years.

Agnew discussed policy broadly in a couple passages throughout his address. Early in his address, Agnew discussed making America the best possible home for all Americans. "It is to provide quality education for all Americans. It is to eradicate disease and eliminate poverty and reduce environmental pollution for all Americans (Agnew, 1972)." Agnew also provided contrast

between the Republican brand and the perceived Democratic brand on foreign affairs and the size of government. The references to both issues were presented as questions with clear-cut answers. In terms of foreign policy Agnew framed the question as do we continue to be a world power, or do we abandon our allies:

...should we continue to be a world power and exercise the international responsibilities that we assumed at the end of World War II or do we ignore the lessons of history, retreat into isolationism, abandon our allies, and concentrate wholly on our internal affairs at the great expense of our national security. (Agnew, 1972)

Agnew used a rhetorical question to demonstrate the clear need to maintain the United States' role in the international community, as any drawback would be disastrous. Agnew also posed a similar question as it relates to the size of government:

In domestic affairs, do we continue to decentralize massive federal bureaucracy in Washington and return some power and responsibility to the state and local governments, the governments closest to the people or do we go back to the discredited paternalism of the 60s adding more and more Washington directed social programs, costing more and more tax dollars. (Agnew, 1972)

The outcome of this rhetorical question was the same as the question regarding foreign policy. The answer was an obvious choice when framed in the way Agnew portrayed these issues, Nixon and the Republicans would do what was right and the Democrats would make the wrong choice. The mention of these areas was done in an effort to draw attention to the administration's strong record on these issues, building a foundation for an argument against changing leaders.

The next theme that Agnew emphasized in his address was that of national unity. In this theme, Agnew made the case that the Nixon Administration was not interested in partisan divides:

For this administration, there is only one America, whose citizens hold a common belief and the principles of equal treatment and fair play for all human beings. And those

principles are ill-served by those who would divide this nation into partisan blocks...we must work hard for the continued progress of one America. (Agnew, 1972)

Agnew utilized this argument to explain how the Nixon Administration promoted national unity and also raised concerns about the Democrats ability to unify a country after the events of their convention in 1968, which showed an inability to unify a party, let alone unify a country.

Throughout the speech, Agnew pointed to President Nixon as a unifying force and promoted the virtues of Nixon's leadership. Toward the end of the speech, Agnew (1972) proclaimed, "With the reelection of Richard Nixon, one America is what our country would remain."

Building off of the previous themes, Agnew's final theme was showing that he and Nixon provided the steadfast leadership America needed and the voters should choose to stay the course. As part of that argument, Agnew referenced national unity as a guiding force behind Nixon's first term:

It was the condition of one America that the president set out to improve. Planning carefully, for he is a man of prudence. He formulated his programs, established the necessary agencies, and appointed the right men and women to operate them. (Agnew, 1972)

Agnew made continual note that Nixon had acted in the best interest of all Americans. "In finding solutions for some of the nation's most stubborn and frustrating problems, the president acted, not on behalf of any one group or faction, he acted for the nation as a whole (Agnew, 1972)." Agnew claimed that the election gave the voters a choice between a desire to change to the inconsistent and untested McGovern or to stick with the tested and proven leadership of Nixon.

President Richard Nixon. Nixon made his case through the use of several different themes as part of his and the Republican Party's brand. The first theme was family and its role both in his life and American life as a whole. The next theme is making demonstrating his role in national unity. Next, Nixon emphasizes the foreign and domestic policy issues of importance.

Finally, Nixon explained the need to stay the course under his proven and steadfast leadership and against the Democratic theme of change.

Nixon began his speech by addressing the theme of women and family, particularly his wife:

I express my deep gratitude to this convention to the tribute you have paid to the best campaigner in the Nixon family-my wife, Pat. In honoring her, you have honored millions of women in America who have contributed in the past and will contribute in the future so very much to better government in this country. (R. Nixon, 1972)

Nixon attempted to reach out to women voters by emphasizing their role in his life and his government. Nixon was able to use that statement to portray himself as someone deeply dedicated to his family and honor women more broadly.

The next theme Nixon emphasized was national unity. Early in the speech, Nixon attempted to portray himself as a post-partisan or a different type of partisan figure. “I address you tonight, my fellow Americans, not as a partisan of party, which would divide us, but as a partisan of principle, which can unite us (R. Nixon, 1972).” Nixon transcended the labels of his party, reaching out in his address; to voters of all stripes He further emphasized this idea by calling out to members of these parties to join him. “I ask everyone listening to me tonight – Democrats, Republicans, independents, to join our new majority – not on the basis of the party label you wear on your lapel, but on the basis of what you believe in your hearts (R. Nixon, 1972).” In both of the preceding passages, Nixon attempted to demonstrate that his leadership had emphasized the beliefs of all Americans across the political spectrum, rather than just those that identify as Republican.

The next part of the party branding emphasized certain policy areas. In terms of domestic policy, Nixon attacked the size of government and the higher levels of taxation resulting from larger government. Nixon lauded the tax cut his Administration passed, insisting there was more work to be done:

Our Administration, as you know, has provided the biggest tax cut in history, but taxes are still too high. That is why one of the goals of our next Administration is to reduce property tax which is such an unfair and heavy burden on the poor, the elderly, the wage earner, the farmer, and those on fixed incomes. (R. Nixon, 1972)

In demonstrating the work his administration has done, Nixon was able to acclaim his success in that area. Nixon also attacked the Democratic plan, and therefore the Democratic brand, as it related to taxes as well:

Listen to these facts: Americans today pay one-third of all of their income in taxes. If their programs were adopted, Americans would pay over one-half of what they earn in taxes. This means that if their programs are adopted, American wage earners would be working more for the government than they would for themselves. (R. Nixon, 1972)

Nixon made a clear case for his policy branding on taxes compared to the branding of Democrats. The comparison was made clear that he would lower the burden on Americans of all backgrounds, where the Democrats would be looking to increase that burden.

In terms of foreign policy, Nixon looked to make the case that his vision for America's place in the world has made America safer during his first term; and, another term would see more progress. Nixon went into great detail, discussing the Cold War and claimed it as the greatest single issue:

Within the space of four years in our relations with the Soviet Union, we have moved from confrontation to negotiation, and then to cooperation in the interest of peace. We have taken the first step in limiting the nuclear arms race... More than any single issue, I ask you, my fellow Americans, to give us the chance to continue these great initiatives that can contribute so much to the future of peace in the world (R. Nixon, 1972)

To speak to the more hawkish members of his own party, Nixon (1972) argued, "What we must understand is, spending what we need on defense will cost us money. Spending less than we need could cost us our lives or our freedom." Within this portion of the branding, Nixon made the case

for maintaining a high level of military funding where the Democrats felt that the level of military spending was too high. This comparison built on to the Republican branding by emphasizing peace through strength. This was echoed later in the speech when Nixon addressed America as a world leader:

We hold the future of peace in the world and our own future in our hands. Let us reject therefore the policies of those who whine and whimper about our frustrations and call on us to turn inward. Let us not turn away from greatness. The chance America now has to lead the way to a lasting peace in the world may never come again. (R. Nixon, 1972)

Once again, Nixon compared the brand he was putting forth to that of the Democrats. He also used words, such as whine and whimper, which was intended to portray those that opposed his branding as weak.

Early in his address, Nixon defined the type of change he felt the Democratic Party was discussing. “The choice in this election is not between radical change and no change. The choice in this election is between change that works and change that won’t work (R. Nixon, 1972).”

Nixon made the case that he would be making changes, such as more tax cuts, if reelected. The changes he proposed would be positive changes in his view, where the change that McGovern was proposing would have negative consequences and are outside of the mainstream view. This view of change and staying the course was emphasized again later in the speech:

Let me illustrate the difference in our philosophies. Because of our free economic system what we have done is to build a great building of economic wealth and money in America. It is by far the tallest building in the world, and we are still adding to it. Now because some of the windows are broken, they say tear it down and start again. We say, replace the windows and keep building. That is the difference (R. Nixon, 1972)

Nixon again argued that the Democrats are looking to overreact to a few minor problems and radically change everything, but his steadfast leadership, the Republicans would fix those minor problems and would continue to build the wealth his Administration had helped to create.

Overall Richard Nixon used his speech to add four key pieces to his brand as well as to the Republican Party brand. First, he emphasized his family and reached out to women. Then, he spoke of national unity and branded himself as a figure that transcended political party. Furthermore, certain domestic and foreign policy areas were emphasized to demonstrate key differences between the two party brands. Finally, Nixon pointed to his steadfast leadership as reason to stay the course rather than make radical changes.

Summary of the 1972 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the 1972 Republican Convention, several themes were present which constructed the brand for that election. Richard Lugar's speech set the tone for the convention by setting clear comparisons between the two party brands with the Republican brand being preferable. Both Agnew and Richard Nixon continued that comparison in their speeches by bringing up more specific examples such as views on taxes, the size of government, and national defense. Pat Nixon's short speech was meant to energize supporters in the convention hall and those watching on television. She made a specific call to younger voters while both Agnew and Richard Nixon spoke to national unity. Agnew and Nixon both focused on the ability of Nixon to transcend partisan divides and bring people together. Agnew also made it clear that the discord of the Democratic Party four years prior indicated an inability to unite the nation. The final piece of the 1972 Republican Party brand was that of steadfast leadership and staying the course. Both Agnew and Nixon discussed the successes of the last four years as evidence of the kind of leader Richard Nixon was and showed how deserving he was of reelection. Nixon also attacked the radical change being proposed by McGovern and the Democrats by proposing his own, pragmatic change as part of his branding for the next four years.

1976 Republican Convention

The 1976 Republican Convention had a unique situation to address. The party was coming into the convention having to deal with their most recent nominee, Richard Nixon, having been removed from office and their current nominee, Gerald Ford, entered the convention as an

incumbent who had never won a national election. The Republican Party was hoping to utilize the convention to rehabilitate its image and convince voters to allow them to remain in the White House. The three main speakers were Senator Howard Baker, Vice-Presidential Nominee Bob Dole, and President Gerald Ford.

There were a few key facets of the Republican Party branding emphasized during the main speeches. First, all of the addresses focused on the strong leadership Ford provided as an argument to stay the course. The speakers also branded the Republican Party as the party in favor of smaller government. Baker also provided a side-by-side comparison of the two parties and why the Republican Party was preferable. Ford was able to brand himself as an effective leader fighting against an obstructionist Congress controlled by the Democrats. Ford also indicated the several key policies that would be a part of the Republican brand heading into the election.

Keynote Speaker Congressman Howard Baker. Howard Baker used his address to help rebuild the party brand after Watergate. He emphasized three themes that helped to bolster the branding for the 1976 Election. First, he emphasized the strong leadership of President Ford and Republicans as an argument to stay the course. Next, he attacked the Democratic Party brand and acclaimed the Republican brand by comparison. Finally, he demonstrated that the Republican Party was the party of smaller government.

Baker began his speech by discussing the quality of leadership the Republican Party exhibited in the wake of the Watergate scandal. He made the argument that the party did what it needed to and acted with the leadership the country required:

...We faced our problems with honor and dignity. We performed as the country would expect us to perform. We did not shy away from our duty in that difficult time, even though we knew that Watergate would be embarrassing, humiliating, and even potentially devastating. (Baker, 1976)

He argued that Republican leadership looked beyond self-interest and put the nation above their party to end the corruption of the Nixon Administration. Baker hoped to brand the Republican Party as selfless and strong leaders with President Ford as worthy of a full four-year term.

The next facet of Baker's address involved attacking the Democratic Party while acclaiming the virtues of the Republican Party. Baker used references to the history of the Democratic Party to show that the criticisms of the old Democrats paled in comparison to the current Democratic Party. "When it comes to big government, Franklin Roosevelt was a piker compared to what Governor Carter's friends in the Democratic Congress have been giving us lately (Baker, 1976)." Baker used the example of Roosevelt's expansion of government as a barometer for the kind of government expansion Carter was proposing. Baker also portrayed the Democratic controlled Congress as a rubber stamp on that expansion. He hoped to draw comparison between the two brands as he continued to discuss the role of government from the Republican brand's perspective.

Baker branded the Republican Party as the party of smaller government and individualism throughout his address. Baker argued that individuals make America strong rather than government. He emphasized that point early in his address. "It's not the government, it's the people of this country who provide that strength, and it's through the free will of a free people that we will continue to build that strength (Baker, 1976)." Later in the address, Baker would end his address by returning to the concept of limited government. "Because we offer effective government, but limited government... Because what we Republicans say to the people is not 'trust me' but rather, 'trust yourselves' (Baker, 1976)." Throughout the speech, Baker continued to show that the Republican Party did not favor a strong executive—but, rather the Party wished to allow the people to worry about themselves. Limited government, as Baker argued, was a Republican ideal, lost in the throes of Watergate but born again at the convention.

Overall, Howard Baker addressed three key areas of the Republican branding. First, he emphasized the strong leadership in the current Republican Party. Baker then attacked the Democratic branding as the party of big government. Finally, Baker emphasized by comparison.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Bob Dole. Bob Dole used his address to build upon the branding introduced by Baker. First, Dole discussed the Republican Party branding as the party of smaller government. Dole also built on the framing of strong leadership within the Republican Party brand, which Baker had discussed.

Dole began his speech by expressing the virtues of smaller government. Throughout his address, Dole made it clear that the Democrats were in favor of a large government that stifled America while Republicans were the party of small government. “All history tells us is that to maximize government is to minimize human freedom and I believe that the promise of America is not told, nor shall it be fulfilled through the oppressive constraints of government (Dole, 1976).” Dole argued that the Republican Party brand would limit government in order to give people more freedom. Similar to Baker, Dole hoped by returning to an emphasis on small government would show voters that the Republican Party was not the same party that had Nixon as its nominee.

Dole also emphasized the strong leadership of the Republican Party. While Baker focused on the Republicans that stood against Nixon’s abuses, Dole looked to acclaim the leadership of President Ford. Dole framed the argument as a case of Ford raising expectations while many American people may have low expectations for the government. “Let us do so with the confidence which comes from the knowledge that we have a president who has met and will continue to meet the highest expectations of the American people (Dole, 1976).” Dole acclaimed the abilities of Ford as a capable leader who had been able to meet the expectations on Americans during his time and office. Dole used this argument as reason to stay the course and officially elect Ford to the presidency.

Overall, Dole used his address to further the arguments put forth by Baker. First, Dole used his address to continue the Republican Party branding as the party of smaller government. Dole then explained how President Ford was a strong and capable leader worthy of people's vote. Baker and Dole had made the case for the entire Republican Party being strong leaders worthy of the trust of the American people.

President Gerald Ford. Gerald Ford used his address to make the case for his election to the office he had held since Nixon's resignation. Throughout his address, he focused on three key areas of the Republican brand. First, he built upon the branding of strong leadership put forth by Baker and Dole. Then, he demonstrated that he was being hampered by and was fighting against an obstructionist Democratic Congress. Finally, Ford explained several key policies that would be part of the 1976 Republican Party brand.

Ford discussed the part of the Republican branding of strong leadership by acclaiming his successes during the two years he has held the office of president. His performance record in foreign and domestic policy was key to the argument of strong leadership he was making:

Let's look at the record since August 1974. Inflation has been cut in half... Confidence has returned, and we are in the full surge of sound recovery to steady prosperity. Two years ago, America was mired in withdrawal from Southeast Asia. (Ford, 1976)

Ford used discussion of a rebounding economy to claim his leadership caused the rebound. He also discussed the ending of the Vietnam War as an achievement that occurred under his watch. Ford also claimed his leadership was helping to restore American's confidence in government officials. "Two years ago, people's confidence in their highest officials, to whom they had overwhelmingly entrusted power, had twice been shattered... Again, let's look at the record since August 1974. From the start my Administration has been open, candid, and forthright (Ford, 1976)." Ford attempted to show how he and the Republican Party had examined itself and responded to the Watergate scandal. Ford made the case that he was a new kind of Republican leader without connection to the Nixon Administration and its corruption.

The next piece of the Republican brand builds off of the branding of strong leadership. Ford branded the Republican Party as the party fighting against the Democratic Congress who were constantly obstructing progress and hampering the leadership of the president:

...Washington is not the problem; their Congress is the problem. You know, the President of the United States is not a magician who can wave a wand or sign a paper that will instantly end a war, cure a recession, or make bureaucracy disappear. (Ford, 1976)

The argument made by Ford was that where Americans view Ford's leadership had come up short, the Democratic Congress was to blame. Ford indicated that he was fighting to change many problems within America, but the Congress had made his job more difficult. Ford attempted to make the Democratic brand look like the party standing in the way of progress.

Ford also included several key policy areas to be included in the party branding. First, Ford discussed his plans to cut taxes to stimulate the economy. "I called for a permanent tax cut, coupled with spending reductions, to stimulate the economy and relieve the hard-pressed, middle-income taxpayers. Your personal exemption must be raised from \$750-\$1000 (Ford, 1976)." Ford called for certain ideas tied to tax reform as part of the branding to show a clear strategy in creating reforms. Ford also explained his goals for agricultural policy. "We will carry out a farm policy that assures a fair market price for the farmer, encourages full production, leads to record exports, and eases the hunger within the human family (Ford, 1976)." Ford looked to speak to rural Americans about he planned to address their unique needs by discussing his hopes for agriculture in America. Finally, Ford addressed foreign policy and national security. "We will continue our strong leadership to bring peace, justice, and economic progress where there is turmoil, especially in the Middle East... While I am president, we will not return to a collision course that could reduce civilization to ashes (Ford, 1976)." Ford brought forth a much more peace-oriented approach to foreign affairs than other Republican speakers throughout the sample. Ford added the three policy areas of tax reform, agricultural policy, and foreign affairs as key areas of the 1976 Republican brand.

Overall, Ford discussed three main facets to the Republican Party brand. First, he built upon the strong leadership framing emphasized by both Baker and Dole. Then he attacked the Democratic Congress as obstructionists who were preventing him from making more progress. Finally, Ford added several key policies to the Republican Party branding in the areas of taxes, agriculture, and foreign affairs.

Summary of the 1976 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the 1976 Republican Convention, many themes indicated the party branding heading into the election. All three main addresses focused on the strong leadership exhibited by the Republican Party in response to and in the aftermath of Watergate. The speeches also all focused on the Republican Party being the party of smaller government. Baker and Ford both attacked the Democratic Party in an effort to create a comparison through which Americans would see that the Republican Party is the preferred choice. Finally, Ford was able to bring several policy areas to the party branding for the 1976 Election.

1980 Republican Convention

For the first time in the sample, the Republican Party was not the incumbent party. Through the speeches by Congressman Guy Vander Jagt, Vice-Presidential Nominee George H.W. Bush, and Presidential Nominee Ronald Reagan, the Republican Party mounted a challenge to the Carter Administration.

As the Republicans attempted to regain control of the White House, many of the addresses focused on a branding of change. Appeals for smaller government also carried over from the 1976 branding and appeared in several addresses. Vander Jagt attacked the Democrats brand while acclaiming the Republicans by contrast. Bush added the history of Republican leadership as part of the brand. Reagan also added several policies to the party brand headed into the 1980 Election.

Keynote Speaker Congressman Guy Vander Jagt. Vander Jagt used his keynote speech to discuss three main facets of the Republican Party brand. First, he discussed a need for

change and the Republican Party being the needed change. Then, he indicated that the Democratic brand was wrong for American and how the Republican Party was more in line with American Values. Finally, Vander Jagt continued the branding of the Republicans as the party of smaller government, which was introduced in the 1976 Convention.

Vander Jagt began his address by talking about the need for change and the Republican Party's ability to fix the nation's problems. Part of that framing involved evoking a slogan that has appeared in other Republican Presidential Campaigns. "We want to make America great again and we know that under the leadership of Ronald Reagan and a new Republican Congress, America can be great again (Vander Jagt, 1980)." The use of the phrase "make America great again" inferred that America was currently not great. He then indicated that the Republican Party was the brand capable of returning the country to greatness. Vander Jagt also made it clear that Congressional Leadership was also in need of change not just the presidency.

Next, Vander Jagt attacked the Democratic Party brand in order to demonstrate the strength of the Republican branding. He used the backdrop of the city of Detroit as an example of the pain caused by the Democrats:

Here in Detroit where the stilled assembly lines, the closed factories, and the jobless workers proclaim the bankruptcy of Jimmy Carter and his policies... And the bad news is that things didn't have to get this way. The good news is that under Ronald Reagan, things won't stay this way. (Vander Jagt, 1980)

Vander Jagt attacked the Carter Administration and its policies as bankrupt in the eyes of the American public. He contrasted that with the good that would result if Reagan were to be elected. Vander Jagt proclaimed that Carter equaled heartbreak for America while Reagan would be able to bring prosperity. Throughout the speech, Vander Jagt attacked Carter as an inept president that had caused problems for the American people and the Republican Party was well suited for fixing those problems.

Finally, Vander Jagt discussed a key policy as part of the Republican brand, smaller government. He built upon this portion of the brand, which was discussed in the 1976 Convention. Vander Jagt emphasized smaller government by comparing the philosophy of the two parties. “In this crisis, government ought to sacrifice and make do with less so that people can grow and work and produce again (Vander Jagt, 1980).” Vander Jagt utilized the current economic crisis to bolster the argument for a smaller government within the party branding. He was able to build upon the branding previously constructed in the last convention.

Overall, Vander Jagt was able to emphasize three key pieces to the Republican Party branding. First, he was able to demonstrate that the Republicans and Reagan were prepared to right the ship by being the change America needed. Then, he attacked the Democratic brand as problematic for America and positioned the Republican brand as the answer to those problems. Finally, he emphasized the party branding for the Republicans as being the party of smaller government.

Vice Presidential Nominee Former CIA Director George H.W. Bush. George H.W. Bush was able to brand the Republican Party in two key areas in his short address. First, he emphasized the change frame that Vander Jag introduced in his address. Bush also positioned the Republican Party as a party of proven leadership.

Bush began his speech by emphasizing what electing Reagan would mean for America. He called a Reagan election the dawning of a new era:

I pledge to you my total dedication and energies to a united effort to see to it that next January 20th, Ronald Reagan becomes our nation’s 40th president and that a bright new era will begin for an America in the decade of the 80’s. We need change. (Bush, 1980)

Bush indicated that Reagan would usher in an era of prosperity for a decade, which was needed after the decline caused by the Carter Administration. Like many other speakers throughout the sample who made the case for change, Bush was able to emphasize the bright future that would come with clear change.

