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THE EXPRESSION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE DEMOCRATIC AND
REPUBLICAN POLITICAL DISCOURSE DURING THE PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS

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The Expression of Social Justice in the Democratic and Republican Political Discourse during the Presidential Elections

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ABSTRACT

The thesis looks at the expressions of social justice used in the political discourse of the Democratic and Republican Parties during the 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020 presidential elections. 63 speeches were analyzed through a systematic analysis to establish the themes and sub-theme according to the second principal of social justice by John Rawls (1971). In addition, critical discourse analysis was performed on the chosen segments of data to achieve a deeper understanding of the presidential candidates' stand on issues related to social justice. The reason the following topic was chosen lies in the fact that social justice remains a highly relevant theme which interconnects society and politics, especially in today's political climate that is deeply affected by societal issues. The overall analysis revealed that the Democratic and Republican Parties tended to adhere to their political positions and values. When presidential candidates were raising issues related to social justice, they were doing so through the narrative of their Party's belief system.

Key words: social justice, Democratic Party, Republican Party, political discourse, election campaign, critical discourse analysis

Abstraktas

Šiose baigiamojo magistro laipsnio tezėse yra apžvelgiamos 2008, 2012, 2016 ir 2020 metų Demokratų ir Respublikonų partijų, prezidento rinkimų kompanijose, išsakyti socialinio teisingumo teiginiai jų politiniame diskurse. Panaudotos 63 kalbos ir jos sistematiškai analizuotos, remiantis John Rawls (1971) antruoju socialio teisingumo principu, bandant atskleisti pagrindines temas ir potemes. Papildomai, išsamesniam supratimui apie kandidatų į prezidentus požiūrį, susijusį su socialiniu teisingumu, kritinei diskurso analizei buvo panaudi atskiri pasirinkti kalbos segmentai. Ši tema buvo pasirinkta, dėl šalyje vyraujančios ypatingai aukštos socialinės nelygybės lygio ir jos aktualumo, ypač kada socialinės problemos turi tokią didelę įtaką politiniam klimatui. Tyrimas atskleidė, kad Demokratų ir Respublikonų partijos yra linkusios laikytis savų politinių pozicijų ir vertybių. Kada savo kalbose, kandidatai į prezidentus, iškeldavo problemas susijusias su socialine nelygybe, jie laikydavosi savo partijos nuostatų.

Raktiniai žodžiai: socialinis teisingumas, Demokratų partija, Respublikonų partija, politinis diskursas, rinkimų kompanija, kritinė diskurso analizė

Santrauka

Baigiamojo magistro laipsnio darbo tema yra “Socialinio teisingumo idėjos raiška demokratų ir respublikonų partijų politiniame diskurse JAV prezidento rinkimų kontekste”. Pagrindinis dėmesys telkiamas į išsakytus socialinio teisingumo teiginius, jų identifikaciją ir analizę, Demokratų ir Respublikonų partijų politiniame diskurse. Šiam tyrimui buvo panaudotos 63 kalbos ir jos sistematiškai analizuotos, remiantis garsaus, politikos filosofo, John Rawls knygos “Teisingumo politika” (“A theory of Justice”, 1971), antruoju socialio teisingumo principu, bandant atskleisti pagrindines temas ir potemes. Papildomai, išsamesniam supratimui apie kandidatų į prezidentus požiūrį, susijusį su socialiniu teisingumu, kritinei diskurso analizei buvo panaudi atskiri pasirinkti kalbos segmentai.

Antrojo socialinio teisingumo principo teorija, pagal John Rawls, buvo panaudota kaip pagrindinė gairė prezidentinių kalbų analizei, kadangi ji veidrodžio principu atspindi centrinės valdžios įsitraukimo lygį į problemas susijusias su socialiniu teisingumu ir lygybe. Straipsnyje yra apžvelgiami išsireiškimai susiję su socialiniu teisingumu, kurie buvo panaudoti Demokratų ir Respublikonų partijų kandidatų į prezidentus kalbose, kada buvo kalbama apie švietimą, socialinę atskirtį, pajamų nelygybę ir sveikatos apsaugą.

Tyrimas atskleidė, kad Demokratų ir Respublikonų partijos yra linkusios laikytis savų politinių pozicijų ir vertybių. Demokratų, į prezidentus, kandidatai pasisakė daug plačiau apie problemas susijusias su socialiniu teisingumu, lyginant su Respublikonų kandidatais. Jų kandidatai pademonstravo, kad yra žymiai geriau susipažinę su įvairiomis socialinėmis problemomis ir siūlė daug išsamesnius sprendimus šioms problemoms spręsti. Respublikonų kadidatai dažnai naudodavo išsireiškimus, kuriuose jie patys save vaizduodavo kaip “gelbėtojus”, ypatingai per paskutinius tris prezidento rinkimų periodus. Abiejų partijų, Demokratų ir Respublikonų, prezidento rinkimų kandidatai save patys reprezentavo pozityviai, tuo pat metu bandydami įtikinti rinkėją apie oponento negatyvų portretą. Dažnai Demokratų kandidatai į kalbas įtraukdavo savo asmenines istorijas, tokiu būdu bandydami parodyti savo empatiją visuomenei, politinį sąmoningumą ir supratingumą.

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1. Introduction

Words carry power as well as the ability to change