Bush was able to position the Republican Party's brand in history by pointing to a previous Republican leader who had been revered as president. Bush used the Eisenhower Presidency as a template for the kind of leadership the Republican Party offered. "We have a great mission, not unlike the great mission undertaken by our party 28 years ago when another great Republican leader, Dwight Eisenhower, began his campaign to restore the faith of the American people in their government (Bush, 1980)." Bush looked to place the Eisenhower campaign in the same context as the Reagan campaign to show an enduring brand of leadership capable of restoring the faith of Americans in their government. Bush emphasized this particular branding in an effort to show that the Republican Party was not the party of Nixon but rather the party of Eisenhower and hopefully Reagan.

Overall, Bush's short address focused on two areas of the Republican Party branding. First, he emphasized that the Republican Party was the type of change America needed and that change would usher in a new era for America. Bush also discussed the current Republican Party as one of leadership capable of restoring faith in American government. He did so by comparing Reagan to another Republican leader in Eisenhower.

Presidential Nominee Governor Ronald Reagan. Reagan utilized his speech to build off of the components of the party brand previously mentioned by Vander Jagt and Bush. Reagan emphasized three areas of the Republican brand. First, he talked about the need for change and the Republican brand being the needed change. Then, he claimed that the Republican Party was the party of small government. Finally, Reagan brought several key policies to the party brand for the 1980 Election.

Reagan began by emphasizing a need for change and the Republican Party being the party capable of bringing that change. He first indicated that there was a need for change. "We need a rebirth of the American tradition of leadership at every level of government and in private life as well (Reagan, 1980)." Reagan was calling for a clear change in both the White House and in Congressional leadership. The Democrats controlled both going into the 1980 Election and

Reagan wanted to make it clear that he was hoping his coattails would be enough to usher in a Republican majority in Congress. He then followed by indicating that he would restore American confidence in government. “I pledge to restore to the federal government the capacity to do the people’s work without dominating their lives (Reagan, 1980).” Reagan stated that he would bring about the clear change that Americans needed. He signaled the branding of small government as part of the needed change as well.

As part of the party branding, Reagan emphasized small government as a uniquely Republican ideal. In this particular aspect of governing, Reagan claimed that there was a clear need for this Republican Party trait which had been part of the party branding throughout many convention addresses. “I believe it is clear our federal government is overgrown and overweight. Indeed, it is time for our government to go on a diet (Reagan, 1980).” Reagan discussed specific ways in which he would implement that “diet” as a means of reigning in government waste. Reagan’s small government framing reinforced the branding created in previous convention speeches during the 1980 and 1976 Conventions.

In order to introduce policies as part of the party branding, Reagan focused on tax reform and national security. Reagan called for a tax cut which would be phased in as part of his tax reform policy. “I have long advocated a 30 percent reduction in income tax rates over a period of three years... A phased reduction of tax rates would go a long way toward easing the heavy burden on the American people (Reagan, 1980).” Reagan framed the tax cuts as an essential step toward improving the lives of Americans. He was specific in both the scope and the time frame of the cuts as well. Reagan made it clear that tax cuts were an important part of his brand as he campaigned for the presidency in 1980.

Reagan also discussed his plans for national security. He started by discussing military pay. “I do favor pay and benefit levels that will attract and keep highly motivated men and women in our armed forces and an active reserve trained and ready for an instant call in case of an emergency (Reagan, 1980).” Reagan was responding to a moral shortfall within the Carter

Administration. According to Reagan members of armed forces were paid so poorly, they were on food stamps. Reagan portrayed himself as someone looking out for those in the military. He did so as a precursor to discussing his view of the president's responsibility in regard to foreign affairs. "It is the responsibility of the President of the United States, in working for peace, to ensure that the safety of our people cannot successfully be threatened by a hostile foreign power (Reagan, 1980)." By positioning national security as the top priority for the president, Reagan positioned himself and his party as the party of national security. He indicated that Carter had mishandled national security and only a Reagan victory could ensure an administration that could adequately handle this important task.

Overall, Reagan utilized his speech to build upon two facets of the party branding. Reagan emphasized the Republican Party was the clear party of change at a time when change was needed. Next, he discussed the branding of smaller government for his party, which had been a key part of the 1976 Convention as well as other speeches at the 1980 Convention. Finally, he brought tax reform and national security in as policies that were important to the Republican Party branding.

Summary of the 1980 Republican Convention Branding. The 1980 Republican Convention helped to finalize the rehabilitation of the Republican Party brand in the aftermath of Nixon's Watergate. Speeches referred to the Republican Party's ability to right the ship and be the change America needed after four years of inadequate leadership under Carter. The branding of Republicans as the party of small government also echoed throughout the various addresses. Vander Jagt took aim at the Democratic brand by comparison and explained why the Republican brand was preferable. Bush emphasized the Republican history of strong leadership by referencing Eisenhower as a template for the leadership Reagan would provide. Reagan added policies related to tax reform and national security to the Republican branding to round out the brand leaving the convention.

1984 Republican Convention

In 1984, the Republican Party was riding high off of the first term of President Ronald Reagan and this convention looked to highlight his achievements and make the case for four more years. In order to minimize the impact of the Democratic nomination of Geraldine Ferraro, the Republicans featured a woman in keynote speaker Katherine Ortega. Treasurer Katherine Ortega, Vice President George Bush, and President Ronald Reagan constructed the Republican Party brand for 1984 through speeches.

Throughout the three addresses, the Republicans branded the party for the upcoming election in several ways. All of the speakers urged Americans to stay the course under the steady leadership that Reagan had provided over the previous four years. Ortega attacked the Democratic brand as out of touch with average Americans and urged Americans to come home to the Republican Party who matched their ideals. Reagan reinforced the small government branding that had been utilized in previous conventions. Finally, both Bush and Reagan emphasized several policy areas that would be a part of the Republican brand for the 1984 Campaign.

Keynote Speaker Treasurer Katherine Ortega. Ortega's address served as an opportunity to highlight the diversity within the Republican Party in response to the Democrats nominating Ferraro for vice president. Within her address she was able to emphasize two areas of the Republican brand. First, she demonstrated the strong leadership of President Reagan and the need to stay the course. Then, she attacked the Democratic Party as out of touch with the average American and encouraged Democrats let down by their party's leadership to come home to the Republican Party.

The first part of Ortega's address acclaimed the great leadership of Reagan over the past four years. Ortega acclaimed the progress made under Reagan as reason to stay the course. "We have come a long way in four years... we have come from the weak leadership of the Carter-Mondale Administration to the strength of the Reagan-Bush Administration (Ortega, 1984)." Ortega referenced the previous administration by naming both the President and Vice President.

She did so in order to point to Mondale, who was running for President in the 1984 Election. Ortega hoped to show the leadership of Reagan while also questioning the leadership of Mondale by positioning him with Carter. She also proclaimed Reagan and Bush to be decisive and capable leaders. “The foreign policy decisions of the next four years will remain in the strong capable hands of President Reagan and Vice President Bush not the indecisive inexperienced hands of Walter Mondale and his running mate (Ortega, 1984).” Ortega used the comparison of the two candidates to show that Reagan was the stronger and more capable leader. She made the case for the Republican Party as the party of strong and experienced leadership and Americans should stay the course under that leadership.

Ortega also attacked the Democratic Party brand as a whole while stating that the Republican brand actually was in line with beliefs of many Democrats. She made it clear to those Democrats that the Republican Party had a home for them:

There are two Democratic Parties in America... The party of special interests, the party of doomsayers, the party of demagogues who look to America's future with fear not hope. Then there are the Democrats that are mainstream... Democrats who, whatever other differences we have, share our Republican mission of America as the land of freedom and individual opportunity, not big government paternalism... We Republicans here in Dallas say we welcome you to our home. Our home is your home. (Ortega, 1984)

Ortega indicated that there were many within the Democratic Party who had abandoned American ideals and were no longer in tune with the values of average Americans. She was able to create the branding of the Republican Party as a party that spoke to the best part of America as she defined it. By speaking about freedom and opportunity as traits uniquely championed by Republicans, she was able to brand the Republican Party as the party of those ideals.

Ortega used her address to promote two key areas to the Republican Party branding at the convention. First, she acclaimed the strong and experienced leadership of President Reagan as reason to stay the course. Then, she attacked the Democratic brand as out of touch with American

ideals and called for disaffected Democrats to come home to the party that championed those ideals.

Vice President George H.W. Bush. Vice President Bush utilized his address to promote two key pieces to the Republican Party brand. First, he added to the branding put forth by Ortega related to the strong leadership of the past four years as reason to stay the course. Bush then shifted to discussing key policy areas for the Republican brand. The issues emphasized by Bush were education, crime, and foreign affairs.

Bush first branded the Republican Party as strong and competent leaders worthy of a second term in office. Bush focused not only on the success of the past but of the need for the strong leadership of Reagan going forward:

In 1980, America needed Governor Reagan in the White House to restore power to the grassroots and to give the American people fresh hope and a new beginning. In 1984, America needs President Reagan in the White House for a second term to finish the job and keep this country moving forward. (Bush, 1984)

Bush branded Reagan as a trusted leader worthy of a second term within his address by pointing to the progress that had been made but also argued that more time was needed to truly make progress.

Bush also added several key policy areas to the Republican brand. Vice Presidential nominees rarely focus on issues with this specificity, so it is clear that there was a strategy to position Bush as Reagan's heir apparent after another four years in office. Bush pushed the Republican brand on the issues of education, crime, and foreign affairs. In referring to education, Bush highlighted the improvements made to education during the first term, which were due to the Republican Party's beliefs surrounding education. "More Americans now have a chance for quality education... We believe in classroom discipline and in merit pay for teachers. We believe in local control of schools and we believe kids should not be prohibited from prayer (Bush,

1984).” Issues such as local instead of national control and school prayer are uniquely part of the Republican branding.

Bush transitioned from discussing education to emphasizing the Republican branding on crime, and drugs in particular. Much like education, Bush emphasized the successes surrounding crime combined with the need to continue the work:

We will not rest until American society is free from the threat of drug pushers, and that’s a fact. More Americans are safe. Crime is down... President Reagan and I think it’s time that we worried less about the criminals and more about the victims of crime. (Bush, 1984)

Bush positioned the success on crime in between the need for more time to make greater progress and the overall philosophy of where the focus should be related to crime.

Bush also discussed foreign policy as an issue where the Reagan Administration was particularly successful. Bush recounted how the previous four years had impacted America’s standing in the world:

Our European alliance has never been more solid... We have strengthened our friendships with countries in the Pacific. We are doing more to foster democratic change and to help the hungry in Africa. We are reaching out to more countries in the Middle East, and our strategic relations with Israel have never been stronger... I am proud to serve with a president who is working for peace and I am proud to serve with a president who doesn’t go around apologizing for the United States of America. (Bush, 1984)

Bush emphasized the strong global ties that had been formed or strengthened by Reagan to show how strong the Republican brand was in creating and maintaining a peace. Bush also emphasized that being unapologetic for American strength was a key part of the Republican brand related to foreign policy.

Overall, Bush reinforced two facets of the Republican Party branding. First, he indicated the strong leadership of Reagan was the reason to stay the course and grant four more years to the

Republican Party to continue making progress. Then, Bush emphasized areas of policy as part of the party branding. Finally, Bush explained how the Republican Party was uniquely positioned to lead America in regard to education, crime, and foreign affairs.

President Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan appeared at the 1984 Convention to make the case for his reelection. During his address he emphasized three key areas of the Republican Party brand. First, he explained the success his party had over the past four years and their leadership was reason to stay the course. Next, Reagan reinforced the branding of the Republican Party as the party of small government. Finally, Reagan discussed several policies that he wished to emphasize as part of the party's branding going into the 1984 Election.

Reagan presented the bid for reelection as a continuation of the promises made in 1980. In his call to stay the course under his leadership he, similarly to Bush, recalled the situation of four years prior:

In 1980 we asked the people of America, "are you better off than you were four years ago?" Well the people answered then by choosing us to bring about change... The American people joined us and helped us. Let us ask for their help again to renew the mandate of 1980, to move us further forward on the road we presently travel, the road of common sense... the road leading to prosperity and economic expansion in a world at peace. (Reagan, 1984)

Reagan referenced the question he asked voters in making the case the Republican Party was the needed change in 1980 to emphasize that the Republican Party had put America on the correct course and should be given more time to build upon that success.

Reagan also reiterated the branding of the Republicans as the party of small government. Reagan compared the Republican belief on government to the Democrats with Reagan claiming that the Republican ideal was much more in tune with that of the Founding Fathers:

Isn't our choice really not one of left or right, but up or down? Down through the welfare state to statism, to more and more government largesse accompanied always by more

government authority, less individual liberty and, ultimately, totalitarianism, always advanced as for our own good. The alternative is the dream conceived by our Founding Fathers, up to the ultimate in individual freedom consistent with an orderly society.

(Reagan, 1984)

Not only did Reagan make a full endorsement of the branding of smaller government as essential to the Republican Party, he portrayed any opposition to smaller government as against everything that is America.

Finally, Reagan put forth key policy areas that he wanted to be part of the party branding headed into the election. The policies Reagan emphasized were tax reform and national defense. Throughout the speech Reagan continued to refer to taxes by either attacking the Democratic brand as it related to taxes or acclaiming his own record on taxes. Reagan attacked the Democrats by pointing to their history of raising taxes. “In just the five years before we came into office, taxes roughly doubled (Reagan, 1984).” This attack provided a basis for comparison when Reagan would acclaim his own achievements related to taxes. “Today, a working family earning \$25,000 has about \$2,900 more in purchasing power than if tax and inflation rates were still at the 1980 level (Reagan, 1984).” Reagan acclaimed the ability of average Americans to do more with their income due to the reduction of taxes and inflation during his first term in office. These two facets of the discussion of taxes allowed Reagan to show the Republican brand’s superiority to the voters by comparison.

Reagan framed national security in a similar fashion to taxes by creating a comparison where the Republican branding on the issue was the preferable choice:

Ten months ago, we displayed this resolve in a mission to rescue American students on the imprisoned island of Grenada. Democratic candidates have suggested that this could be likened to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the crushing of human rights in Poland, or the genocide in Cambodia. (Reagan, 1984)

Reagan framed himself as a leader who was willing to act in order to protect Americans while branding Democrats as unwilling to do what was right and even compared America's actions to that of dictators and despots.

Reagan focused his address on several key facets of the Republican branding. First, he touted his steady leadership as reason to stay the course. Then, he reinforced the Republican branding as the party of smaller government. Finally, he discussed tax reform and national security as policy areas important to the Republican Party brand for 1984.

Summary of the 1984 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the three main speeches of the Convention, the Republican Party built upon the branding of the party after the disgrace of Watergate. While the 1980 Convention revolved around the Republican Party as the party of needed change, the 1984 Convention centered on staying the course behind the leadership provided by Ronald Reagan as all three speakers utilized that theme. Ortega attacked the Democratic brand as outside of the mainstream and indicated that the Republican Party was much more in line with the views of all Americans including many Democratic voters. She branded the Republican Party as “home” for Americans to come back to. Bush, in a departure from the norms of vice presidential nominees, indicated key policies as part of the Republican brand. Reagan reinforced the small government branding of the party within his address. He also emphasized a couple policies into the party branding for the election in addition to those introduced by Bush. While the main goal of the 1984 Convention was to reelect Reagan, there was also some positioning of Bush as the presumptive nominee in 1988 after another four years of Reagan.

1988 Republican Convention

The 1988 Republican Convention promoted itself as a chance to continue the eight years of prosperity by Ronald Reagan through his Vice President, George H.W. Bush. New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean, President Ronald Reagan, Vice-Presidential Nominee Dan Quayle, and Presidential Nominee George H.W. Bush gave speeches. This convention included the addition of

an outgoing Republican president as a keynote speaker in support of his chosen successor. The main branding for the Republicans in this convention revolved around continuing what the Reagan Administration started under Reagan's vice president, Bush.

Throughout the four addresses the Republican Party reinforced several facets of the party brand presented in previous conventions and introduced new themes of the branding as well. First, all of the speakers emphasized the leadership the Republican Party had provided over the previous eight years as reason to stay the course. Bush was positioned as the natural successor to the Reagan Administration in the convention speeches. Several speeches also attacked the Democratic brand as obstructionists and out of touch with the needs of average Americans. Reagan added an emphasis to the Republican Party as the party in favor of protecting religious expression. Bush and Quayle discussed their personal narratives of service to show their leadership and experience. Finally, Bush emphasized several key policies as part of the Republican brand.

Keynote Speaker Governor Thomas Kean. Within Thomas Kean's address, he discussed two major planks of the Republican brand. First, he attacked the Democratic Party as unpatriotic and positioned the Republicans as the party representing American patriotism. Then, Kean spent most of his address making the case for staying the course with the strength of the Republican Party now led by Bush after eight years of success under Reagan.

Kean began his speech, attacking the Democratic Party as lacking patriotism. Kean's main attack on Democratic patriotism revolved around the color scheme of the Democratic Convention:

You see this flag of red, white, and blue? It symbolizes the land of the free and the home of the brave. Well, their media consultants in Atlanta didn't think the colors looked good on television. So they change to red to pink, blue to azure, and the white to eggshell. Well, I don't know about you, but I believe Americans, Democrat and Republican alike, have no use for pastel patriotism. (Kean, 1988)

Kean argued that Democrats refused to be patriotic simply because the Democrats felt the pastel colors would look better on television. He also argued that Americans would not stand for the nation's colors being ignored. Finally, Kean used that line of attack to make Democrats seem less American.

Kean then spent most of the rest of his address discussing the leadership of the Republican Party as he made the case to stay the course and allow Bush to continue the Reagan legacy. Kean also made the case of Bush being Reagan's natural successor by making it clear that Bush was deeply involved in the Reagan Administration:

After eight years of Ronald Reagan and George Bush, our country is stronger, safer, and better today. And Americans are proud to admit it... we don't want to repeal the Reagan Revolution, far from it. We want to take the Reagan principles into new areas where liberal policies have failed. (Kean, 1988)

Kean made it clear in the first part of the passage that Reagan's successes were Bush's successes. He then went on to proclaim that Bush and the Republicans would spread those successes into other policy areas in need of reform.

Keynote Speaker President Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan addressed the convention as an outgoing president looking to mark his legacy by passing the presidency on to Bush. Reagan began his speech by acclaiming the successes of his administration. Reagan hoped that these successes would transfer to his vice president and current presidential nominee, George Bush:

So together we pulled out of a tailspin that created 17 ½ million good jobs. That's more than a quarter million jobs a month for 68 consecutive months. America is working again. And just since our 1984 Convention, we have created over 11 million of those new jobs. (Reagan, 1988)

In the example of jobs, Reagan showed the progress made under his administration. He made similar claims regarding national security and reigning in federal bureaucracy. As part of this

argument of success, Reagan made the case for an obstacle for greater successes. “Where we really need change is to elect Republican majorities in both Houses. And then George Bush can have a team that will protect your tax cuts, keep America strong, hold down inflation and interest rates, appoint judges to preserve your rights, and yes, reduce the budget (Reagan, 1988).” After establishing the success of the past eight years as Bush’s, Reagan claimed the change narrative for the election, not for the presidency, but for Congress. Democrats presented clear sense of the change needed to move the country in the right direction. Reagan claimed that it was the Democratic Congress, which was standing in the way of progress.

Reagan also branded the Republican Party as the party standing up for religious expression in America. Reagan referenced the Pledge of Allegiance, school prayer, and the rights of the unborn as issues that bind Americans:

We respect the values that bind us together as families and as a nation. For our children, we don’t think it’s wrong to have them committed to pledging “one nation under god, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” And we have so many requirements in their classrooms; why can’t we at least have one thing that is voluntary, and that is to allow our kids to repair quietly to their faith to say a prayer to start the day, as Congress does. For the unborn, shouldn’t they be able to live to become children in those classrooms?

(Reagan, 1988)

Reagan used the “under god” clause of the Pledge of Allegiance as an entry into his section on religious expression. Reagan then argued that school prayer should be allowed and framed it in a way to indicate that prayer in schools was in line with the will of most Americans. Together, with his reference to a pro-life agenda, Reagan sounded the bells for evangelical voters.

Overall, Reagan’s address served two purposes for the Republican brand. First, he was touted his Administration’s successes and made Bush appear as the natural successor. In doing so, Reagan also pointed to the Democratic Congress as the branch of government in need of change.

Reagan also spent time branding the Republican Party as a party interested in advancing religious expression and advocating for evangelical issues.

Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Dan Quayle. Dan Quayle addressed the convention to promote two facets of the Republican brand. First, he told his personal narrative of service. In doing so, portrayed the Republican ticket as a ticket of dedicated public servants. Quayle began his speech by talking about his personal narrative of service. He used his service narrative to show his dedication to the nation:

Since 1980, I have been a United States Senator from Indiana and very proud of it.

Before that I was a member of the United States House of Representatives and proud of it. And as a young man, I served six years in the National Guard. (Quayle, 1988)

Quayle would spend most of his address discussing the legacy of leadership the Republican Party had built under Reagan. He started by proclaiming that he and Bush were accepting the torch passed to them. “The Reagan-Bush revolution has already been written on the pages of history. Now George Bush and Dan Quayle are going to add several bold new chapters to the story of the greatest nation god ever put on this Earth (Quayle, 1988).” First, Quayle was careful to label the last eight-years the Regan and Bush revolution, crediting Bush as Reagan’s co-equal. Next, Quayle explained that the ticket would expand on that success, not by writing a new book but by adding chapters to the existing book started by Reagan and Bush. Quayle also pointed to East-West relations as an indicator of that history of leadership. “Today, our relationship with the Soviet Union is at its best since World War II. George Bush will keep it that way and I will be right there with him (Quayle, 1988).” Once again, Quayle pointed to the success of the previous eight years while looking to the future Bush Administration as a continuation of that successful leadership.

Overall, Quayle’s address served two functions in creating the Republican brand. First, Quayle discussed his personal narrative of service. And, further he pointed to Bush’s leadership as the natural heir to the Reagan Administration.

Presidential Nominee Vice President George H.W. Bush. As Bush looked to ascend to the presidency after eight years as vice president, Bush emphasized several areas of the party branding. First, Bush talked about his personal narrative of service to combine with Quayle's narrative. Then, Bush discussed the legacy of strong leadership that he would be continuing. Finally, Bush discussed four main policy areas as part of the Republican branding. The policies Bush focused on were job creation, national security, tax reform, and protecting the environment.

Bush began his speech by telling his personal narrative of service. He discussed his view of service in his life and recounted his previous roles in public service:

I am a man who sees life in terms of missions – missions defined and missions completed. And when I was a torpedo-bomber pilot, they defined the mission for us. And before we took off, we all understood that, no matter what, you try to reach the target. And there have been other missions for me – Congress, China, the CIA. But I am here tonight, and I am your candidate, because the most important work of my life is to complete the mission we started in 1980. (Bush, 1988)

Bush used his narrative of various missions to go over the various roles he had held in public service. Bush also made it known that his personal narrative of service had another chapter left to complete, the presidency. Both Bush and Quayle used their personal narratives of public service in order to help brand the Republican Party as the party of dedicated public servants.

Bush also acclaimed the recent history leadership of the Republican Party was indicative of the party branding as a whole:

Eight years ago, I stood here with Ronald Reagan and we promised, together, to break with the past and return America to her greatness. Eight years later, look at what the American people have produced, the highest level of economic growth in our entire history and the lowest level of world tensions in more than 50 years. (Bush, 1988)

Bush positioned himself as part of the recent history of successful leadership by indicating that he had promised to achieve great things with Ronald Reagan. Reagan's record of leadership was

Bush's record of leadership. By showing his role in the eight years of success, Bush aided in branding the Republican Party as a whole as having a record of strong leadership.

Finally, Bush indicated several policies that were included in the party branding for 1988. Job creation was the first policy Bush indicated as part of the party branding. Bush utilized the record of job creation the Reagan Administration had over the past eight years. "Unemployment was up and climbing, and now it's the lowest in 14 years... We've created 17 million new jobs the past five years, more than twice as many as Europe and Japan combined, and they're good jobs (Bush, 1988)."

Another policy area emphasized by Bush was national security. Bush described an optimistic view of the world and America's place in it due to the progress made over the previous eight years:

One issue overwhelms all the others, and that's the issue of peace... And one by one, the unfree places fall, not to the forces of arms but to the force of an idea: freedom works.

And we have a new relationship with the Soviet Union: the INF Treaty, the beginning of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the beginning of the end of the Soviet proxy war in Angola and, with it, the independence of Namibia. Iran and Iraq move toward peace. It's a watershed. It is no accident. (Bush, 1988)

Bush indicated that peace and national security was the most important issue. He then pointed to areas of the world where many have had concerns in the past that are now moving toward normalized relations. Like job creation, Bush used the success of the past eight years as an indicator for how he would handle the issue of national security and peace.

The next policy area Bush focused on was tax reform. Bush made it clear that he would not raise taxes during his time in office, a pledge he would later regret:

I'm the one who will not raise taxes... My opponent won't rule out raising taxes, but I will, and the Congress will push me to raise taxes, and I'll say no, and they'll push, and

I'll say no, and they'll push again, and I'll say to them, "read my lips: no new taxes."

(Bush, 1988)

Bush made a clear distinction between the two parties. He framed the Democrats favoring a tax increase; while Republicans were staunchly opposed to any such measure.

Lastly, Bush used his address to discuss the environment and steps needed to help protect it. Bush explained the current environmental situation and the steps he planned to take to improve upon the situation:

I am going to stop ocean dumping. Our beaches should not be garbage dumps, and our harbors should not be cesspools. And I am going to have the FBI trace the medical wastes, and we're going to punish the people who dump those infected needles into our oceans, lakes, and rivers. And we must clean the air. We must reduce the harm done by acid rain. (Bush, 1988)

Overall, Bush used his speech to add several key facets of the Republican branding. First, he used his own narrative of public service to show that the Republican Party was a party made up of dedicated public servants. Next, he tied the successful leadership of the previous eight years to the leadership he would bring to the presidency. Finally, he introduced four key policy areas into the party branding. Those policy areas were job creation, national security, taxes, and the environment.

Summary of the 1988 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the 1988 Republican Convention the key argument was that Bush would bring another four years of the prosperity the nation had experienced under Reagan. All of the speeches discussed the legacy of leadership the Republican Party had over the previous eight years and Bush was the natural heir to continue that legacy. Both Quayle and Bush utilized their personal narratives related to public service to show that the Republican Party was a party of dedicated servants. Kean added an attack on the lack of patriotism during the Democratic Convention as a claim to then show that the Republican Party represented patriotic Americans. Reagan made appeals to religious voters by

speaking about religious expression in schools and speaking out against abortion. Finally, Bush added the key policy areas of job creation, national security through peace, no new taxes, and cleaning up the environment to the party branding.

1992 Republican Convention

As President George H.W. Bush was seeking reelection, he entered the 1992 Republican Convention in a much different position than his 1988 appearance. No longer riding the coattails of the very popular Reagan Administration, he promoted his own accomplishments and encouraged Americans to vote for him and stay the course. Former President Ronald Reagan appeared at the convention as a keynote speaker as he did in 1988. Senator Phil Gramm appeared as another keynote speaker. First Lady Barbara Bush spoke, making her the first candidate spouse, since Pat Nixon, to address a convention. Vice President Quayle and President Bush rounded out the main speakers.

For the Republican brand in 1992, the convention focused on several facets of that branding. First, many of the speeches addressed the leadership that Bush had provided over the previous four years as an argument to stay the course. Several speeches also attacked the Democratic Party, especially in Congress, as obstructing the progress promised by Bush and Republicans. Both Barbara Bush and Quayle discussed family and family values. Quayle and President Bush also discussed several policy areas.

Keynote Speaker Senator Phil Gramm. Gramm highlighted several of the major accomplishments of the Bush Administration. These accomplishments revolved around foreign affairs and portrayed Bush as a once in a generation leader:

Never in history has the world experienced more dramatic changes in a shorter period of time than in the last four years. The Berlin Wall has come down... The Soviet Union, the evil empire that threatened our lives and our freedom for 45 years, exists today only in the pages of history books... None of these things happen by accident. They are the result of strong Republican leadership. (Gramm, 1992)

Gramm made the case that none of these big events in the world could have occurred if not for the strong leadership of Bush specifically, but also Republicans more broadly. Gramm subtly gave a nod to Reagan's leadership, indicating that it was not only Bush who had ushered in this new era.

Gramm also attacked the Democrats as obstructionists who had prevented the real progress Bush had been trying to make. Gramm attempted to brand the Democrats as obstacles and Republicans as the party of action:

George Bush asked Congress for a spending freeze, for the line item veto, for a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Had Congress said yes, the deficit would be falling, and mortgage interest rates would be below six percent today, but Democrats said no. (Gramm, 1992)

Gramm indicated that Bush had a strong plan to fight the problems ailing the economy. Bush and the Republicans were trying to take action but were consistently hindered by the Democratic Congress. Any issue that the American people had with the state of the nation was the fault of the Democratic Congress and not the President according to Gramm's assessment.

Gramm utilized his address to put forth two facets of the Republican brand. First, he discussed the leadership exhibited by Bush and more broadly all Republicans in recent years as an indication of the party's ability to lead. For Gramm the Republican Party was the soul of leadership.

Keynote Speaker President Ronald Reagan. As the still popular former president, Reagan was brought in to remind Americans that the party of Bush was also the party of Reagan. During his speech, Reagan reinforced the two themes present in Gramm's address. First, Reagan discussed the legacy of leadership that the Republicans had built over the previous 12 years. Then, Reagan attacked the Democratic brand as standing in the way of the progress Bush represented.

Reagan began by emphasizing the state of the nation 12 years prior as an indication of the progress he and Bush had made during their respective administrations. Reagan discussed the bleak picture of the state of the nation prior to his election:

We mustn't forget, even if they would like to, the very different America that existed just 12 years ago; an America with 21 percent interest rates and back to back years of double digit inflation an America where mortgage payments doubled; paychecks plunged; and motorists sat in gas lines... It was a world where our children came of age under the threat of nuclear holocaust... But we stood tall and proclaimed that communism was destined for the ash heap of history. (Reagan, 1992)

Reagan emphasized all of the problems America was facing prior to his election to show how far Republican leadership had brought America. Rather than acclaim the successes, Reagan focused on the type of America the Democrats had created the last time they were in power.

Next, Reagan attacked the Democratic Congress as the branch that needed change. Similar to his argument in 1988, Reagan argued that the Democrats in Congress were the obstacles in Washington and the Democratic branding of change actually applied to Congress instead of the presidency. "What we should change is a Democratic Congress that wastes precious time on partisan matters of absolutely no relevance to the needs of the average American (Reagan, 1992)." Reagan indicated that the Democrats were out of touch with the needs of average Americans and Republicans were trying to get things done that would improve the lives of many Americans. Reagan attempted to brand the Democrats as ineffective, arguing that Republicans and their message had a boarder appeal.

Overall, Reagan used his address to reinforce the Republican Party branding of the past couple of elections. Reagan's appearance reminded the audience that his success was also Bush's. Reagan discussed the leadership of the past 12 years as a reason to not turn back to the poor Democratic leadership America had lived under prior to Reagan. Reagan also attacked the

Democratic brand as out of touch and obstructing true progress and indicated that Republicans are the party that cared about average Americans.

Nominee Spouse Barbara Bush. Barbara Bush was only the second spouse to address the convention during this sample. Her address focused on family and family values. Throughout her speech she used her family narrative as a way to describe the values of her family. She also employed the narratives of other families she met on the campaign trail to reinforce those family values.

Bush described the type of father her husband was to their children. She tied their challenges to those of the average family:

You know, to us, family means putting your arms around each other and being there. No family is perfect, and no family is without pain and suffering. We lost a daughter, we almost lost a son, and one child struggled for years with a learning disability. (B. Bush, 1992)

Continuing, she discussed the families she and her husband had met on the campaign trail as exemplars of many American families:

We have met so many different families, and yet, they really aren't so very different. As in our family, as in American families everywhere, the parents we've met are determined to teach their children integrity, strength, responsibility, courage, sharing, love of god, and pride in being an American. (B. Bush, 1992)

Bush described the values, which she indicated were part of all American families, and her family was just that, an American family. She was able to brand the Republican Party as a party representative of America's family values.

Vice President Dan Quayle. Dan Quayle used his address in a similar way to Bush's address from the 1984 Convention. He was making the case for reelection while also attempting to position himself as the heir apparent for 1996. Quayle emphasized three main facets of the Republican Party brand. First, he discussed his own family narrative to reinforce the family

values branding put forward in Barbara Bush's speech. Then, Quayle introduced the policies of burdensome federal regulations and Congressional term limits to the party branding. Finally, Quayle discussed the legacy of leadership that the Republican Party had built over the past several years.

Quayle began his speech by discussing his family narrative as a demonstration of the family values the Republican Party represented. Quayle discussed the values he instilled in his children, including an understanding of different definitions of family:

Marilyn and I have tried to teach our children these values, like faith in god, love of family, and appreciation for freedom. We have also taught them about family issues like adoption... We have taught our children to respect single parents and their challenges... Like so many Americans, for me, family comes first. When family values are undermined, our country suffers... Americans try to understand right and wrong only to be told that every so-called lifestyle alternative is morally equivalent. That is wrong.

(Quayle, 1992)

Quayle used his family's narrative to show appreciation for many of the variations of family within America but takes aim at family dynamics that do not fit with his view of an appropriate lifestyle. He entrenched his notion of family values as "traditional" values as part of the Republican brand.

Quayle also emphasized several policy areas that he felt were integral parts of the Republican brand. He acclaimed his work in railing against burdensome federal regulations as the chair of a presidential council:

The President's Council on Competitiveness, which I chair, will continue to lead the charge against unnecessary federal regulation. We've worked to save jobs, and to save lives. We have reformed the drug approval process to speed up the availability of new medicines for people with life-threatening diseases like cystic fibrosis, cancer, and AIDS.

(Quayle, 1992)

Quayle discussed unraveling unnecessary federal regulations to fit in with the branding of the Republican Party as the party in favor of smaller government. He took a much more specific approach than utilized in previous conventions by discussing regulations rather than spending. Quayle added a new angle for the smaller government branding emphasized by Republicans.

Another policy that Quayle discussed is related to Congressional term limits. He argued that since presidential term limits are in effect a similar policy should exist for members of Congress:

Almost 16 years ago, in my first speech as a member of the House of Representatives, I proposed limiting the terms of Congress. The Democratic Congress tells us that it is good for the country to limit Ronald Reagan and George Bush to two terms as president. I say to them, if it's good for the country to limit Ronald Reagan and George Bush to terms, then it would be great for the country to limit the terms of senators like George Mitchell and Ted Kennedy, and the rest of that liberal Democratic Congress. (Quayle, 1992)

Quayle demonstrated that he had been a long-term advocate for term limits.

Finally, Quayle discussed the Republican legacy of leadership by speaking about his experiences serving by Bush's side. Quayle used that legacy as an argument to stay the course. "George Bush has given us great victories abroad and performed great deeds at home. But, as Theodore Roosevelt said, 'the greatest victories are yet to be won... the greatest deeds are yet to be done' (Quayle, 1992)." Quayle indicated that Bush had achieved great things over the past four years but had more work to do.

Overall, Quayle's address covered several key areas of the Republican brand. First, he discussed traditional family values. Then, he emphasized the policies of burdensome regulations and Congressional term limits. Finally, he helped to build the case for staying the course under Bush by explaining the legacy of leadership Bush had exemplified over the past four years.

President George H. W. Bush. Bush returned to the convention stage to make the case for his reelection. He built upon three key areas of the Republican brand during his address. First,

Bush emphasized the legacy of leadership during his time in office. Next, Bush advocated for two policies he wished to focus on, smaller government and tax reform. Finally, he acclaimed the Republicans as the true party of progress that was being hindered by the obstructionist in the Democratic Congress.

Bush began his speech by recounting his successes. He stressed his leadership in the realm of national security:

Four years ago, I spoke about missions for my life and for our country. I spoke of one urgent mission, defending our security and promoting the American ideal abroad. Just pause for a moment to reflect on what we've done. Germany is united, and a slab of the Berlin Wall sits right outside the Astrodome... This convention is the first at which an American president can say the Cold War is over, and freedom finished first. (G. Bush, 1992)

Bush positioned himself as a world leader responsible for the fall of communism throughout the world. His leadership was the reason for the end to a longstanding threat to the world and Americans should therefore elect him to a second term to continue the job. Bush indicated that Democratic leaders would be incapable of making strong choices. "And while the U.S. postwar strategy was largely bipartisan, the fact remains that the liberal McGovern wing of the other party, including my opponent, consistently made the wrong choices (G. Bush, 1992)." Bush also linked Clinton to McGovern, who had been considered outside of the mainstream, even for some liberal Democrats.

Bush also focused on two policies as part of the Republican branding for 1992, smaller government and tax reform. He focused on reducing spending as the target of his ideal of smaller government:

We start with a simple fact: Government is too big and spends too much. I have asked Congress to put a lid on mandatory spending, except Social Security... So, beginning

tonight, I will enforce the spending freeze on my own. If Congress sends me a bill spending more than I asked for in my budget, I will veto it fast... (G. Bush, 1992)

The discussion of smaller government had been a part of the Republican branding for the past several conventions.

The second area of policy Bush focused on was tax reform. In 1988, Bush promised to not raise taxes; in 1992 he had to answer for going back on that promise. He did so by reaffirming his commitment to tax reform:

Two years ago, I made a bad call on the Democrats tax increase. I underestimated Congress' addiction to taxes. With my back against the wall, I agreed to a hard bargain, one tax increase one time in return for the toughest spending limits ever. Well, it was a mistake to go along with the Democratic tax increase, and I admit it. But here's the question for the American people. Who do you trust in this election? The candidate who's raised taxes one time and regrets it, or the other candidate who raised taxes and fees 128 times and enjoyed it every time? (G. Bush, 1992)

Bush explained his culpability while he also planted the tax increase squarely on the Democrats. While Bush regretted his decision and promised to fight against future tax increases.

The final part of the party brand emphasized in Bush's speech involved framing the Democratic Congress as obstructionists and the Republicans as the true party of progress:

Every day, Congress puts politics ahead of principle and above progress. Now, let me give you just one example: February 20, 1991. It was at the height of the Gulf War. On that very same day, I asked American pilots to risk their lives to fly missions over Baghdad. I also wanted to strengthen our economic security for the future... How many days did it take to win the Gulf War? 43. How many did it take Congress to pass a national energy strategy? 532, and still counting. I have ridden stationary bikes that can move faster than the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, controlled by the Democrat leadership. (G. Bush, 1992)

According to Bush, the Democrats were to blame for a lack of progress. When success was not present, Bush pinned the blame on Congress and its obstruction.

Overall, Bush built upon several key facets of the Republican brand. First, he discussed his legacy of leadership, especially related to foreign affairs. He then discussed two policy areas that have been heavily emphasized within the party branding at several conventions, smaller government and tax reform. Finally, he attempted to brand Democrats as obstructionists who were incapable of working for the American people while also making Republicans out to be principled leaders who had the people's best interest in mind.

Summary of the 1992 Republican Convention Branding. Several facets of the 1992 Republican Party brand built upon previous branding elements put forth in previous conventions. All of the speeches built upon the legacy of leadership that has been the result of 12 years of Republicans controlling the White House. Reagan and Bush both followed up on their 1988 claims that the Democratic Congress was the branch of government in need of change due to their hindrance of the progress offered by Republicans. Smaller government and tax reform were two policies, which had appeared in multiple Republican Conventions. Barbara Bush and Quayle both built upon the family values branding. Overall, the 1992 Convention focused on reinforcing the party brand of the past 12 years.

1996 Republican Convention

The 1996 Republican Convention saw the Republican Party turn to a candidate for president that had been on the ballot 20 years prior as a Vice-Presidential Nominee in Senator Bob Dole. The Republicans hoped they could prevent Bill Clinton from becoming the first Democratic president to be elected to two terms since FDR. Congresswoman Susan Molinari gave the keynote speech; Elizabeth Dole spoke in favor of her husband along with Vice-Presidential Nominee Jack Kemp. These speeches, along with Bob Dole's, helped create a brand that contrasted with the brand Clinton and the Democrats offered in their convention.

Keynote Speaker Congresswoman Susan Molinari. Susan Molinari's address discussed two key facets of the party branding. First, she told her personal narrative which symbolized the American Dream. Then, Molinari also attacked the Democratic Party and the Clinton Administration for ignoring the needs of the people. She used the attack to then pivot to an acclaim on how Dole and Kemp would do better for Americans.

Molinari discussed her family narrative as an example of the American Dream. She recounted her family's history including her great-grandparents immigration to the United States from Italy:

For the Molinari family, our American story began in 1904, when Guyatano and Marie Molinari bundled up their young son and left Italy in search of a dream. They found it, on 104th Street in Queens... Along the way, the American Dream got a little bigger, and in just two generations, a seat in a Queens barbershop, led to a seat in the United States Congress. (Molinari, 1996)

Molinari used her family's American Dream narrative to show that the Republican Party was the party where a person could start out as an immigrant with nothing and their family could accomplish anything. Her personal narrative was meant to resonate, not as unique, but as fundamentally American and, even more important for the party branding, Republican.

Molinari also attacked the Democratic brand as out of touch while acclaiming the Republican branding. She attacked the Democrats on several policy areas using a similar organizational pattern:

Under Bill Clinton, Medicare will be bankrupt in five years. But this president would rather play politics, than muster the political courage to rescue it. Republicans will save Medicare and protect Social Security, so people can stop worrying about their parents' and their grandparents' health and security. (Molinari, 1996)

Molinari made it clear that under the continued leadership of the Democratic Party, America would see many key programs end due to incompetence. At the same time she pointed to the priorities of the Republican Party to create a better life for the American people.

Overall, Molinari used her address to advance two parts of the Republican brand. First, she told her family's narrative of the American Dream. By doing so she framed the Republican Party as the party responsible for advancing that dream. Then, she attacked the Democratic brand as incapable of addressing the needs of Americans while acclaiming the Republicans as invested and ready to work for the American people.

Nominee Spouse Elizabeth Dole. Elizabeth Dole spoke to the convention and made the case for electing her husband to the presidency. In the main, she spoke of the type of man her husband was and used his narrative of the American Dream to increase that particular branding:

He was born in a small town in Kansas. His parents were poor. In fact, at one point, when Bob was a boy, they had to move their family; parents and four children into the basement and rent out their small home, the upstairs, just to make ends meet. (E. Dole, 1996)

She was able to show that her husband had not always been a person living in privilege and as he had lived the American Dream, he could still empathize with Americans who were struggling to get by every day. Overall, Elizabeth Dole's speech was meant to show her husband's narrative of the American Dream and how it has made him a person of empathy.

Vice Presidential Nominee Secretary Jack Kemp. Jack Kemp spoke to the convention with the goal of reinforcing two facets of the Republican brand. First, he discussed the legacy of Republican leadership and Dole's role in that legacy. Then, he attacked the Democrats as out of touch and unable to ensure true progress. He used the attack to demonstrate that the Republicans are the party of change.

Kemp began and ended his address by discussing the legacy of leadership within the Republican Party. At the beginning of the speech, Kemp championed the American Dream as the

cause Republicans have always fought for. “And so tonight, as the party of Lincoln, Reagan, and Dole we begin our campaign to restore the American Dream (Kemp, 1996).” Kemp placed Dole among revered Republican leaders as a way of arguing that Dole would be that level of leader if he were elected. Kemp would reinforce this point at the end of the speech. “America is fortunate that last night you nominated a leader worthy of succeeding Ronald Reagan. A man with strength, determination, and a vision to do the job that lies ahead (Kemp, 1996).” Kemp seemed to gloss over the Bush Presidency by referring to Dole as Reagan’s successor and successful leadership.

Kemp also attacked the Democratic brand as out of touch with average Americans as a way to demonstrate that Republicans understood what average Americans needed. Kemp described the Democratic Party as lacking faith in people. “The Democratic Party today is not democratic. They’re elitists. They don’t have faith in the people. They have faith in the government... That is the problem with all elitists, they think they know better than the people (Kemp, 1996).” Kemp utilized this line of attack to argue that the Republicans were not elitists and that they would trust the American people to decide what is best for them. He branded the Republican Party as the party of individual freedom standing in opposition to the party of heavy government oversight.

Overall, Kemp reinforced the Republican brand in two ways. First, he recounted the Republican legacy of leadership. He did this by placing Dole in the context of revered Republican leaders such as Lincoln and Reagan. Then, Kemp attacked the Democratic brand as elitists and out of touch. By doing so, Kemp argued that Republicans trusted the American people and was on their side rather than the side of big government.

Presidential Nominee Senator Bob Dole. Bob Dole’s address covered many areas that have been engrained into the Republican Party branding throughout the previous and current conventions. First, Dole recounted his personal narrative of the American Dream. He expanded on the narrative from the version his wife, Elizabeth, told as part of her address. Next, he emphasized family values, especially traditional family values as the Republican Party has

defined them. Then, Dole emphasized four key policies as part of the Republican branding. The four policies included in the convention branding were tax reform, education reform, crime, and national security.

Dole began his speech with echoes of the American Dream:

I come from good people, very good people, and I'm proud of it... I loved them and there's no moment when my memory of them and my love for them does not overshadow anything I do, even this even here. And there is no height to which I have risen that is high enough to allow to forget them, to allow me to forget where I came from, and where I stand and how I stand. (B. Dole, 1996)

Dole expanded on the notion of the American Dream narrative given by his wife. She explained the meager upbringing that he had to overcome to get to this point. In his address, Dole was then able to explain that he had not forgotten where he came from or the journey that he took to get to that point. While this is not the explicit telling of an American Dream narrative many have used in the past, it does connect to his wife's telling allowing for a connection to that narrative.

The next theme present in the Republican Party branding by Dole was family values. He emphasized the importance of families and the role he felt the government had in promoting families:

And after the virtual devastation of the American family, the rock upon which this country was founded, we are told that it takes a village, that is collective, and thus the state, to raise a child... And with all due respect, I am here to tell you it does not take a village to raise a child. It takes a family to raise a child. If I could by magic restore to every child who lacks a father or a mother that father or mother, I would... And I shall as president vote measures that keep families whole. (B. Dole, 1996)

Dole, like many Republicans before him, insisted the family was key to America's success. He also made it known that he felt families should be enticed to stay together for the common goal of

raising children. He rejected the notion put forward by Democrats that raising children is a community effort and stated that it was only up to the family to raise children.

Dole next discussed policy. The first policy area Dole discussed was tax reform, a key component of the Republican brand:

It means you will have a president who will reduce taxes 15 percent across the board for every taxpayer in America. And it will include a \$500 per child tax credit for lower and middle-income families in American... It means that you will have a president who will end the IRS as we know it... I will not be satisfied until we have reformed our entire tax code and made fairer and flatter and simpler for the American people. (B. Dole, 1996)

Dole explained that he felt taxes as they currently stood were unfair and needed dramatic reforms. He clearly branded the Republican Party as the party of much lower taxes by laying out the type of reforms he was proposing.

Dole also talked about reforming education in America. Compared to taxes, he was less specific about the kind of reforms he wanted, but it was clear that he wanted to make several changes:

And to the teachers' union, I say when I am president; I will disregard your political power for the sake of the parents, the children, the schools, and the nation. I plan to enrich your vocabulary with those words you fear, school choice and competition and opportunity scholarships. (B. Dole, 1996)

Dole made it clear that he was opposed to teachers' unions and looked to increase school choice programs as part of the Republican branding.

Dole also targeted crime as a focus for the Republican branding in 1996. He targeted parole as an area in need of reform. "In the Dole Administration, we will work with the nation's governors to abolish parole for violent criminals all across America. And with my national instant check initiative we will keep guns out of the hands of criminals (B. Dole, 1996)." Dole looked to

build on a policy that was in place under Reagan. Reagan ended parole in federal cases, Dole looked to expand that to the states. Dole branded the Republican Party as tough on crime.

Finally, Dole discussed foreign policy as part of the Republican brand. Dole argued that the president should not take cues from any other foreign leader. “When I am president every man, and every woman will know the president is the commander-in-chief, not Boutros Boutros-Ghali or any other UN Secretary General (B. Dole, 1996).” Dole made the case that the United States should decide for itself and not view the United Nations Secretary General as an authority figure. He proclaimed that he would lead the United States with steady and determined leadership, which has been missing from Democratic administrations but had been a hallmark of Republican administrations.

Overall, Dole discussed several areas of the Republican Party branding. First, he built upon his personal narrative of the American Dream as an indicator that he understood the struggles many Americans face. Then, he emphasized family values as distinctly Republican. Finally, Dole emphasized four policy areas that would be highlighted by the Republican Party. Those policies were tax reform, education reform, crime, and foreign affairs.

Summary of the 1996 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the 1996 Republican Convention, there were several areas of the party branding that were built upon from previous conventions. Many of the addresses discussed the American Dream as something the Republican Party had lived and therefore understood better than Democrats. Several speeches also attacked Democrats as elitists and out of touch. This was done in order to promote Republicans as the needed change. Kemp discussed the legacy of leadership the Republicans have provided. Dole discussed tax reform and national security as issues previously made part of the Republican brand. He also introduced crime and education reform as policies important to the party brand for the 1996 Election.

2000 Republican Convention

The 2000 Republican Convention was called to order with the Republicans looking to reclaim the presidency after eight years of Bill Clinton in office and his Vice President, Al Gore attempting to win another term in office for the Democrats. The Republicans hoped to capitalize on attacks of the Democrats for supporting Clinton through his impeachment hearings. After a contentious primary battle between Arizona Senator John McCain and Texas Governor George W. Bush, the party was also looking to present a united front going into the election. The Republican brand was constructed by speeches given by Senator John McCain, General Colin Powell, Laura Bush, Vice-Presidential Nominee Dick Cheney, and Presidential Nominee George W. Bush.

Throughout the convention addresses several areas of the party branding were emphasized. Many of the addresses focused on a need for change and Republicans being that needed change. Powell as well as Laura and George Bush discussed education reform. McCain, Cheney, and Bush emphasized leadership as part of the Republican brand. Laura and George Bush discussed their family narrative to promote the Republican branding of family values. Finally, George discussed tax reform and a smaller government to reinforce those two policies as part of the Republican branding.

Keynote Speaker Senator John McCain. John McCain's address was meant to help bring the Republican Party together after a divisive primary. Throughout his speech he promoted the Republican branding of leadership. He touted the leadership of George W. Bush as founded in selflessness and courage:

It is easy to forget in politics wherein principle ends, and selfishness begins. It takes leaders of courage and character to remember the difference. Tomorrow, our party will nominate such a leader. George W. Bush believes in the greatness of America and the justice of our cause... I say to all Americans, Republican, Democrat, or Independent, if

you believe America deserves leaders with a purpose more ennobling than expediency and opportunism then vote for Governor Bush. (McCain, 2000)

McCain described the kind of leader that he felt America was in need of and then proclaimed that the description fit Bush. McCain also attempted to reach out to those outside of the party faithful and ask them to see Bush as the leader McCain described.

Throughout McCain's address he spoke of leadership and painted Bush as the leader America needed. After a divisive primary between Bush and McCain, McCain's main goal was to unify his supporters behind Bush for the general election.

Keynote Speaker General Colin Powell. Colin Powell was viewed as a key military figure in the Gulf War of the early 90's. His appearance was meant to signal the endorsement of Bush from the national defense community. Throughout his address he focused on two facets of the party branding. First, he emphasized the need for change and the Republican Party being the ones to represent that change. Then, he discussed education as a key policy in the campaign.

The first theme of Powell's speech was the clear need for change present in America after eight years of a Democratic president. Powell talked about his travels around the country and the problems he had seen. "I cannot ignore that in my travels I've also seen poverty, failing communities, people who've lost hope... I've seen kids in utter despair. I've visited kids in jail doing adult time for crimes they've committed (Powell, 2000)." Powell painted the picture of an America, beset with many serious problems. He focused on the loss of hope in communities that had felt left behind or forgotten during the Clinton Administration. Later in the speech, Powell pointed to Bush as a leader capable of fixing these problems:

Governor Bush doesn't just talk about reforms, he reforms... He has been successful at bringing more and more minorities into the tent by responding to their deepest needs. Some call it compassionate conservatism. To me, it's just about caring for people. (Powell, 2000)

Powell directed the need for change to the person capable of bringing the correct kind of change, George W. Bush.

Powell also spoke about education and failing schools:

Tonight, we focus on education. Governor Bush has rightly made children and education the centerpiece of his campaign for president... But I have seen too many schools that are failing. They are trapped in fossilized bureaucracies. Bureaucracies that have low expectations for children and consequently set low standards for them. These schools are leaving our children behind and they must be fixed. (Powell, 2000)

Powell discussed the problems he saw with schools before pivoting to acknowledge that education was the main priority of the Bush campaign and the Republican brand.

Overall, Powell used his address to focus on two facets of the Republican brand. First, he discussed the clear need for change and the Republican Party being able to bring about that needed change. Then, Powell discussed education.

Nominee Spouse Laura Bush. Laura Bush utilized her speech to reinforce two parts of the brand. First, she discussed education. Her career as a schoolteacher allowed her to use her personal narrative in promoting this part of the Party brand. Then, she focused on family and family values.

Bush began by speaking about her connection to education and tying that to the role it would play in her husband's Administration. She discussed how Gore was only recently learning about American education when compared to her husband:

Education is the living room of my life. George's opponent has been visiting schools lately and sometimes when he does, he spends the night before at the home of a teacher. Well, George spends every night with a teacher. I first decided to become a teacher when I was in the second grade... Growing up I practiced teaching on my dolls... Years later our daughters did the same thing. We used to joke that the Bush family had the best educated dolls in America. (L. Bush, 2000)

Bush furthered her argument:

I know many teachers will agree we need better training in what works to teach children to read and as president, George will fund improved teacher training. Public school reforms are crucial, but they aren't enough... As First Lady, I will make early childhood development one of my priorities, and George will strengthen Head Start to make sure it's an early reading and early learning program. (L. Bush, 2000)

Bush made the case that teacher training and reforms to early childhood education were necessary. Once again, she referred to her expertise to make this policy argument. She also demonstrated the expanded role that the First Lady had taken on in recent years by indicating that early childhood development would be one her top priorities as well as her husband's as president.

Bush also spoke of her family narrative to demonstrate the family values that has been established as part of the Republican branding in past conventions. She talked about how life in public service had impacted their family:

George and I have been blessed throughout our 23 years of marriage with many interesting opportunities. Our lives have changed enormously in the last six years. He was elected Governor, we moved to Austin with our then 13-year-old twin teenagers, and since then, we've been through dating, driver's licenses, prom night, and just a few weeks ago, high school graduation... They say parents often have to get out of the house when their kids go off to college because it seems so lonely. Everyone deals with it in different ways. But I told George I thought running for president was a little extreme. (L. Bush, 2000)

Bush discussed how they had handled their daughters growing up like any other family would. Her family narrative indicated that she and George were average Americans in that aspect. She even discussed their upcoming empty nest as difficult by making it the tongue in cheek reason her husband was running for president.

Vice Presidential Nominee Secretary Dick Cheney. Throughout Cheney's address he focused on two areas of the Republican branding. First, he discussed his personal narrative of service to fit into the Republican legacy of leadership as he had held prominent positions in recent Republican Administrations. Then, he discussed the need for change and demonstrated how the Republican Party could move the country forward.

The first part of the address involved Cheney discussing his narrative of service, which included working with every Republican president since Ford. This narrative was meant to highlight not only his lifetime of service, but also the legacy of leadership that the Republican Party brand represented:

I have been given an opportunity to serve beside a man who has the courage, and the vision, and the goodness to be a great president: Governor George W. Bush. I have been in the company of leaders. I was there on August 9, 1974 when Gerald Ford assumed the presidency during our gravest constitutional crisis since the Civil War... I was a congressman when another man of integrity lived in the White House... I learned the meaning of leadership from President Ronald Reagan. I left Congress to join the cabinet of President Reagan's successor. And I'm proud to say that I'm not the only man on the ticket who has learned from the example of President George Bush. (Cheney, 2000)

Cheney showed how he learned what it took to be a leader. He was able to tie himself to every administration in the past 25 years. By doing so he promoted the legacy of leadership within the Republican Party and also demonstrated his experience and lifetime of public service.

Cheney also discussed the need for change. He explained the damage done during the Clinton Administration before pivoting to discuss how a Bush Administration could repair that damage:

We can restore the ideals of honesty and honor that must be a part of our national life if our children are to thrive. When I look at the administration now in Washington, I am dismayed by opportunities squandered... George W. Bush will repair what has been

damaged... On the first hour of the first day he will restore decency and integrity to the Oval Office. (Cheney, 2000)

Cheney referred somewhat vaguely to the scandals that had been a part of the Clinton Administration. He did so to brand the Democrats as lacking honesty or honor. He was able to then provide comparison and portray the Republican brand as moral, decent and honest.

Overall, Cheney used his address to promote two facets of the Republican brand. First, he used his own narrative of service to show both his experience and the Republican legacy of leadership. Then, he transitioned to speaking about the need for change and the Republican's ability to be that change. These two facets built upon the Republican brand that had been established in previous conventions.

Presidential Nominee Governor George W. Bush. George W. Bush's address focused on several parts of the party branding. Each facet reinforced themes expressed as part of the party branding in previous conventions as well as within the 2000 Republican Convention. First, Bush discussed his personal family narrative to demonstrate his family values. Then, he emphasized the need for change and the Republican Party being the most able to provide that change. Next, he discussed the Republican legacy of leadership and his place as part of that legacy. Finally, Bush brought forth key policies to the party brand for the campaign. The two policies presented were education and tax reform.

The first theme present in Bush's address was family. Bush offered his family narrative as exemplary:

I'm especially grateful tonight to my family. No matter what else I do in my life, asking Laura to marry me was the best decision I ever made. And to our daughters, Barbara and Jenna, we love you a lot. We're proud of you... and mother, everybody loves you and so do I... And I want to thank my dad, the most decent man I have ever known. (G. Bush, 2000)

Bush talked about each member of his immediate family to demonstrate their role in his life. He branded himself as a family man through this narrative. Another piece of Bush's family narrative was the ability to remind Americans who his father was. By having a former president as a father, he was able to subtly position himself among Republican leaders.

Bush also focused on the need for change. He began by discussing the state of the world when Clinton took office and compared it to the current situation:

Little more than a decade ago, the Cold War thawed, and with the leadership of Presidents Reagan and Bush, that wall came down. But instead of seizing this moment, the Clinton-Gore Administration has squandered it. We have seen a steady erosion of American power and an unsteady exercise of American influence... This administration had its chance. They have not led. We will. (G. Bush, 2000)

Bush made it clear that the Clinton Administration wasted America's foreign policy edge.

Next, Bush emphasized the leadership he would bring to the White House. He explained his goal to restore honor to the office and mentioned several former presidents as guides for his leadership:

And to lead this nation to a responsibility era, that president himself must be responsible. So, when I put my hand on *The Bible*, I will swear to not only uphold the laws of our land, I will swear to uphold the honor and dignity of the office to which I have been elected... I believe the presidency, the final point of decision in the American government, was made for great purposes. It is the office of Lincoln's conscience, of Teddy Roosevelt's energy, of Harry Truman's integrity, and Ronald Reagan's optimism. (G. Bush, 2000)

Bush mentioned restoring the dignity of the office as an attack on the Clinton Administration. Conversely, he created a sense of bipartisanship by mentioning Truman as one of the presidents he held in high esteem. By talking about the templates of leadership he would use for his own presidency, Bush presented his branding of leadership.

Bush then emphasized two key policies as part of the Republican brand. The first policy was education. Education had been a policy area that was featured heavily throughout many of the addresses during the 2000 Republican Convention. Bush built on this branding by discussing his vision for schools. “One size does not fit all when it comes to educating our children, so local people should control local schools... When a school district receives federal funds to teach poor children, we expect them to learn (G. Bush, 2000).” Bush emphasized local control of schools as one of the keys to education. He also stated that there was a need for assessment of success when evaluating where federal dollars go.

Another policy that Bush discussed was tax reform. Bush gave a lengthy section of his address to tax reform and how he planned to change America’s tax code:

The last time taxes were this high as a percentage of our economy, there was a good reason, we were fighting World War II... I will use this moment of opportunity to bring common sense and fairness to the tax code... On principle, no one should have to pay more than one third of their income to the federal government, so we will reduce tax rates for everyone in every bracket... Now is the time to reform the tax code and share some of the surplus with the people who pay the bills. (G. Bush, 2000)

Bush made it clear that he planned to give the current surplus back to Americans and lower taxes across the board. Lowering tax rates, in order to shrink the size of government, had been part of the Republican branding through several conventions. By reforming the tax code, Bush planned on making the role of the federal government smaller.

Overall, Bush reinforced several areas of the party branding. First, he talked about his family narrative. Then, he emphasized the clear need for change and argued that he was the one capable of making that change occur. Next, Bush discussed how he would lead and the presidents he would model his leadership after. Finally, he reinforced the policies of education and tax reform insisting they were essential to the Republican Party.

Summary of the 2000 Republican Convention Branding. Many of the themes throughout the 2000 Republican Convention can be found in prior convention speeches. Several of the addresses focused on the need for change from the Democratic control presently in the White House to Republican control, which would restore honor and dignity to the office. Leadership and service were also key facets of the party branding with Cheney showing his experience working with several Republican presidents and Bush discussing his presidential role models. Family narratives were also shared in order to reinforce the branding of the party as the party of family values. Education became a key focus thanks mainly to Laura Bush, the former teacher. Finally, George W. Bush emphasized tax reform as a key policy area for his campaign.

2004 Republican Convention

The 2004 Republican Convention was unique in that every main speaker had addressed a previous convention. Another unique feature of this convention was Zell Miller, who was one of the keynote speakers at the 1992 Democratic Convention, delivered a keynote address to this Republican Convention. The other four speakers; Senator John McCain, First Lady Laura Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, and President George W. Bush all gave speeches at the Republican Convention four years prior. The convention centered around the strong leadership in the face of terror after September 11, 2001 with the case being made for keeping Bush in office for another four years.

Throughout the convention several areas of the party branding were emphasized. First, many speeches discussed national security. In the aftermath of September 11th, the Republican Party looked to brand themselves as the party that would keep America safe from further terrorism. Several speeches also discussed Republican leadership as a reason to stay the course. Miller, a former Democrat, and Cheney attacked Democrats as out of touch with the values of average Americans. Cheney also discussed the American Dream as championed by Republicans. Finally, Bush discussed three key policies in addition to national security; jobs, tax reform, and education.

Keynote Speaker Senator Zell Miller. Zell Miller was the first speaker to address the Republican Convention after having addressed a Democratic Convention in a previous cycle. His address focused on two areas of the Republican brand. First, Miller attacked Democrats as out of touch with the current needs of Americans. Miller also discussed the leadership provided by Republicans as reason to stay the course.

Miller began his address:

Now, while young Americans are dying the sands of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan, our nation is being torn apart and made weaker because of the Democrat's manic obsession to bring down our Commander in Chief. What has happened to the party I've spent my life working in? (Miller, 2004)

Miller took offense to the partisan games that he felt the Democrats were playing with the war on terror. He made case that the president was handling the war on terror well and the Democrats should support the troops and the president's efforts.

Miller also lauded Bush as a strong leader, capable of making the right decisions for America. Miller explained this in the context of the war on terror and his experiences in getting to know Bush:

George Bush understands that we need new strategies to meet new threats... George Bush wants to grab terrorists by the throat and not let them go to get a better grip... I first got to know George Bush when we served as governors together. I admire this man. (Miller, 2004)

Miller framed Bush as a decisive and strong leader, capable of winning the war on terror.

Overall, Zell Miller used his speech to reinforce two parts of the Republican brand. First, he used the reasons for his leaving the Democratic Party to show that the Democrats were out of touch with American values. Miller was uniquely able to demonstrate the flaws he saw the Democratic Party having recently been a part of that party. Miller also discussed the strong leadership Bush provided to the war on terror. Miller branded Bush as a strong and decisive

leader capable of winning that war. Miller also showed that Bush's leadership led him to join the Republican Party.

Keynote Speaker Senator John McCain. Throughout John McCain's address, he discussed two facets of the Republican brand for 2004. First, he emphasized national security as it related to the war on terror. The other theme presented in McCain's address focused on the steadfast leadership of the Bush Administration. The branding of leadership also had roots in discussions surrounding national security and the war on terror. For example, McCain argued:

It's a big thing, this war. It's a fight between a just regard for human dignity and a malevolent force that defiles an honorable religion by disputing God's love for every soul on earth... And should our enemies acquire for their arsenal the chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons they seek, this war will become a much bigger thing... Only the most deluded of us could doubt the necessity of this war. (McCain, 2004)

McCain indicated that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were wars of necessity. Anyone that disagreed with that philosophy did not have a full grasp of the situation, according to McCain's assessment of the wars.

McCain also made the argument that Americans should stay the course under the leadership of President Bush, especially given the national security concerns. He claimed that Bush had proven his abilities as a strong leader in the aftermath of September 11th:

This is not just an expression of our strength. It's a measure of our wisdom. That's why I commend to my country the re-election of President Bush, and the steady, experienced, public-spirited man who serves as our vice president, Dick Cheney... I knew my confidence was well placed when I watched him stand on the rubble of the World Trade Center, with his arm around a hero of September 11th, and in our moment of mourning and anger, strengthen our unity and summon our resolve by promising to right this terrible wrong, and to stand up and fight for the values we hold dear. He promised our enemies would soon hear from us. And so, they did. (McCain, 2004)

McCain reinforced his endorsement of Bush and Cheney from four years prior by indicating that the leadership after September 11th had vindicated that judgment.

McCain used the frame of national security to reinforce two facets of the Republican Party branding. First, he was able to brand the Republican Party as uniquely capable of fighting the war on terror. Next, McCain reinforced his endorsement from four years prior by pointing to Bush's response to September 11th as vindication for his endorsement. This allowed McCain to proclaim that America should stay the course and reelect Bush to a second term.

Nominee Spouse First Lady Laura Bush. Laura Bush gave her address to the convention, echoing Miller and McCain. First, she discussed the leadership her husband had provided as an argument to stay the course. She also emphasized national security and the successes the Bush Administration had in fighting the war on terror. Like McCain's address, both parts of the branding were in the context of the war on terror.

The first area of the Republican brand reinforced in Laura Bush's speech was the steady leadership her husband had provided over the previous four years. She emphasized the decision to go to war and that decision led the world toward greater security and freedom:

No American President ever wants to go to war... And my husband didn't want to go to war, but he knew the safety and security of America and the world depended on it... And I was there when my husband had to decide. Once again, as in our parents' generation, America had to make the tough choices, the hard decisions, and lead the world toward greater security and freedom. (L. Bush, 2004)

Bush described the struggle her husband had gone through when deciding to go to war. She then explained that he did what many great presidents had done in that situation and made the right choice for the security of the world. Bush explained that her husband was the kind of leader America needed in that situation.

In addition to using the war on terror to highlight the Republican branding of strong leadership, Bush also acclaimed the successes her husband's Administration had in the area of

national security. She highlighted several key points as evidence that the war on terror was successful:

After years of being treated as virtual prisoners in their own homes by the Taliban, the women of Afghanistan are going back to work... Almost every eligible voter, over 10 million Afghan citizens, have registered to vote in this fall's presidential election, more than 40 percent of them women... I recently met a young Iraqi woman. She's one of the new Iraqi Fulbright scholars studying in the United States... She told me that when people look at Iraq, what they don't see is that Iraq is a country of 25 million people, each with their own hope. (L. Bush, 2004)

Bush emphasized these successes as reason to continue the national security strategy that her husband had been executing. She demonstrated that the Republican Party was a party of results that made America safer.

Throughout the convention, addresses have focused on leadership and particularly national security. Laura Bush's address was no different. Throughout her address she spoke of the leadership her husband had provided over the past four years. She used that leadership to emphasize key successes in the area of national security. Bush argued only the Republican Party could fully execute the war on terror and keep America safe.

Vice President Dick Cheney. Throughout Cheney's address he focused on three facets of the Republican branding. First, he recounted personal version of the American Dream. His telling of this narrative allowed him to show that Republicans understood the lives of average Americans and would work to make the lives of Americans easier. Then, he acclaimed the leadership of the Republican Party as an argument to stay the course. He also provided an attack on the Democratic brand as unable to lead. Finally, he built on the branding of being the party of national security.

Cheney began his address by discussing his family's narrative of the American Dream. He talked about his grandfather's meager beginnings and how that led to Cheney becoming the vice president:

Now, my grandfather didn't have the chance to go to high school... But the modesty of his circumstances didn't stop him from thinking that President Roosevelt should know about my arrival. My grandfather believed deeply in the promise of America and had the highest hopes for his family. And I don't think it would surprise him all that much that a grandchild of his stands before you tonight as vice president of the United States... And that sense of boundless opportunity is a gift that we must pass on to all who come after us. (Cheney, 2004)

Cheney used the narrative of his family proving that he was a man of humble origins. In his version of the American Dream hard work and imagination could more than overcome modest circumstances. For Cheney insuring accessibility of the American Dream for generations to come is the key to the American dream.

Cheney also acclaimed the leadership of the Republican Party as a reason to stay the course under Bush's leadership. He attacked the Democratic brand as unable to lead effectively in this environment.

First, he acclaimed Bush's record in a number of areas:

As President Bush and I were sworn into office, our nation was sliding into recession, and American workers were overburdened with federal taxes... So President Bush delivered the greatest tax reduction in a generation, and the results are clear to see... And there is more to do. Under this president's leadership, we will reform medical liability, so the system serves the patients and good doctors, not personal injury lawyers. (Cheney, 2004)

Cheney showed that Bush had been able to make the economy grow through his tax cuts. He also made the case for staying the course under Bush, as there was more work to be done.

Cheney then attacked Democratic Nominee John Kerry as someone who was indecisive and weak:

On Iraq, Senator Kerry has disagreed with many of his fellow Democrats. But Senator Kerry's liveliest disagreement is with him. His back-and-forth reflects a habit of indecision and sends a message of confusion. And it's all part of a pattern. (Cheney, 2004)

Cheney made it clear that Kerry was incapable of making a clear decision. When paired with the arguments demonstrating the strong leadership of Bush, it showed that the Republican Party was a party of steadfast leadership and Americans should vote to stay the course.

Finally, Cheney discussed national security and built on the branding of the previous speakers. Cheney described the view of national security through the foreign policy held by the Bush Administration in regard to other nations:

But as the President has made very clear, there is a difference between leading a coalition of many nations and submitting to the objections of a few. George W. Bush will never seek a permission slip to defend the American people. (Cheney, 2004)

Cheney argued that the Bush Administration would not listen to the objections of other countries while deciding how best to defend America. This was a new addition to the Republican branding on national security.

Throughout Cheney's address he emphasized three areas of the Republican brand. First, he used his personal American Dream narrative to demonstrate that he empathizes with the struggles had by many Americans and made it a clear part of the Republican branding. Next, Cheney attacked the Democrats as indecisive and weak while arguing that the Republicans were steady and decisive leaders capable of meeting the world's challenges. Finally, Cheney discussed the branding surrounding national security. Here, Cheney made it clear that the Bush Administration would not seek consultation when it came to defending America.

President George W. Bush. Bush took the stage attempting to do something his father had been unable to do 12 years prior, win reelection. In order to make the case for his reelection, Bush brought forth several areas of the Republican branding into his address. First, he emphasized his leadership and made the case for Americans to stay the course. Then, he discussed national security as a key issue within the party branding after 9/11. Next, Bush promoted job creation as part of the party branding. Tax reform was also reinforced from previous convention in his speech. Finally, Bush discussed education in order to reiterate a key part of the Republican branding from the 2000 Convention.

Bush led with the single most consistent element of the Republican brand, tax cuts:

I believe in the energy and innovative spirit of America's workers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and ranchers, so we unleashed that energy with the largest tax relief in a generation... I believe this nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership. And that is why, with your help, we will win this election. (G. Bush, 2004)

Bush discussed national security as a key piece of the Republican brand. Since the 2004 Election was the first election after September 11th, national security played a large role in Bush's address. One section of the speech addressed terrorism and how September 11th shaped his perception of how he planned to continue to fight it:

Three days after September the 11th, I stood where Americans died, in the ruins of the twin towers... Since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how better to protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes...our strategy is succeeding... We have led, many have joined, and America and the world are safer. (G. Bush, 2004)

Bush indicated that that since September 11th he had national security as his foremost thought. He claimed successes in making the world and America safer in order to push the Republican branding as the only party capable of ensuring the safety of Americans from the threat of terrorism.

Bush also made job creation a large part of the party branding. Bush explained his plans for creating jobs in a lagging economy. He put forth several examples of areas where he felt job creation could be boosted:

To create more jobs in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business... To create jobs, we will make our country less dependent on foreign sources of energy... And we must protect small business owners and workers from the explosion of frivolous lawsuits that threatened jobs across our country. (G. Bush, 2004)

Bush put forth a clear plan for the areas he would focus on in creating new jobs, concentrating on tort reform and energy production. Bush made job creation a priority as part of the Republican brand by talking about changes the government could make to help create them.

Another area related to job creation, which had been an established part of the Republican branding, was tax reform. In this case, Bush discussed the tax code as overly complex and in need of simplification:

Another drag on our economy is the current tax code, which is a complicated mess, filled with special interest loopholes, saddling our people with more than six billion hours of paperwork and headache every year... in a new term, I will lead a bipartisan effort to reform and simplify the federal tax code. (G. Bush, 2004)

This attack on the status quo was a different way of approaching the tax reform branding of past conventions. Generally, past speeches had insisted lowering tax rates and making the tax code fairer. Bush, however, makes the argument that the tax code is overly complex burden.

The branding four years prior focused heavily on reforms needed to help children succeed. This time around, the focus was on the success of those reforms:

Tonight, I remind every parent and every teacher, I say to every child: No matter what your circumstance, no matter where you live, your school will be the path to promise of America. We are transforming schools by raising standards and focusing on results. We are insisting on accountability, empowering parents and teaching and making sure local

people are in charge of their schools. In northeast Georgia, Gainesville Elementary School is mostly Hispanic and 90 percent poor. And this year, 90 percent of its students passed state tests in reading and math. (G. Bush, 2004)

In 2000, Bush emphasized the role his wife, a former teacher, had played in shaping his view of education due to her role as an educator. In the 2004 Convention, he focused much more on how his reforms had been able to show signs of positive results. He discussed what his reforms required and how they had been able to improve educational outcomes.

Overall, Bush reinforced several areas of branding for the Republican Party. First, he stressed his leadership role, key to the Party's brand. Then, he transitioned to several policy areas. National security was the main policy focus in the first post September 11th presidential election. Bush described how his foreign policy had been shaped by the events of September 11th and how he would continue to fight to protect America. Bush also discussed job creation and the areas in which the government could help with creating new jobs. In an area related to job creation, Bush also reinforced the Republican brand surrounding of tax reform by adding a new layer to that branding. He discussed how the current tax code was too complex and confusing which created a need for a simpler tax code. Finally, Bush revisited the education branding from four years prior to discuss how the reforms he had made were succeeding.

Summary of the 2004 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the 2004 Republican Convention several facets of the Republican brand were resounded. While national security and foreign affairs had been part of the Republican brand in past conventions, this was the first time that this branding related to terrorism. Many speakers spoke of national security in the wake of September 11th as paramount to the Republican identity. Addresses also proclaimed the leadership of President Bush as reason to stay the course. In some speeches, Bush's leadership was described as decisive in order to create a comparison to the Democratic nominee's indecisiveness. Cheney used his speech to also proclaim his personal American Dream narrative in order to extend that branding from previous conventions. Finally, Bush used his address to

discuss several policy areas that would be essential to the 2004 Republican branding. The policies of job creation, tax reform, and education reform were all reinforced as key policy priorities within the Republican Party. In the case of education, the main focus was on the successes achieved in the past four years with hopes of four more to build upon.

2008 Republican Convention

The 2008 Republican Convention brought the Republican Party together in hopes of maintaining control of the White House for four more years. The Party nominee, John McCain, addressed his third consecutive convention as a major speaker. His running mate, Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, his wife Cindy McCain, and keynote speaker Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani joined him. The main facets of the brand for this convention included McCain being portrayed as an independent thinker and a hero, while Obama was branded as inexperienced and not ready for the job.

The 2008 Republican Convention featured several parts of the party branding. First, many speakers spoke of the experience and service which continued the Republican Party's clear branding of steady leadership. Narratives of family and family values also reemerged as a key component of the Republican branding. Several addresses also spoke of national security as important in the post September 11th world. Palin reinforced the party branding of Republicans as the party of smaller government. Finally, McCain discussed three key policy areas in addition to national security important to the Republican brand; tax reform, education, and energy policy.

Keynote Speaker New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Former Mayor Giuliani was featured as a speaker at the convention in order to remind Americans of the leadership provided by Republicans after the tragedy of September 11th. During his speech, Giuliani attacked the Democratic brand and acclaimed the Republican brand in two areas. First, he described the experience of McCain compared to Obama as an indication of which candidate was truly ready to lead. Then, he compared the two party brands on national security to demonstrate that one party was proclaiming victory while the other was proclaiming defeat.

The first part of Giuliani's discussion of the Republican brand is about the experience of leadership of the Republican Party. This branding involved comparing the two candidates in order to show one as prepared and the other as not:

Barack Obama has never led anything, nothing; nada... The choice in this election comes down to substance over style. John McCain has been tested, Barack Obama has not... No one can look at John McCain and say that he's not ready to be commander-in-chief. He is. He's ready. (Giuliani, 2008)

Giuliani compared the two candidates' records of leadership. His argument is clear; Republicans were tried and true. He described the Democrats as unwilling to acknowledge the realities of the world while demonstrating that the Republicans had made the tough choices to keep America safe:

For four days in Denver, the Democrats were afraid to use the words Islamic terrorism... Of great concern to me, during those same four days in Denver, they rarely mentioned the attacks of September 11, 2001. They are in a state of denial about the biggest threat that faces this country... John McCain can face the enemy... Let's look at one example at a lifetime of principled stands that John McCain's brought about: his support for the troop surge in Iraq. The Democratic Party had given up on Iraq. (Giuliani, 2008)

Giuliani argued that the Democratic Party was blind to the reality of the war on terror and thus unqualified to address the national security needs of the nation. Conversely, he also made it clear that McCain had the correct judgment, which resulted in keeping America safe and winning the war on terror.

Overall, Giuliani focused his address on comparing the two parties and their brands in two different ways. First, he focused on leadership. He demonstrated that only one party had the experience and knowledge necessary to assume the presidency. The Republican brand was that of longstanding service and leadership while the Democratic Party was inexperienced and not ready for the job according to Giuliani. He also transferred the inexperienced critique to the branding on

national security. Giuliani explained that the Democrats refused to acknowledge the dangers present in the world and were therefore unprepared to adequately defend America. Conversely, McCain and the Republicans had a track record of being right in matters of national security.

Nominee Spouse Cindy McCain. Cindy McCain used her address to discuss her husband's leadership and how he fit into the Republican legacy of leadership. She particularly compared her husband to Ronald Reagan who was still well regarded in the Republican Party:

We all have to work together, build consensus, the way John has done all his life. His leadership inspires and empowers and places ultimate success in all our hands. Ronald Reagan was fond of saying, "with freedom goes responsibility, a responsibility that can only be met by the individual himself." I have been witness to great service and sacrifice to lives lived with humility and grace... I think John was a hero in Vietnam. But he thinks it was just his turn. (C. McCain, 2008)

Cindy McCain talked about her husband as a leader who inspires others to act. By quoting Reagan, she positioned her husband as similar to the popular Republican leader and reinforced the legacy of leadership present in the Republican brand.

Vice Presidential Nominee Governor Sarah Palin. Sarah Palin was the first female nominee for vice president on a Republican ticket. Within her address she focused on three parts of the Republican brand. First, she used her personal family narrative as an example of the family values that Republicans champion. Next, she advocated for smaller government as a key principle of the Republican Party. Finally, she discussed the service that demonstrated the leadership and experience she and McCain brought to the Republican brand.

Palin began by discussing her personal family narrative. She discussed her children and acknowledged that she was the parent of a child with special needs:

So Track is the eldest of five children... you know, from the inside, no family ever seems typical, and that's how it is with us... Sometimes even the greatest joys bring challenge. And children with special needs inspire a very, very special love. To the families with

special needs children across the country, I have a message for you... I pledge to you that, if we're elected, you will have a friend and advocate in the White House. (Palin, 2008)

Palin used her family narrative to show she understood the challenges of raising a family, especially one with a child with special needs. This narrative allowed her to show that she had the same family values as many Americans and would represent them within the Republican branding.

Palin also reinforced the Republican brand of smaller government. She tied a growing government with increasing taxes to emphasize this point. "Government is too big, he wants to grow it... Taxes are too high, he wants to raise them... And let me be specific, the Democratic nominee for president supports plans to raise income taxes... (Palin, 2008)." Palin attacked the Democrats as wanting to expand the government in an effort to show a comparison of the branding of the two parties. Throughout this section, Palin stated that the status quo was overly burdensome and then proclaimed that the Democrats wished to make it worse.

Finally, Palin articulated the value of local leadership. Important to her was her proven leadership at all levels of her Alaskan life, from the PTA to the governorship:

I had the privilege of living most of my life in a small town. I was just your average hockey mom and signed up for the PTA... And when I ran for city council, I didn't need focus groups and voter profiles because I knew those voters, and I knew their families too. Before I became governor of the great state of Alaska, I was mayor of my hometown. (Palin, 2008)

As a newcomer to the national political stage, Palin needed to demonstrate she was an experienced leader who had dedicated her life to public service.

Later in her address, she discussed the record of leadership of her running mate:

Senator McCain's record of actual achievements and reforms helps explain why so many special interests, and lobbyists, and comfortable committee chairmen in Congress have

the prospect of a McCain presidency from the primary election in 2000 to this very day.

(Palin, 2008)

Palin looked to brand McCain as an independent leader that wasn't concerned about following a group. By demonstrating that McCain was not always in line with what certain interests wanted, she helped to brand McCain as an independent and thoughtful leader.

Overall, Palin used her address to promote three areas of the Republican brand. First, she used her own family narrative to demonstrate the family values of the Republican Party, including how those values reach families of children with special needs. Next, she discussed the branding of the two parties as it related to smaller government. She was able to show that the Democratic Party was interested in making a bad situation worse by adding to the taxes Americans paid in order to increase the size of the federal government. Finally, she discussed the lifetime of service and experienced leadership both her and McCain possessed. She used her personal service narrative to demonstrate how she exemplified the Republican branding of service. Finally, she also used McCain's record of independence to show the kind of leadership the two would provide to the American people.

Presidential Nominee Senator John McCain. John McCain came to the 2008 Convention having been the keynote speech at the previous two conventions. This address allowed him to add more to the party branding than his prior two addresses, as he had become the standard bearer for the Republican Party. McCain addressed several facets of the Republican brand throughout his address. First, he discussed leadership and how he exemplified leadership. Then, he reinforced the branding of tax reform. He also discussed education reform, continuing the branding put forth in the previous two conventions. McCain also discussed national security as a key issue for Republicans in a post September 11th environment. Finally, McCain discussed his personal narrative of service to his country.

McCain emphasized his record of leadership by describing how he had fought for the American people time and again. He described how he often fought members of both parties as well:

I fought corruption, and it didn't matter if the culprits were Democrats or Republicans...

I fought big spenders in both parties, who waste your money on things you neither need nor want, and the first big spending, pork barrel earmark bill that comes across my desk, I will veto it... I fought for the right strategy and more troops in Iraq when it wasn't the popular thing to do... I fight for Americans. I fight for you. (J. McCain, 2008)

McCain positioned himself as a leader who was constantly fighting for the American people, even when it was unpopular. He showed himself to be someone who was above partisan politics if it meant doing the right thing. He was able to brand himself as a principled and effective leader.

McCain reinforced the Republican branding surrounding tax reform. He discussed several specifics to emphasize how his reforms would work:

We all know that keeping taxes low helps small businesses grow and create new jobs.

Cutting the second highest business tax rate in the world will help American companies compete and keep jobs from going overseas. Doubling the child tax exemption from \$3500 to \$7000 will improve the lives of millions of American families. (J. McCain, 2008)

McCain discussed cutting taxes on businesses and expanding the child tax credit as his take on the Republican branding of tax reform. He made his mark on this branding by discussing these specifics, which differ only slightly from previous conventions.

McCain also discussed reforms to education as he built upon the branding introduced in the 2000 Convention. The reforms McCain introduced expanded the branding from previous conventions by mentioning school choice:

Education is the civil rights issue of this century... We need to shake up failed school bureaucracies with competition, empower parents with choice... When it fails to meet its

obligations to students, parents deserve a choice in education of their children... Some may choose a better public school. Some may choose a private one. Many will choose a charter school. But they will have a choice, and their children will have that opportunity.

(J. McCain, 2008)

McCain touted school choice as a new reform he wished to promote as part of the Republican branding. This built upon the reforms of the Bush Administration, namely the importance of choice and accountability for failing schools.

Next, McCain lauded the party for its national security success.

Today, the prospect of a better world remains within our reach... We have dealt a serious blow to Al Qaeda in recent years, but they're not defeated, and they'll strike us again, if they can... Russia's leaders, rich with oil wealth and corrupt with power, have rejected democratic ideals and the obligations of a responsible power... And the brave people of Georgia need our solidarity and prayers. As president, I will work to establish good relations with Russia so that we need not fear a return to the Cold War. But we cannot turn a blind eye to aggression and international lawlessness that threatens the peace and stability of the world and the security of the American people. (J. McCain, 2008)

McCain was able to combine the two issues of national security present throughout the Republican Convention, terrorism and Russia. First, he referenced the successes America has had in the war on terror while proclaiming more work needed to be done. Then, he discussed the current issues with Russia and explained that the Cold War could return without strong leadership. McCain looked to reinforce the Republican branding as the party most capable of handling national security concerns by explaining the successes of Republican leadership in that area and the threats on the horizon.

Finally, McCain discussed his narrative of service. McCain focused largely on his service in Vietnam where he was a prisoner of war to show his dedication and sacrifice in the name of patriotic service:

I've been an imperfect servant of my country for many years. But I've been her servant first, last, and always... Long ago, something happened to me that taught me the most valuable lesson of my life. I was blessed by misfortune... I found myself falling toward the middle of a small lake in the city of Hanoi, with two broken arms, a broken leg, and an angry crowd waiting to greet me. I was dumped in a dark cell and left to die. (J. McCain, 2008)

McCain used his story as a prisoner of war to show that he had never hesitated to lead and sacrifice for the country. He spoke about the torture he endured during, stressing his character and raw determination to serve. All other accounts of service will pale by comparison.

Overall, McCain used his address to reinforce or expand several key areas of the Republican Party branding. First, he discussed his leadership narrative to show he was someone who had constantly fought for the American people. Then, he emphasized the Republican branding on tax reform. Next, he expanded the branding surrounding education reform to include school choice programs. Then, McCain discussed national security within the context of both of the established antagonists present in the Republican branding, Russia and terrorists. Finally, McCain told his personal narrative of service by recounting his time as a prisoner of war to show he was willing to go to unimaginable lengths to serve his country faithfully.

Summary of the 2008 Republican Convention Branding. During the convention, the speakers reinforced or expanded several facets of the Republican branding. First, many of the speeches included a nod to leadership through both service and experience, especially when compared to the Democratic brand. National security was also continued from the 2004 Convention as it related to the war on terror. McCain also reintroduced Russia as a potential threat to national security. Palin used her family narrative to demonstrate the branding on family values. She also reinforced the branding of Republicans as the party of smaller government. McCain reiterated the branding surrounding tax cuts. He also expanded the branding on education

by discussing school choice programs. Finally, McCain used his service narrative, emphasizing the sacrifices he was willing to make in service to his country.

2012 Republican Convention

The 2012 Republican Convention involved the Republican Party attempting to reclaim the White House after being defeated four years prior. Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, who had been defeated by John McCain for the party nomination four years prior, was named the nominee for president and picked Congressman Paul Ryan to be his running mate. Mitt Romney's wife, Ann, gave an address focusing on their history together and their family. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie delivered the keynote address. The overall theme for the convention centered on America's entrepreneurial linked to American exceptionalism.

During the 2012 Republican Convention, several areas of the Republican brand were reinforced from prior conventions. All of the addresses included some form of the argument that the Republican Party was the party most representative of the American Dream. Within the branding surrounding the American Dream, the speakers also demonstrated how Republicans would fight for the continuation of the Dream. Many speakers also spoke of a need for change and the Republican Party being that change. Romney took it a step further and indicated that change was necessary due to a failure of leadership by the Democrats. Several speakers emphasized the Republican branding of leadership. Both Mitt and Ann Romney spoke about family and family values in their speeches by using their own family narratives. Finally, Mitt Romney discussed jobs and national security as two policy areas that were important to the Republican branding.

Keynote Speaker Governor Chris Christie. Christie discussed several brand elements throughout his speech, reinforcing portions of the Republican Party branding from past conventions. First, he discussed his personal narrative of the American Dream. Like many previous speakers, his narrative was a demonstration of his connection to the American Dream leading to the party being the champion of the Dream. Next, he discussed the need for change and

the Republican Party being capable of bringing that needed change. Finally, Christie emphasized the Republican branding of steady leadership.

The first aspect of the Republican brand present in Christie's address was his personal narrative of the American Dream. He spoke of his parents and their lives in poverty and how they instilled key values in him:

I am the son of an Irish father and a Sicilian mother... my mom, who I lost eight years ago was the enforcer... They both lived hard lives. Dad grew up in poverty... Mom also came from nothing... I am her son... I was her son as I moved into a studio apartment with Mary Pat to start a marriage that is now 26 years old... And I am still her son today, as governor, following the rules she taught me: to speak from the heart and to fight for your principles. (Christie, 2012)

Christie used his family's narrative to demonstrate how he was an average American who came from a family who had struggled financially. His narrative was meant to show that he had not forgotten his roots and as a prominent Republican, represented the party as a champion of the American Dream. His narrative also discusses how that upbringing influenced how he had lived his life.

Next, Christie discussed the need for change and emphasized the Republican Party's ability to provide that change. Christie emphasized the problems America was facing and placed some of the blame for those problems at the feet of the Democrats due to the Democrats spreading divisiveness:

It's the power of our ideas, not our rhetoric that attracts people to our party. We win when we make it about what needs to be done. We lose when we play along with their game of scaring and dividing. For make no mistake, the problems are too big to let the American people lose; the slowest economic recovery in decades, a spiraling out of control deficit, an education system that's failing to compete with the world... I know we can fix our problems. (Christie, 2012)

Christie started by stating that campaigning on Republican policies was a winning strategy in the eyes of the American Public. He then followed by stating they would lose if they let the Democrats divide the American people. By then adding the parts of America that were in need of fixing, Christie attempted to show there was a clear need for change, which he followed by claiming Republicans could bring about that change.

Finally, Christie emphasized the leadership that Romney and Ryan would bring to America. He branded them as two formidable leaders that would be able to fill the leadership void that America was facing:

We have Governor Mitt Romney and Congressman Paul Ryan, and we must make them our next president and vice president... Mitt Romney will tell us the hard truths we need to hear to end the debacle of putting the world's greatest health care system in the hands of federal bureaucrats and putting those bureaucrats between an American citizen and her doctor. We ended an era of absentee leadership without purpose of principle in New Jersey. It's time to end this era of absentee leadership in the Oval Office and send real leaders to the White House. (Christie, 2012)

Christie framed the Obama Administration as absent and lacking leadership, which Romney would rectify if he were elected.

Overall, Christie utilized his address to advance the Republican brand established in prior conventions. First, he discussed his family's narrative, which exemplifies the American Dream. The helped reinforce the branding of Republicans as champions of the American Dream. Next, Christie emphasized the need for change and branded Republicans as capable of providing that change. Finally, he claimed the Romney would be able to provide leadership while Obama had been an absent leader during the four years of his administration.

Nominee Spouse Ann Romney. Throughout Ann Romney's address, she made the case for the election of her husband. First, she discussed family, particularly her family as an example of a typical American family. Then, she discussed the American Dream by telling the narrative of

her husband and his family. Similar to the narrative told by Chris Christie, this narrative was meant to show that the Romney's were just like any other American family and would fight for average Americans.

Romney began by discussing family. Rather than simply discuss her own family, she broadened the notion of family out to speak of an American family:

I want to talk not about what divides us, but what holds us together as an American family... Tonight I want to talk to you about love. I want to talk to you about the deep and abiding love I have for a man I met at a country dance many years ago... I want to talk to you about that love so deep only a mother could fathom it, the love we have for our children and our children's children. And I want us to think about the love we all share for those Americans, our brothers and sisters, who are going through difficult times, whose days are never easy, nights are always long, and whose work never seems to be done. (A. Romney, 2012)

Romney used her discussion of family to demonstrate that her and her husband would have an almost parental view of their roles in the White House. She stated that her love for her own children would extend to all American citizens.

The other facet of the Republican branding present in Ann Romney's address is the American Dream. She emphasized this branding by discussing her and her husband's family narrative. She began by discussing her own narrative:

I am the granddaughter of a Welsh coal miner who was determined that his kids get out of the mines... When he was 15, dad came to America... He moved to a small town in the great state of Michigan... He raised a family and he became mayor of our town. (A. Romney, 2012)

Through her own narrative, Romney explained how her grandfather wanted a better life for his kids, which led to her father coming to America and eventually ended with him being elected

mayor. Her father's journey demonstrated that she knew about the promise of the American Dream. She continued by discussing her husband's narrative:

Mitt's dad never graduated from college... He worked hard, and he became the head of a car company, and then the governor of Michigan. When Mitt and I met and fell in love, we were determined not to let anything stand in the way of our life together... We were very young...Our desk was a door propped up on sawhorses. Our dining room table was a fold down ironing board in the kitchen. (A. Romney, 2012)

Romney's telling of her husband's narrative of the American Dream also allowed for her to explain that while their parents had achieved the American Dream, the road required a fair amount of hard work. As with other speakers, the use of these narratives was meant to show that the Republican Party had lived and appreciated the struggles associated with living the American Dream.

Romney used her address to fulfill two parts of the branding within the convention. First, she discussed family through comparing her own family to the American family. In doing so she internalized the role of the potential First Lady. Romney also discussed the American Dream narratives that her and her husband had lived in order to demonstrate how they understood the struggles many Americans faced in their day-to-day lives.

Vice Presidential Nominee Congressman Paul Ryan. Paul Ryan focused on three areas of the Republican branding in his address. He utilized his address to reinforce facets of the branding which were present in the previous speeches of the convention. First, he discussed the clear need for change and the Republican Party bringing that needed change. Then, he talked about his personal narrative of the American Dream. Finally, he discussed leadership and how he and Romney exemplified American leadership.

Throughout Ryan's speech he emphasized a need for change. He made the case clearly in the beginning of his speech comparing the campaigns of Obama and Romney:

I'm the newcomer to the campaign, so let me share a first impression. I have never seen opponents so silent about their record, and so desperate to keep their power. They've run out of ideas. Their moment came and went. Fear and division are all they have left. With all their attack ads, the president is just throwing away money and he's pretty experienced at that. You see some people can't be dragged down by the usual cheap tactics, because their ability, character, and plain decency are so obvious. And ladies and gentlemen, that is Mitt Romney. (Ryan, 2012)

Ryan framed the Obama campaign as desperate, out of ideas and lacking in character. Later in the address, Ryan discussed areas where he had felt Obama made clear mistakes that hurt the American people:

Right now, 23 million men and women are struggling to find work... Millions of young Americans have graduated from college during the Obama Presidency, ready to use their gifts and get moving in life. Half of them can't find the work they studied for, or any work at all. So, here's the question: Without a change in leadership, why would the next four years be any different from the last four years. (Ryan, 2012)

Ryan discussed unemployment as an area in which Obama had failed, calling for a clear change in leadership. Ryan branded the Republican Party as the clear alternative to the Obama Administration, which was leaving Americans behind.

Ryan also discussed the American Dream by talking about a narrative of an American Dream taken away in his hometown. This is a departure from using one's own narrative to show how the Republican Party understood the American Dream and have lived it. Instead, Ryan talked about how the Obama Administration had failed to protect the Dream for many families in Ryan's hometown:

My home state voted for President Obama. When he talked about change, many people liked the sound of it, especially in Janesville, where we were about to lose a major factory. A lot of guys I went to high school with worked at that GM plant. Right there at

that plant, candidate Obama said: “I believe that if our government is there to support you... this plant will be here for another 100 years.” That’s what he said in 2008. Well, as it turned out, that plant didn’t last another year. It is locked up and empty to this day.

(Ryan, 2012)

Ryan intimately disclosed the closing of the GM plant in his hometown. This claim allowed for Ryan to demonstrate that Obama and the Democrats were responsible for dismantling the American Dream while the other speeches made the case for the Republicans as the party protecting the American Dream.

Finally, Ryan emphasized the branding of leadership he and Romney provided. Ryan focused on the different kind of experience leading the two Republican nominees had as complementary:

We’ve had very different careers, mine mainly in public service, and his mostly in the private sector. He helped start businesses and turn around failing ones. By the way, being successful in business, that’s a good thing. Mitt has not only succeeded, but also succeeded where others could not. He turned around the Olympics at a time when a giant institution was collapsing under the weight of bad management, overspending, and corruption. Sounds familiar doesn’t it? (Ryan, 2012)

Ryan emphasized Romney’s ability to lead in several different situations to show that Romney had a track record of proven leadership, which would allow him to join the previous proven leaders the Republican Party had nominated for president. Ryan also took the opportunity to claim the Obama Administration was not capable of leading effectively.

Overall, Ryan used his address to discuss and expand three areas of the Republican brand. Ryan emphasized a clear need for change throughout his address and used several points to demonstrate that Romney was capable of providing the change American needed. Ryan also expanded the branding of the Republican Party surrounding the American Dream. Finally, Ryan

discussed the record of leadership Romney brought to the table. Ryan especially focused on Romney's track record of righting the ship of large failing institutions.

Presidential Nominee Governor Mitt Romney. Romney took the stage as the first nominee from either party to be a member of the Mormon faith. Throughout his address, he focused on several facets of the party brand. First, he reinforced the branding of the Republicans as being capable of changing America in the ways it needed changing. Romney then discussed two key policy areas that he felt were important to the party branding, jobs and national security.

Romney, like Ryan, traced a common thread throughout his address; there was a clear need for change. Romney made this point by attacking the Democrats legacy of leadership:

That is why every president since the Great Depression who came before the American people asking for a second term could look back at the last four years and say with satisfaction: "you are better off today than you were four years ago." Except Jimmy Carter. And except this president... But today, the time has come to turn the page. (M. Romney, 2012)

Romney attacked the Democratic Party's legacy of leadership by stating that two of the last three Democratic presidents were unable to say that the American people were better off at the end of their first term when compared to when they took office. He emphasized this failure to demonstrate a clear need for change.

Romney discussed his personal narrative of living the American Dream. During this narrative he also focused on his family to demonstrate his exemplification of family values:

I grew up in Detroit in love with cars and wanted to be a car guy, like my dad. But by the time I was out of school, I realized that I had to go out on my own, that if I stayed in Michigan in the same business, I'd never really know if I was getting a break because of my dad. I wanted to go somewhere and prove myself. Those weren't the easiest days, too many long hours and weekends working, five young sons who seemed to have this need to reenact a different world war every night. But if you ask Ann and I what we'd give, to

break up just one more fight between the boys, or wake in the morning and discover a pile of kids asleep in our room. Well, every mom and dad knows the answer. (M. Romney, 2012)

Romney then discussed job creation and how it would be a central focus of his administration. He emphasized a five-step plan to create jobs within his address:

First, by 2020, North America will be energy independent by talking full advantage of our oil and coal and gas and nuclear, and renewables. Second, we will give our fellow citizens the skills they need for the jobs of today and the careers of tomorrow... (M. Romney, 2012)

Laying out five-point plan, Romney argued he knew what it would take to create new jobs in a lagging job market.

Finally, Romney discussed national security, placing particular attention on Obama's use of diplomacy:

In his first TV interview as president, he said we should talk to Iran. We're still talking, and Iran's centrifuges are still spinning. President Obama has thrown allies like Israel under the bus; even as he has relaxed sanctions on Castro's Cuba... We will honor America's democratic ideals because a free world is a more peaceful world. This is the bipartisan foreign policy legacy of Truman and Reagan. And under my presidency, we will return to it once again. (M. Romney, 2012)

Romney explained that Obama had departed from long-standing foreign policy and was weakening global security as a result. Romney portrayed the Obama Administration foreign policy tactics as out of the mainstream by indicating foreign policy had been conducted in the manner Romney was proposing by past presidents of both parties.

Overall, Romney used his address to advance several key facets of the Republican branding. First, he made the case for needed change by emphasizing the Democratic Party's failure to lead effectively. Then, Romney used his personal narrative of the American Dream to

also incorporate family values into the Republican branding surrounding the American Dream. Finally, Romney addressed job creation and national security as two key policy areas he wished to reinforce as part of the Republican brand.

Summary of the 2012 Republican Convention Branding. During the 2012 Republican Convention, the Republican Party hoped to unseat a popular Democratic president. In their attempt, the Republicans relied on several facets of the Republican brand that had been utilized in the past and achieved electoral success. First, the speakers looked to reinforce the Republican branding as the party responsible for maintaining the American Dream. Next, the speeches discussed a strong need for change and the Republicans being capable of bringing about that change. Then, speakers emphasized the legacy of leadership within the Republican Party. In some cases, the speakers discussed the Democratic legacy of leadership as one of failure to lead. Both Romney's discussed family and family values. Mitt Romney connected his discussion of family with his personal narrative of the American Dream while Ann Romney took the concept of family and described a maternal posturing toward the American people. Finally, Mitt Romney discussed job creation and foreign policy as key issue areas that the Democrats were incapable of adequately addressing and were in the Republican wheelhouse.

2016 Republican Convention

After eight years out of office the Republicans marched into the 2016 Convention as a party somewhat divided by its primary process with some prominent Republicans refusing to express their full support for the nominee, Donald Trump. The major theme throughout the convention involved presenting Donald Trump as a political outsider who would use his business acumen if he were elected president. Ben Carson, Melania Trump, Vice Presidential Nominee Mike Pence, and Donald Trump gave major speeches.

Throughout the 2016 Republican Convention, the speakers reinforced several areas of the Republican Party brand and added several policy focuses to the Republican Convention branding. Several speakers addressed their personal American Dream narratives as an indication of their

representation of that Dream. After eight years of a Democratic president, the theme of a need for change and Republicans being that change was emphasized within several addresses. The Republican branding of leadership also appeared within various speeches by emphasizing the nominee's business leadership and the Republican legacy of leadership. Ben Carson used his speech to emphasize religious values and to appeal to evangelical voters. Mike Pence emphasized the family and family values branding previously established in past Republican Conventions. Finally, Donald Trump discussed policy more than any of the broad types of branding present in nominee addresses. He discussed crime, national security, immigration, job creation, and tax reform. Since this is the first convention where the nominee has not had any prior public service experience, Trump used policy to help reinforce his personal branding within the party brand absent a voting or governing record on many issues.

Keynote Speaker Ben Carson. Ben Carson used his speech to accentuate two facets. First, he branded the Republican Party as the party in line with American ideals and the Democratic Party as radical extremists who were out of touch with American values. Then, Carson discussed the importance of religion in American life and how god had ordained the United States for greatness.

Carson began by attacking the Democrats and the Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton, specifically. He attacked Clinton as a radical who was out of touch with mainstream American values:

Now one of the things I have learned about Hillary Clinton is that one of her heroes, her mentors was Saul Alinsky... Now, interestingly enough, let me tell you something about Saul Alinsky. He wrote a book called *Rules for Radicals*. On the dedication page it acknowledges Lucifer, the original radical who gained his own kingdom. (Carson, 2016)

Carson tied Clinton to an author who had promoted radical actions to demonstrate how she would not act within mainstream American values. He also used the acknowledgement of Lucifer as an indictment against Clinton as lacking religious and moral values. Carson branded the Democratic

Party as so far outside of what was considered moral values in America that the Republican Party was the only possible branding one should accept.

Carson also argued that the United States was a nation founded on Christian values and the Republican Party promoted those values while the Democratic Party discarded them:

The secular progressive agenda is antithetical to the principals of the founding of this nation, and if we continue to allow them to take god out of our lives, god will remove himself from us, we will not be blessed, and our nation will go down the tubes... Now, Donald Trump understands this very well. (Carson, 2016)

Carson assailed the Democrats' stand against the religious founding of the nation and accused them of trying to remove religion from the country. Carson then mentioned that Trump understood the religious principles which Carson felt were central to American values. Carson insisted that the Republican Party faced opposition from Democrats in the struggle for the American soul.

Overall, Carson branded the Republican Party in two ways, both of which compared the Republican brand to the brand of the Democrats. First, he accused the Clinton and the Democrats of subscribing to a radical agenda so far outside of the mainstream views held by most Americans. Carson also attacked the Democrats as irreligious. Carson stated that religion was inherent in the nation's founding and Republicans upheld that value. Carson's address juxtaposes the Republicans' and Democrats' vision.

Nominee Spouse Melania Trump. Melania Trump's address focused on two areas of the Republican brand, both including personal narratives. First, she recounted her narrative of the American Dream. Using her narrative as an immigrant to the United States, her story is atypical but reinforces the branding of the American Dream. Next, she discussed leadership. She used the narrative of her husband's leadership to demonstrate that he was a competent and proven leader. His leadership narrative was central to her argument that he fit the mold of a Republican leader.

Melania Trump discussed her own narrative of how she exemplified the American Dream. She used her upbringing to indicate that she was raised on values that were emphasized as American and her becoming an American citizen was the culmination of the American Dream for her:

I was born in Slovenia, a small, beautiful, and then communist country in Central Europe... From a young age, my parents impressed upon me the values that you work hard for what you want in life, that your word is your bond, and you do what you say, and you keep your promise, that you treat people with respect... I am fortunate for my heritage, but also for where it brought me today... I arrived in New York City 20 years ago, and I saw both the joys and hardships of daily life. On July 28th, 2006 I was very proud to become a citizen of the United States. (M. Trump, 2016)

She explained that her parents had instilled her with values that allowed her to escape a communist country and live the American Dream through her immigration and citizenship. This narrative was also used in an effort to demonstrate that Republicans were accepting of an immigration narrative as well.

Trump also emphasized her husband's narrative of leadership. She described how he had led in the past, pivoting to the future:

Donald is and always has been an amazing leader. Now he will go to work for you. His achievements speak for themselves, and his performance throughout the primary campaign proves that he knows how to win... my husband's experience exemplifies growth and successful passage of opportunity to the next generation. His success indicates inclusion rather than division. (M. Trump, 2016)

She portrayed Trump as a leader capable of unifying the nation and helping to usher in prosperity, qualities, which she felt, were essential in branding him as a strong leader.

Overall, Melania Trump used her address to promote two facets of the Republican brand. First, she discussed her personal American Dream to show that an immigrant's story fits within

the Republican narrative. She also discussed her husband's leadership and showed that he had a proven track record of strong leadership.

Vice Presidential Nominee Governor Mike Pence. Mike Pence used his address to further reinforce several areas of the Republican brand and appeal to Republican voters who may have been uncomfortable with Trump. Pence demonstrated that there would be at least one traditional conservative on the ticket. By highlighting his own values, he emphasized the idea that Republicans are the party of family values. Pence also reiterated the need for change after eight years of a failed Democratic president. Finally, he argued that the Republican Party was the party of strong and capable leaders.

Pence began his address by discussing about his personal narrative of living the American Dream. Like many other convention speakers who utilized the American Dream brand, Pence discussed members of his family coming to America to start a new life:

For those of you that don't know me, which is most of you, I grew up on the front row of the American Dream. My grandfather immigrated to this country, and I was raised in a small town in Southern Indiana in a big family with a cornfield in the backyard... When I was young, I watched my mom and dad build everything that matters; a family, a business, and a good name. I was raised to believe in hard work, faith, and family.

(Pence, 2016)

Pence used the narrative of his grandfather immigrating the United States and watching his parents "build" everything to demonstrate that his story was the same as many Americans. He claimed to be just an average American. By claiming to be an average American, Pence framed himself as someone that would look out for other average Americans. Pence then transitioned to talking more about his family. He pointed out that his family was his number one priority. He talked about his wife and children to help frame himself as someone who had good family values:

The best thing that ever happened to me, even counting tonight, is that 31 years ago, I married the girl of my dreams... She's everything to me... And regardless of any title I

ever hold, the highest role I will ever play is dad. Karen and I are blessed to be the parents of the three greatest kids in the world. (Pence, 2016)

Twice in the passage, Pence referred to his family as more important than the public offices he campaigned for or held. He used this narrative to brand himself and the party as strong on family values. Given the family narrative his running mate had, Pence's branding on family was strategic in order to appeal to voters who may have been uncomfortable with a candidate who had been divorced multiple times.

Pence then discussed a clear need for change. He argued, "Hillary Clinton essentially offers a third Obama term... the national debt has nearly doubled in these eight years, and her only answer is to keep borrowing and spending (Pence, 2016)." Continuing, he explained:

At the very moment when America is crying out for something new and different, the other party has answered with a stale agenda and the most predictable of names. People of both parties are restless for change, ready to break free from old patterns in Washington, and Democrats are about to anoint someone who represents everything this country is tired of... It is change versus the status quo, and my fellow Republicans when Donald Trump becomes President of the United States, the change will be huge. (Pence, 2016)

Pence branded the Republican Party as the party of change, fighting against the Democratic status quo. As an outsider, Pence inferred, Trump is the ideal candidate to challenge the current state of affairs.

Finally, Pence discussed Trump's leadership and how he fit into the Republican brand. Pence emphasized his own brand of commonsense leadership as uniquely Republican and positioned Trump within that branding as well:

You know, Indiana is a state that works because conservative principles work every time you put them into practice... We have fewer state employees than when I took office, and businesses large and small have created nearly 150,000 new jobs. That is was you can do

with commonsense Republican leadership, and that is exactly what the no-nonsense leadership of Donald Trump will bring to the White House. (Pence, 2016)

Pence used his record to claim conservative values. He then transitioned to proclaiming Trump would be that same kind of Republican leader. Pence reinforced the branding of Republican leadership within the context of Trump by acclaiming his own success in political office and stated that Trump would be capable of similar leadership due to their shared beliefs and values.

Overall, Mike Pence discussed several key areas of the Republican branding. Pence largely reinforced previously emphasized areas of the brand. First, he used his personal narrative of the American Dream to highlight the focus of the Republican Party on maintaining that Dream. Then, he discussed his family as his greatest achievement and number one priority. This narrative emphasized the family values that were a key feature of the Republican Party branding over several conventions. Next, Pence proclaimed the Republican Party as the party of change. He did so by comparing the outsider status of Trump to Clinton's status as someone with a long career entrenched in the Washington establishment. Finally, Pence emphasized the ways which both he and Trump were part of the legacy of Republican leadership. Pence made it clear that the success he had in Indiana was due to conservative principles and commonsense leadership which both he and Trump shared.

Presidential Nominee Donald Trump. Donald Trump took the stage with varied expectations given his relative lack of experience in a public service role. As a result, he focused heavily on policies he wished to include as part of the Republican brand. He did, however, start by discussing the strong need for change after the Obama Administration. He indicated that Clinton would be a continuation of that administration. He then transitioned to discussing policy. First, he discussed crime and need for a stronger approach to law and order. Then, he reinforced the Republican branding of national security. He expanded national security to also include immigration reform as a key policy area. He then finished with two key policy areas related to the

economy, which had been emphasized within several Republican Conventions; job creation and tax reform.

Trump began his speech by discussing the strong need for change. He described America as a nation riddled with violence that had been made worse under the Obama Administration:

Our Convention occurs at a moment of crisis for our nation. The attacks on our police, and the terrorism in our cities, threaten our way of life. Any politician who does not grasp this danger is not fit to lead our country... Decades of progress made in bringing down crime are now being reversed by this Administration's rollback of criminal enforcement.
(D. Trump, 2016)

Trump insisted the Democratic Party was unable to reign in crime in America. He went so far as to say that the Obama Administration had made crime worse. Trump frankly argued that anyone in denial about the spike in crime was in no position to lead. Trump expanded on the issue of crime by helping to brand his campaign as one that focused on the issue of crime. He looked to brand the Republican Party as advocates of law and order:

I have a message to every last person threatening the peace on our streets and the safety of our police: when I take the oath of office next year, I will restore law and order to our country. I will work with, and appoint, the best prosecutors and law enforcement officials in the country to get the job done. In this race for the White House, I am the law and order candidate. (D. Trump, 2016)

Here, Trump focused on prosecuting criminals to make the case for the branding of Republicans as the party of law and order. When compared with the way he made the case for change, Trump had obviously indicated that Democrats were incapable of handling crime and bringing justice to those who commit crimes. The comparison was used to emphasize the Republican brand as the preferable choice.

Trump then pivoted to national security as part of his overall theme of keeping America safe. Trump mainly focused on ISIS and Islamic terror in his discussion of national security:

To make life safe in America, we must also address the growing threats we face from outside America: we are going to defeat the barbarians of ISIS... We must abandon the failed policy of nation building and regime change that Hillary Clinton pushed in Iraq, Libya, Egypt, and Syria. Instead, we must work with our allies who share our goals of destroying ISIS and stamping out Islamic terror. This includes working with our greatest ally in the region, Israel. (D. Trump, 2016)

Trump continued the theme of keeping Americans safe by discussing the next issue present in the Republican branding, immigration reform. Trump discussed immigration reform as a national imperative. His plan called for building a large border wall at the Mexican border in order to keep gangs and criminals out of the United States:

We are going to build a great border wall to stop illegal immigration, to stop the gangs and the violence, and to stop the drugs from pouring into our communities... By ending catch and release on the border, we will stop the cycle of human smuggling and violence. Illegal border crossings will go down. (D. Trump, 2016)

Trump explained his immigration plan as a matter of national security. This made sure that immigration reform was a strong part of the party branding. Trump emphasized American safety overall and had the policy areas of crime, national security, and immigration reform as three facets of the party branding to help emphasize keeping Americans safe.

Trump then transitioned to discussing two economic issues, job creation and tax reform. First, when discussing job creation, Trump indicated he would end trade deals that allowed for companies to move job overseas:

I am going to bring our jobs back to Ohio and to America and I am not going to let companies move to other countries, firing their employees along the way without consequences... No longer will we enter into these massive deals, with many countries, that are thousands of pages long and which no one from our country even reads or understands. (D. Trump, 2016)

Trump argued he would not allow multinational trade deals to disadvantage American workers. He indicated that these deals were generally so complex no one understood everything that was in them. He proclaimed American companies could not abandon American workers without facing consequences as well. He branded the Republican Party as the party fighting to keep American jobs in America.

Trump also touched on the need for tax reform like many of his Republican predecessors. He explained the unnecessarily high taxes Americans faced and lowering them would result in an improved economy. “America is one of the highest taxed nations in the world. Reducing taxes will cause new companies and new jobs to come roaring back into our country (D. Trump, 2016).” Trump argued he would lower taxes in an effort to bring jobs back to America that left due to the burdensome tax code. Throughout the various Republican Conventions, the presidential nominee has branded the party as in favor of reforming the tax code to lower taxes to create jobs; Trump followed his predecessors’ lead.

Overall, Trump used fear appeals to demonstrate a need for change but did not stray greatly from previously established Republican branding. First, he emphasized a need for change, as Democrats were unable or unwilling to acknowledge the problems America faced. He then discussed several key policy areas, which he felt Republicans were much better equipped to handle. Two themes of policy were present in Trump’s speech. The first was the safety of Americans. Trump discussed the safety of Americans by emphasizing the Republican branding surrounding three issues; crime, national security, and immigration reform. Crime and national security had been focused on in previous Republican Conventions. Immigration reform appeared as a new policy area highlighted at the convention. The other policy theme Trump focused on was the economy. He discussed job creation and tax reform as the two key facets of the Republican brand. He emphasized ending trade deals, which were bad for American workers to help create and save jobs. He then proclaimed that reforming the tax code to lower taxes would result in more job creation.

Summary of the 2016 Republican Convention Branding. Throughout the Republican Convention one theme seemed to ring true, the Democratic Party was unfit to lead. Many facets of the Republican brand also included an attack on the current state of affairs and held the Democrats responsible for the problems America was facing. Many addresses discussed a strong need for change from the Democratic status quo. Several addresses also utilized American Dream narratives to show the party understood the American Dream and would defend it. Another predominant part of the Republican brand was leadership. While Trump did not have public sector leadership experience, the focus on his ability to lead in the private sector was viewed as a transferable skill and proof of his ability to lead as president. Carson added religious expression as a fundamental part of the Republican Party that had been met with aggression by the Democratic Party. Pence reinforced the Republican branding of family values in his address. Finally, Trump discussed two key policy themes, which had several long-standing policies of the Republican brand, security and economic prosperity.

Chapter six will discuss the role of each address in constructing the party branding as well as electoral exigencies which required the parties to adapt their branding. Both parties will have their branding examined to point out the enduring qualities within the branding. Chapter six concludes the study by pointing out the conclusions made and where future research should be taken.

Chapter Six: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the convention addresses and determining the constructed brand for each party during their respective conventions, several conclusions can be drawn from the preceding analysis. The narratives presented by each individual speaker helped to shape the overall party branding for both the convention and into the future. The narratives presented have shown that the Democratic Party is much more fluid in its branding, vacillating from more liberal to more conservative from cycle to cycle than the much more stable Republican Party brand. As a result of the varying brand presented by the Democratic Party, the contrasting brands also sway from presenting competing narratives which are dramatically different to narratives which are not really competing at all. When the Democrats offer a more moderate candidate, and thus a more moderate brand, the issue branding narrative tends to ignore the issues presented by the other party. In 2004, both parties presented competing narratives surrounding national security as it related to the war on terror and the war in Iraq. Conversely, when President Clinton spoke about welfare reform and work requirements, the Republican brand narrative did not address welfare reform as they had in the past. The party that has the second convention will ignore the issue narratives presented by the opposition unless their narratives are in direct opposition.

Both parties present narratives surrounding many facets of the party branding. There are narratives about the policy brands, generally crafted by the presidential nominee. The policy narratives speak to the voters about the issues the party and the nominee find important and hope to focus on if they are elected. Additionally, other narratives surrounding leadership and change occur based on the electoral situation being presented to the parties. The conventions allow these narratives to take center stage and be presented to the voting public and brand the parties. Other broader narratives related to the American Dream and hope are often presented to demonstrate an appreciation for the struggles of average Americans. The American Dream and hope narratives occur more frequently in Democratic addresses, most likely due to more members of the

Democratic Party having lived the narrative of the American Dream by coming from meager beginnings.

Through the study of these convention addresses, one can notice that each address fulfills a different role. These roles allow us to predict that conventions occurring as part of the current era will include certain narratives in creating the party branding. We can expect spousal addresses to focus on a family narrative. Keynote speakers will put forward narratives consistent with the type of keynote they present. The vice presidential nominee will attack the narrative brands of the opposition and introduce a leadership narrative for the party's nominee. The presidential nominee will speak about an issue narrative to promote the values of the party. We can also expect the situation of the election to dictate certain facets of the party branding. An incumbent party nominee will recount successes as a narrative of strong leadership while the opposing party will present a need for change narrative. The same can be said for a sitting vice president running for reelection but we can also expect that, in most cases, the outgoing president will deliver a keynote address discussing a narrative of legacy and a continuation of that legacy by the new nominee. Finally, we can also expect the Democratic Party to be much more flexible in their branding, usually depending on the result of the last election.

Each genre of convention address focused on different aspects of the party's branding. Keynote speakers, for example, focused on different aspects of the brand depending on their ties to the nominee, including keynote speakers who had been a former opponent of the nominee, an outgoing or former president, or a representative of a particular party coalition. Each of these three types of keynote speakers delivered their addresses with different goals in mind. Addresses given by the nominee's spouse typically focused on a "family values" narrative as the main point of their addresses. Vice Presidential nominees served largely as the attack dogs of the convention, illustrating clear differences between the two party's presidential candidates and brands. Finally, presidential nominees focused heavily on creating the party's issue brand.

The next set of conclusions drawn from the analysis focus on the nature of the election's impact on the manner in which the party branded itself. Incumbent elections often showed the incumbent party making the argument to stay the course and thus branding the party as a party of strong and trusted leadership. Conversely, those out of power would formulate their party brand in the frame of needed change. Sitting vice presidents seeking to ascend to the presidency had many of the same qualities as an incumbent election, but also featured language that constructed a brand of consistency and change -- connecting the nominee to an incumbent's successes while also distancing oneself from the administration's failures and arguing for new directions. Open elections where neither party had a sitting president or vice president as the nominee focused less on issue differences in constructing the party brand, as the nominee and their opponent often had no clearly defined record on which to run and based their main arguments and brand construction on values and candidate biography and personal characteristics. Those elections which occurred during or following unusual national circumstances, such as in 1972 for the Democrats after the riots at the 1968 Democratic Convention, or in 1976 after Watergate, and in 2004 following the September 11, 2001, attacks, found the two parties developing elements of their party brand in response to these major political events.

Finally, the analysis identified the enduring party brands for both major political parties. The Democratic Party's brand was somewhat fluid throughout the five decades of conventions. Often the party would react to previous election outcomes by either becoming more liberal or more centrist in their branding. For example, the liberal McGovern in 1972 was followed by the more centrist Carter in 1976. Conversely, the Republican Party brand remained much more stable throughout the 44 years investigated in this study. One noticeable change that did occur in the Republican brand was due to the ending of the Cold War and the start of the war on terror. Here, the Republican Party's national security brand shifted from fighting communism to fighting Islamic extremism. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, specific findings related to the

purposes of each speech genre, changes in party brands due to the nature of the election, and the two major party's enduring brands will be discussed in greater detail.

Speech Genres and Branding

Each genre of convention address focused on different elements of the party's constructed brand. The keynote speeches established three separate subgenres with different branding goals tied to each element. The nominee's spousal address emerged as a convention mainstay for both parties in more recent conventions, and these addresses often focused on the presidential nominees' family narratives as a way to humanize the would-be presidential leader. The vice presidential nominee often attacked the opposition nominee and party's brand. Finally, the presidential nominee focused largely on identifying the party's issue brand.

Keynote Addresses. Through the analysis, it was discovered that three subgenres of keynote speeches exist. Each type of keynote speech also was employed to accomplish a different facet of the party's branding. The first type of keynote address is one delivered by a party member who represented and identified with a different element of the party's core constituency, either ideological, demographic, or geographic. This type of keynote address included heavy attack of the opposition party, noting particularly how the party for which the speaker represented included values or appreciation and understanding of citizens that were lacking in the opposition party. The next subgenre of keynote speeches included the address delivered by an outgoing or former president. These addresses often focused on the successes of that president's administration and sought to anoint the current nominee as the natural successor to continue the incumbent's legacy. The third subgenre of keynote address was delivered by a former primary opponent. The speeches often spoke to the building of party unity heading into the general election against the opposition.

Keynote addresses given by party members to highlight important core constituencies of the party often focused on attacking the opposition. Most of this type of keynote address utilized an attack function to marginalize the opposition party as out of touch with average Americans.

When these speakers were not attacking the opposition, they often developed a frame of a hope in their addresses to indicate that their party represented hope for America's future. One prime example of the hope frame was in 2004 when then State Senator Barack Obama delivered his Democratic keynote address that focused on hope for rebuilding America's communities, and also hope for uniting Democrats and Republicans and our fractured nation of red and blue states. In more recent conventions, a keynote speaker's personal narrative that represented the American Dream was offered to illustrate the party's commitment to helping all Americans fulfill their own American Dream. Starting in 1996, keynote speakers from the Democratic Party in particular presented their own narratives of achieving the American Dream. Republican keynote speakers focused less on achieving or enacting the American Dream and instead focused their addresses on constructing a party of strength that would protect the American people and developed their presidential leaders and party brand as the party of strong leaders that would fight for traditional American values and for American supremacy throughout the world. The branding of the Republican Party as the party of strong leaders was created in part as the Republicans were more frequently in power and served as the incumbent party more often throughout the five decades of this analysis. An interesting deviation from this description came in 2016 when Ben Carson delivered the keynote speech at the Republican Convention. His address focused solely on attacking Hillary Clinton but did so in a way that did not address policy. Carson used his address to position Clinton as the second coming of Lucifer using biblical language to make that point. Where most attacks in keynote speeches revolve around policy or ideological differences, Carson's attacks ventured into a unique territory. Overall, keynote addresses were heavy on attacks from both parties, focused on hope and the American Dream with the Democrats, and focused on strong national and world leadership by Republican keynote speakers.

A second subgenre of keynote speakers included former or outgoing presidents. This type of keynote address has occurred only a few times since 1972. Ronald Reagan filled this role twice in 1988 and 1992 for the Republican Party. Barack Obama was an outgoing president who

spoke in 2016, and Bill Clinton spoke in both 2000 and 2016 for the Democrats. Clinton's 2016 address, however, was not as a keynote speaker but rather as a candidate spouse. Former and outgoing presidents developed their convention keynote addresses to help reinforce the enduring party brand, discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. These speakers often pointed to their time in office as a period of success and prosperity due to their leadership, and their party's nominee had been a good and trusted lieutenant who would continue to build upon the current administration's legacy and success. In the case of presidents soon to leave office, the speaker pointed to the nominee as a logical third term where the nominee would continue the path of the previous eight years. In the case of Ronald Reagan in 1992, he actually argued for a fourth term for his former vice president turned president George H.W. Bush, which would have given the White House to the Republican Party for the longest period since Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 12 years and 39 days as President (a lease on 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue voters would not grant the Republicans in 1992). Bush's son, George W. Bush, is the only two term president to not address the convention the year his replacement was elected. This omission was due to a hurricane causing the convention to be shortened. The former and outgoing presidential keynote addresses sought to shape their own legacy while positioning their party's nominee as a natural successor to their reign.

The third subgenre of keynote speakers was that of a presidential nominee's former primary opponent. These speakers were chosen following their primary candidacy as an opponent to the eventual nominee in an often adversarial and hotly contested primary. In the Republican Party, only John McCain in 2000 filled this role when serving as a keynote speaker at the George W. Bush convention. The fact that Republicans had fewer former primary opponents featured at their conventions may illustrate the frequent "line of succession" for Republicans, where the party has traditionally anointed the next in line in terms of party seniority or standing. In fact, George W. Bush was seen as something of an "outsider" in 2000, but the establishment McCain would again get his chance as the party's nominee in 2008 following Bush's two terms as president. The

Democratic Party, on the other hand, has more frequently featured former primary opponents as keynote speakers, illustrating that party's tendency to mount highly contested primary contests with much less regard to seniority or establishment privilege. Democratic conventions over the past five decades have featured a number of former rivals as keynote speakers, including Ted Kennedy in 1980, Hillary Clinton in 2008, and Bernie Sanders in 2016. Each of these speakers sought to bring unity to the party, and particularly the unification of competing factions within the party following a contentious and divisive primary where supporters of the unsuccessful candidate needed to be persuaded to now fully support the party's nominees. Ted Cruz would be considered a part of the genre of keynote speakers for his address at the 2016 Republican Convention, but the Republican Party positioned his address to earlier in the day to avoid prime time coverage of his address. Cruz also did not fulfill the role in uniting the party during his address as he did not include an endorsement of Trump. In these speeches, the former opponent turned keynote speaker would acclaim the positive qualities of the party as a whole and attack the opposition party and its nominee as so egregious that party members must put aside their animosity and unite behind their nominee. These elements of the keynote address were far more prominent than the former rival's praise of the party nominee. The three types of keynote speeches contained different elements in the development of party branding due to their unique exigencies; however, they also featured several similarities tied to the nature of the election, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Spousal Addresses. Prior to 1996, only two nominee's spouses addressed the conventions, Republicans Pat Nixon in 1972 and Barbara Bush in 1992. Starting in 1996, however, when Hillary Clinton and Elizabeth Dole addressed their respective conventions, an expectation for the nominee's spouse to deliver a keynote address has been followed. Pat Nixon's address was a very short and simple address where she thanked supporters and acknowledged younger supporters in particular to provide something of a youth appeal as part of

the Republican brand. Many of the spousal addresses have focused on some version of the presidential nominees' family narrative, developing the theme that the nominee and his or her family have achieved the American Dream. The spousal addresses have also been developed to brand the party as a champion of family friendly policies. For example, Hillary Clinton in 1996 discussed family leave as a policy that Democrats, led by her husband, had enacted to make it easier to raise a family. Laura Bush was another speaker who inserted policy into her spousal address when she discussed the importance of education by describing her own career as an education professional, an elementary librarian. Both nominee spouses in 2004, Laura Bush and Teresa Heinz Kerry found it necessary to weave military service into their spouses' family narratives and to stress the importance of national security, as this was the first election following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and national security was an important element of both party brands during this period.

Bill Clinton's spousal address in 2016 was unique as he was the first husband to deliver this address. His spousal address was also unique and constructed differently as he had to contend with his own presidency. Despite these exigencies, Bill Clinton's address still followed the typical spousal script by discussing the Clinton family narrative, including Hillary Clinton's role as mother and wife. Husband Clinton also balanced Hillary Clinton's maternal accolades by focusing on his wife's public service record and leadership abilities. Even with his role as a former president, this was not the moment, nor did he deliver a speech akin to the keynote addresses of former presidents. In general, the emergence of the spousal address as a key part of the nominating conventions injected a family narrative to humanize the presidential candidate and constructed an element of party branding that argued the nominee understood the plight of ordinary American families and would enact family friendly policies.

Vice Presidential Nominee Addresses. Vice presidential nominees used their addresses to focus on two key components of the party's identifiable brand. First, vice presidents serve the role as the appointed "attack dog" of the convention. These addresses often levied attacks on the

opposition to portray the other party as out of touch with the average American. The other key purpose for vice presidents in crafting the party's brand was constructing a narrative of tested and strong leadership for the nation. The VP speakers often pointed to their own record and the record of the presidential nominee as illustrative of the strong and capable leadership they would provide as president and vice president.

An interesting finding regarding vice presidential nominee addresses was found in two instances, when both George H.W. Bush in 1984 and Dan Quayle in 1992 departed from the normal VP acceptance address script and developed their speeches around key issue agendas. Both of these candidates were seeking a second term as vice president and perhaps saw their second acceptance address as vice president as their initial argument to brand themselves as the obvious presidential successor in four years when the current administration's second term ended. In George H. W. Bush's case from 1984, his rhetorical positioning was successful in making the case four years later that he should become the presidential nominee. In Quayle's case, as he and Bush were not reelected, his attempted positioning did not allow him to emerge as the heir apparent for the Republican nomination in 1996. Other vice presidents nominated for a second term, in either party, did not develop an issue agenda as part of their VP acceptance addresses to portend a future presidential run. To do so may have appeared presumptuous or even disloyal to their presidential partner; and during the nominating convention's modern era, only two incumbent vice presidents, besides George H.W. Bush and Dan Quayle, would eventually secure the presidential nomination – Walter Mondale and Al Gore. Neither of these individuals indicated in their VP address that they might stand in their own right as a presidential candidate by developing their own agenda or one in any way distinct from their presidential boss. Of course, neither of these eventual presidential nominees was successful in their bid for the presidency. In fact, in the last half century, only George H. W. Bush was able to succeed his vice presidential office and make it to the Oval Office, and for only a single term. While serving as second-in-command may have its benefits, this office is not at all a likely stepping-stone to the presidency.

Presidential Nominee Addresses. The Presidential nominee's address fulfilled several key functions of party branding. First, the nominee presented a narrative of leadership, and in most cases a narrative built upon the nominee's personal life to highlight one's experiences and capabilities to endure the demands of the presidency. In the case of relative newcomers to the national political scene, their narrative drew largely upon party history and positioned the nominee as a continuation of the legacy of leadership found within the party. One exception to the use of the leadership narrative was Donald Trump's presidential acceptance address in 2016. He spoke almost exclusively regarding the issues he would champion as president and presented himself, almost alone and with little acknowledgement for anyone else, as the individual who would "Make America Great Again." In short, the Republican brand of 2016 was the Trump brand. Trump's narrative of the lone and singular leader may have been prompted by his complete lack of prior government experience, he had no record in public office to use as illustration of his abilities, and certainly seemed driven by his need to acknowledge himself and his greatness at the expense of others. As will be discussed in more detail in the next section, the presidential nominee acceptance narrative was also heavily influenced by incumbency status, with those seeking a second term framing their appeal as a "stay the course" message while nominees who would be new to the Oval Office framed their message as a plea for change.

A dominant element present in all presidential nominee addresses in crafting the party brand involved the development of the party's issue brand. Here, the nominee's discussed, sometimes in great detail, the policy issues which they perceived to be strengths of the party, those issues that would appeal to important constituencies within the party, and also the most prevalent issues confronting the nation. Republicans, for example, were consistent in their development of national security as part of their issue brand throughout the nearly 50 years of the modern nominating convention era. In earlier conventions during this period, Republican presidential nominees referred repeatedly to communism and the Soviet Union as the major threats facing our nation. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Republican brand shifted toward

fighting Middle Eastern Islamic extremism and then eventually terrorism. Each party's specific issue brand will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter when examining the enduring party brands.

Overall, each genre of convention address demonstrated clear distinctions in how the type of address contributed to the construction of the overall party brand. Keynote speeches fell within three separate subgenres including former primary opponents, former or outgoing presidents, and recognized party members who spoke to and represented a key constituency group within the party. In different ways, these subgenres allowed keynote speeches to lay the foundation for the party's branding efforts that would be developed and augmented with the convention addresses that would follow. Former primary opponents promoted party unity. Former or outgoing presidents sought to build their own legacy and also to constitute the party's new nominee as a continuation of that legacy. Party members representing a specific constituency, often related to ideology, demographics or geography, would attack the opposition and frame their party as the preferable brand.

Nature of the Election

The different electoral contexts surrounding each convention influenced the branding strategies of the two parties. Both parties positioned themselves differently based on the particular exigencies related to the election. Usually, these exigencies were related to incumbency status, the nomination of a sitting vice president hoping to ascend to the presidency, or an open election. Occasionally, there were other social or political exigencies which altered party branding efforts, such as Watergate and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

Incumbents Running for Reelection. A sitting president seeking reelection, and the opposition party's attempt to unseat an incumbent, affected message branding for both parties. The exigency of an incumbent president seeking reelection occurred with the Republicans in 1972, 1984, 1992, and 2004. It occurred for the Democratic Party in 1980, 1996, and 2012. Although in 1976 Gerald Ford was standing for reelection, he sought his party's presidential

nomination for the first time after assuming the presidency following the resignation of Richard Nixon. Therefore, that convention's particular exigencies were much different from other nominations and will be discussed in a later section of this chapter. The party in power developed a narrative of steady and trusted leadership with a call for the nation to stay the course. The party out of power developed their narrative around a clear need for change. With Democrats most frequently the party out of power during the period of 1972 – 2016, their message and brand was most frequently developed around the frame of change; while Republicans argued the nation should stay the course and also presented a message that rather consistently attacked the Democratic brand as risky and not to be trusted.

An incumbent president who hoped to earn reelection made their leadership and record a centerpiece of the party's branding efforts throughout the convention. Most keynote, vice presidential, and nominee's addresses reinforced the incumbent president's strength of leadership, wisdom, and ability to make difficult decisions. The various speakers supporting an incumbent's efforts to return to the White House also provided as evidence for reelection the various program and policy successes achieved during a first term. The incumbent's experience message frame would be offered in contrast to the lack of experience of the opposition, who represented as a risky gamble for the nation to take. Finally, when an incumbent entered the convention as a major underdog, such as Jimmy Carter in 1980, the leadership frame was altered somewhat to focus more on party history and the legacy of presidential leadership associated with that party. The intent behind such framing sought to remind voters of a better time tied to the party and its leaders rather than the current occupant of the Oval Office who may not have been able to achieve such success just yet but would surely do so if given just a bit longer at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Conversely, the party out of power constructed their narrative and positioned their brand as the agent of change at a time when change was desperately needed in the land. The message of change was a prominent element of any convention for a party out of power and seeking its way

back to the White House; but the plea for change was even more pronounced – with more focused attacks – when the party out of power was attempting to topple an incumbent president seeking reelection (versus an open election). For example, in 1980, challenger Ronald Reagan argued that Jimmy Carter was weakening our nation’s standing throughout the world; and in 1992, Bill Clinton argued that the economic and domestic policies of George H.W. Bush were causing the American Dream to disappear.

Sitting Vice President Running for President. Within this particular election context, the party in power was tasked with seeking a third term following a usually successful two-term presidency. In such contests, the party out of power followed a similar branding strategy of running against an incumbent president. This exigency of asking voters for a third term occurred for Republicans in 1988 with George H. W. Bush’s nomination and also for the Democrats in 2000 when Al Gore was nominated. In both cases, the outgoing president was a keynote speaker at the convention in order to present their vice president as heir apparent to their legacy. For the incumbent party, the message goal was to situate their nominee as an integral part of the previous eight years. With Bush in 1988, all references to the Reagan presidency were referred to as the Reagan-Bush Administration and years. This language intentionally placed Bush as a partner during the Reagan years and constituted Bush as continuing the Reagan legacy. With Al Gore, interestingly, the 2000 convention focused less on Gore’s partnership with Bill Clinton, while still framing Gore’s election as a choice between continuing eight years of growth and prosperity or returning the nation to a time of division and struggle during yet another Bush presidency. Although with just two cases during the modern era of vice presidents seeking to succeed a popular two-term president, the one case in which the vice president joined himself as a clear partner with the outgoing president was successful in his bid for the presidency (George H. W. Bush), while the other vice president who distanced himself from his presidential partner (Al Gore) never made it to the White House.

Open Elections. During elections where there is neither an incumbent president nor vice president seeking the presidency, such as in 2008 and 2016, the party's branding is altered slightly as these presidential nominees are not directly tied to the administration that currently occupies the White House. In 2008, a relative newcomer to the national stage, Barack Obama, challenged John McCain who had been a long serving member of Congress. In 2016, Hillary Clinton ran as a candidate who had served in the U.S. Senate and as Secretary of State during the Obama Administration but had left the Democratic Administration several years prior to her nomination. Donald Trump in 2016 ran as a Republican outsider with no Washington or elective office experience.

In both 2008 and 2016, the candidates nominated by the party out of power, Barack Obama and Donald Trump respectively, were candidates who were seen as true political outsiders with little or no experience on the national political stage. This lack of national experience allowed them to more easily brand themselves as clear agents of change who would reject the policies of the ruling party, and also alter the manner in which Washington as a whole conducted business. Both candidates argued there needed to be a fundamental change in our national political process rather than just a change in political ideology originating from the White House.

The candidates representing the parties in power in both of these elections, John McCain in 2008 and Hillary Clinton in 2016, were more traditional or establishment candidates who both branded their candidacies on their extensive government service and political knowledge. Both of these "insider" candidates argued they had the requisite experience necessary to lead the nation and world, while their "outsider" or political novice opponent would not be ready to assume the presidency on day one. While both McCain and Clinton ran as long serving political leaders experienced in the ways of Washington, the electorate in both cases opted instead for the less experienced candidates who promised change and a rejection of the established political order. While the positioning of insider against outsider candidates occurred in the two conventions

where an open election existed, it does not dictate how an open election may change the narrative brand for future conventions.

Conventions with Special Exigencies. Several conventions were marked by special exigencies which influenced the branding of one or both parties during their respective conventions. In 1972, for example, the Democrats were called to acknowledge the rioting and turmoil that occurred four years earlier at their convention in Chicago. In 1976, the party brand for both Republicans and Democrats was influenced by the resignation of President Richard Nixon following the Watergate scandal. Finally, in 2004 both party brands were influenced by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

During the 1972 Democratic Convention each of the speakers emphasized change, but not the typical change narrative that comes from the party out of power. Instead, the Democrats' brand of change in 1972 focused more so on change within the party rather than changing the current occupant of the Oval Office. Vice presidential nominee Thomas Eagleton's address, for example, focused largely on changes the party had made in its nomination process following the riots and party infighting that dominated the 1968 Convention. In fact, all speakers at the Democrats' 1972 gathering emphasized the theme of party unity and acknowledged the diverse perspectives present within the party.

Four years later, in 1976, the nation as a whole was still coming to terms with the resignation of Richard Nixon and fallout from the Watergate scandal. Naturally, the Democrats attacked Republicans as the party of corruption. Washington outsider Jimmy Carter was offered by the Democrats as untainted by Washington scandal and as the highly ethical southern Baptist Sunday school teacher who would go to Washington and clean up the Republican's mess. Conversely, the Republicans attempted to brand themselves as the party who was willing to put country ahead of party and partisan politics when they joined Democrats in calling for investigation and the eventual impeachment of their fallen president. The Republicans argued, in fact, that it was their leadership that brought the scandal to an end.

In 2004, the country was still recovering from the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. As George W. Bush sought reelection, the most prominent element of the Republican Party brand was that of a strong national security, a theme that was reinforced in every speech presented at the convention. The central argument put forth by the Republicans was that the president had kept America safe since the attacks and would continue to do so in a second term. On the Democratic side, the argument was made that Bush's foreign policy had made America less safe since September 11 and there was a need for change. Each of the Democratic speakers focused on John Kerry's military service as evidence that he was eminently fit for duty as commander-in-chief in our war against terror. Clearly, the major influence on the development of the two party's brands in 2004 was the events that occurred on September 11, 2001.

Overall, the context of a given election influenced each party's proffered campaign message and constructed brand. The major types of elections included incumbents seeking reelection with a stay the course theme, sitting vice presidents who sought to ascend to the presidency often with a plea for a third term for the incumbent party, and open elections that were frequently characterized by "insider" establishment versus "outsider" or fresh candidates untainted by the ways of Washington. Finally, a number of special election season circumstances or exigencies influenced the party message and brand. Even with the type of election affecting the construction of party brand, both parties remained true to an enduring political brand that was somewhat consistent across the nearly half century of the modern presidential nomination convention.

Enduring Party Brands

While the constructed brand for each party differed somewhat from convention to convention, there were facets of each party's brand that remained consistent and endured throughout the modern era of presidential nominating conventions. The final section of this discussion chapter will highlight the elements of each party's brand that endured during the 44 years of this study, and also note how each party's brand evolved across the decades.

The Enduring Democratic Brand. Throughout the 12 Democratic Conventions from 1972 - 2016 that are included as part of the study, several key themes emerged as enduring elements of the Democratic Party brand. First, perhaps the most common appeal made by Democratic speakers was that the Democratic Party represented the interests of “average” Americans, defined primarily as working and middle-class citizens. Another dominant theme found consistently in Democratic convention addresses constructed the party as one of progress and opportunity for all people. From Barbara Jordan’s keynote address in 1976, to Geraldine Ferraro’s vice presidential acceptance address in 1984, to Barack Obama’s acceptance of his party’s presidential nomination in 2008, and, finally, Hillary Clinton’s presidential acceptance address in 2016, the Democratic Party across the nearly half century analyzed here enacted its major party brand of inclusion and opportunity for all as represented by its party leaders and nominees.

The Democratic Party and its convention speakers also spoke frequently of hope, and particularly hope that all could achieve the American Dream. Hope was invoked to encourage those feeling left behind, ignored and unheard that Democrats understood their plight in life and represented their desires and hopes. In their various convention addresses, many Democratic speakers used their own personal life narratives to show they had overcome obstacles and struggled from humble beginnings to achieve the American Dream. This personification of success demonstrated the party’s commitment to help all citizens in the pursuit of their own American Dream.

Finally, the Presidential nominees developed key policies as part of the Democratic Party brand. Consistently for the Democrats, their policy focus was devoted primarily to the economy and jobs, along with a wide range of domestic policies, and also social issues, particularly matters relating to equality and inclusion of all citizens. It was only in the elections immediately following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks that Democrats included national security as a prominent feature of their issue agenda. Overall, the Democratic Party brand was fairly

consistent in its construction with a seeming cyclical calibration in its ideological focus depending on the party's electoral successes. In 1972, for example, led by George McGovern's anti-war policies, the Democratic Party appealed to its more liberal base. Following McGovern's near electoral shut out (Nixon carried all states except McGovern's home state of South Dakota), the party swung back to the center with the nomination of the more centrist Southern Democrat Jimmy Carter. Following Carter's thrashing after only one term (Carter carried only six states to Ronald Reagan's 44), the Democrats were out of power for more than a decade with unsuccessful nominees representing the party's more liberal wing, including Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis. Finally, again returning to the South for a more centrist Democrat, the Democrats returned to power in 1992 with Bill Clinton's nomination. The next Democrat that the party and nation would send to the White House would be Barack Obama, arguably from the party's more liberal wing, although Obama emerged in the era of "outsider" candidates new to Washington. As one traverses the nearly 50 years of modern nomination conventions, the Democrats' rather steady pendulum swing – from its more liberal wing to the center and back – is apparent in its presidential nominees and party convention branding efforts.

The Enduring Republican Brand. Throughout the approximately five decades included in this study, there were several key facets of the Republican Party brand which have endured. While Republicans initially had to contend with a rehabilitation of their brand following the Watergate scandal, the party quickly rebounded with several of the larger electoral victories in our nation's history (Ronald Reagan won 44 states in 1980, 49 in 1984, and George H.W. Bush carried 40 states in 1988). Overall, and unlike the Democrats' steady pendulum swing, the Republican brand has remained fairly consistent throughout the modern era.

First, what is perhaps most noticeable about the Republican's unwavering brand is the party's steady issue agenda. Several policy areas have endured as part of the party's branding efforts since the 1970's. The Republican Party has constantly argued that it is the party of smaller

government. Republicans have reminded voters continually that too many federal regulations have hindered American prosperity. Also, we have too many agencies and bureaucracies within the federal government. Throughout the past five decades Republicans have asked the American voters to send them to Washington to make government smaller. Two additional policy appeals have been a mainstay of the Republican issue agenda, taxes and national security. On the taxation front, Republicans have always argued the need for lower taxes to allow citizens to keep more of their “hard earned” money, and also lower taxes for business so companies can hire more workers. A strong national defense to protect our nation and national interests abroad has also been a common refrain for Republicans. The variation on this theme included fighting the Soviet Union and communism during the 1970’s and 1980’s, shifting to a new enemy, Al Qaeda and Islamic terrorism, after the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. While the enemy remained Islamic terrorists in 2016, Al Qaeda has most recently been replaced with ISIS as the most frequently mentioned enemy.

Finally, on the social front, Republicans across the decades have continually invoked family and family values, with the party and its representatives arguing that their own values and policies honor and protect American families. Here, the family values frame is often associated with such social issues as abortion and same-sex marriage, but also religious freedom and the general inclusion of religion in society. The family values element of the Republican brand represents a key appeal to one of the Republican Party’s most crucial and enduring constituencies, the so-called “religious right” or social conservative voters.

Overall, a striking difference between the Republican and Democratic brands across the decades is the stability and consistency of the Republican message versus the Democrats’ shifting appeals to either its centrist or more left-leaning wing. Once their rehabilitation following Watergate was complete, the Republicans and Ronald Reagan hit upon the right – and often winning – brand formula that has remained largely unchanged even today. The Republican

message of small government, less taxes, a strong national defense and honoring family values has been the party mantra for nearly fifty years. Democrats, on the other hand, while remaining consistent on some core elements of their message or party brand, have also struggled from election to election in modulating its specific appeals and the general direction of the party. What has remained constant for the Democratic Party is its commitment to inclusion and equality, and also support for the middle and working class, the so-called “average” Americans who often need help if they are to fully share in the American Dream. The Democrats at times have been somewhat reactionary, both internally and in response to the opposition party. The Democrats’ ideological pendulum swing described earlier has found the party shifting from identification with and leaders representing the party’s more liberal philosophy, to a more centrist appeal. Indeed, the rhetorical construction of party image and its central message – its brand – is perhaps most clearly enacted on the nominating convention stage every four years.

Conclusion

The modern era of the presidential nominating conventions started in 1972 as both major U.S. political parties adopted a system of choosing their nominees through a primary process culminating in the nomination convention. Since that time, both parties have called upon key speakers to deliver addresses during these nationally-televised conventions to highlight different elements of their party brands. Through the personal narratives included in these many speeches, the issues discussed, and the functions of campaign discourse, one can discern the changing and stable brands constructed by the Republican and Democratic parties in their quest to gain control of the White House.

This study first explored each genre of convention address and found that these various types of speeches play a different role in creating the party’s brand. Also developed from the analysis were three distinct types of keynote speakers. Outgoing or former presidents served the role of connecting the party’s current nominee to their successes. Former primary opponents worked to unite the party behind the nominee. General keynote speakers most often represented

the diverse elements of the party's constituencies. Candidate spousal addresses are a newer addition to the convention stage, and these speeches generally focus on the candidate's personal family narrative and serve to "humanize" the candidate. The spousal address has historically been gendered as a feminine address, with its focus on the familial; but with Bill Clinton delivering this address in 2016, even though he also focused on his wife's roles as daughter, mother and spouse, the expectations for this address may change over time with the inclusion of more diverse presidential candidates. Vice presidential nominee addresses serve to attack the opposing party's presidential candidate and brand, and sometimes features a leadership narrative of the VP who may aspire to their own nomination as president in the near future. Finally, the presidential nominee's acceptance address usually fleshes out the party's issue agenda that it will take into the upcoming general election campaign.

The type of election context greatly influences the party's overall narrative and constructed brand. For example, an incumbent president seeking reelection intones a stay the course message, while the party out of power constructs and brand and message of change. An open election that involves no incumbent seeking reelection tends to focus less on issue development with more attention devoted to the presidential candidates' personal qualities and leadership abilities.

Overall, the narratives presented in the convention addresses aid in creating a clear party brand. Each address plays a role in crafting the brand through the narratives presented. Keynote speakers have very clear narratives related to the role of the speaker. The nominee's spouse utilizes a family narrative to humanize the nominee. The vice presidential nominee attacks the opposition and offers a leadership narrative. The presidential nominee puts forward a policy narrative. We also notice that the electoral situation also plays a role in the party branding. Incumbents emphasize their strong leadership narrative while their opponents have a narrative of change. Sitting vice presidents rely on their predecessor to create a narrative of a continued legacy. Open elections have relied on an experienced narrative battling a narrative of a needed

new perspective. As more open election conventions occur this style of branding may prove to be more a product of the candidates offered than the situation itself. Finally, we know the Democratic brand is much less static than the Republicans. Democrats often look to the results of the last election to dictate a more liberal or conservative brand to present to the voters.

In the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election, both political parties are carefully examining their future – exploring their identities, who they represent and seeking to craft their political message and brands. An evolving political electorate and shifting allegiances within both political parties has created great uncertainty that may well lead one or both to fundamentally reshape – or rebrand – itself in response to this changing political landscape. Often, there will be a shift in priorities for a party's brand based on how well the party performed in the last election. The Republican Party currently seems to be in a state of some confusion, deciding whether it has now become the party of Trump; or perhaps the incumbent president will face a challenge within his own party ranks to reclaim the Republican Party that we have known since the time of Ronald Reagan. Clearly, much is to be decided for the current party in power. For the Democrats as well, following the surprise defeat of Hillary Clinton who was seen by many as a return to the more centrist core of the party following Barack Obama, will Democrats now swing once again back to its left flank? These questions suggest the possibility of many changes in the fundamental branding for both parties, perhaps the greatest changes in party identification and construction that have been seen since 1972. The study of party brand construction is an important area for political communication research. How both parties brand themselves, and particularly at their presidential nominating conventions, provides an important lens for analysis in understanding the role of political parties in our electoral process.

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Press.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF SPEECHES

Democratic Conventions	Republican Conventions
<u>July 10-13, 1972 Miami, FL</u> Sen. George McGovern – Pres. Nominee Sen. Tom Eagleton – VP Nominee Gov. Reubin Askew – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 21-23, 1972, Miami, FL</u> Pres. Richard Nixon – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. Spiro Agnew – VP Nominee Pat Nixon – Nominee Spouse Mayor Richard Lugar – Keynote Speaker
<u>July 12-15, 1976 New York, NY</u> Gov. Jimmy Carter – Pres. Nominee Sen. Walter Mondale – VP Nominee Sen. John Glenn – Keynote Speaker Rep. Barbara Jordan – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 16-19, 1976 Kansas City, MO</u> Pres. Gerald Ford – Pres. Nominee Sen. Bob Dole – VP Nominee Sen. Howard Baker – Keynote Speaker
<u>August 11-14, 1980 New York, NY</u> Pres. Jimmy Carter – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. Walter Mondale – VP Nominee Sen. Edward Kennedy – Keynote Speaker Rep. Morris Udall – Keynote Speaker	<u>July 14-17, 1980 Detroit, MI</u> Gov. Ronald Reagan – Pres. Nominee Dir. George H.W. Bush – VP Nominee Rep. Guy Vander Jagt – Keynote Speaker
<u>July 16-19, 1984 San Francisco, CA</u> Vice Pres. Walter Mondale – Pres. Nominee Rep. Geraldine Ferraro – VP Nominee Gov. Mario Cuomo – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 20-23, 1984 Dallas, TX</u> Pres. Ronald Reagan – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. George H.W. Bush – VP Nominee Treasurer Katherine Ortega – Keynote Speaker
<u>July 18-21, 1988 Atlanta, GA</u> Gov. Michael Dukakis – Pres. Nominee Sen. Lloyd Bentsen – VP Nominee TX State Treasurer Ann Richards – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 15-18, 1988 New Orleans, LA</u> Vice Pres. George H.W. Bush – Pres. Nominee Sen. Dan Quayle – VP Nominee Pres. Ronald Reagan – Keynote Speaker Gov. Thomas Kean – Keynote Speaker
<u>July 13-16, 1992 New York, NY</u> Gov. Bill Clinton – Pres. Nominee Sen. Al Gore – VP Nominee Gov. Zell Miller – Keynote Speaker Rep. Barbara Jordan – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 17-20, 1992 Houston, TX</u> Pres. George H.W. Bush – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. Dan Quayle – VP Nominee Barbara Bush – Nominee Spouse Pres. Ronald Reagan – Keynote Speaker Sen. Phil Gramm – Keynote Speaker
<u>August 26-29, 1996 Chicago, IL</u> Pres. Bill Clinton – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. Al Gore – VP Nominee Hillary Clinton – Nominee Spouse Gov. Evan Bayh – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 12-15, 1996 San Diego, CA</u> Sen. Bob Dole – Pres. Nominee Sec. Jack Kemp – VP Nominee Elizabeth Dole – Nominee Spouse Rep. Susan Molinari – Keynote Speaker
<u>August 14-17, 2000 Los Angeles, CA</u> Vice Pres. Al Gore – Pres. Nominee Sen. Joe Lieberman – VP Nominee Tipper Gore – Nominee Spouse Pres. Bill Clinton – Keynote Speaker Rep. Harold Ford Jr. – Keynote Speaker	<u>July 31-August 3, 2000 Philadelphia, PA</u> Gov. George W. Bush – Pres. Nominee Sec. Dick Cheney – VP Nominee Laura Bush – Nominee Spouse Sen. John McCain – Keynote Speaker Gen. Colin Powell – Keynote Speaker

<u>July 26-29, 2004 Boston, MA</u> Sen. John Kerry – Pres. Nominee Sen. John Edwards – VP Nominee Teresa Heinz Kerry – Nominee Spouse Sen. Barack Obama – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 30-Sept 2, 2004 New York, NY</u> Pres. George W. Bush – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. Dick Cheney – VP Nominee Laura Bush – Nominee Spouse Sen. John McCain – Keynote Speaker Sen. Zell Miller – Keynote Speaker
<u>August 25-28, 2008 Denver, CO</u> Sen. Barack Obama – Pres. Nominee Sen. Joe Biden – VP Nominee Michelle Obama – Nominee Spouse Sen. Hillary Clinton – Keynote Speaker Gov. Mark Warner – Keynote Speaker	<u>September 1-4, 2008 St. Paul, MN</u> Sen. John McCain – Pres. Nominee Gov. Sarah Palin – VP Nominee Cindy McCain – Nominee Spouse Mayor Rudy Giuliani – Keynote Speaker
<u>September 4-6, 2012 Charlotte, NC</u> Pres. Barack Obama – Pres. Nominee Vice Pres. Joe Biden – VP Nominee Michelle Obama – Nominee Spouse Pres. Bill Clinton – Keynote Speaker Mayor Julian Castro – Keynote Speaker	<u>August 27-30, 2012 Tampa, FL</u> Gov. Mitt Romney – Pres. Nominee Rep. Paul Ryan – VP Nominee Ann Romney – Nominee Spouse Gov. Chris Christie – Keynote Speaker
<u>July 25- 28, 2016 Philadelphia, PA</u> Sec. Hillary Clinton – Pres. Nominee Sen. Tim Kaine – VP Nominee Pres. Bill Clinton – Nominee Spouse Pres. Barack Obama – Keynote Speaker Sen. Elizabeth Warren – Keynote Speaker Sen. Bernie Sanders – Keynote Speaker	<u>July 18-21, 2016 Cleveland, OH</u> Donald Trump – Pres. Nominee Gov. Mike Pence – VP Nominee Melania Trump – Nominee Spouse Ben Carson – Keynote Speaker

VITA

Joshua Bolton was raised in Janesville, Wisconsin (also home to political dignitaries Russ Feingold and Paul Ryan). After graduating from Joseph A. Craig High School in 2000 he spent a year at the University of Wisconsin – Rock County before transferring to the University of Wisconsin – Madison where he majored in Political Science which he graduated from in 2006. After a few years of working he began pursuing a Master’s degree in Corporate Communication from the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater, graduating in 2012. Following in the footsteps of his Master’s advisor, Dr. Corey Davis, he went on to pursue a Doctoral degree in Political Communication from the University of Missouri, graduating in 2018. During his time at Mizzou, he also served as the Director of Communication for the Graduate Professional Council and was an active member of the Coalition of Graduate Workers since its founding. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Public Relations at Loras College in the Division of Communication and Fine Arts.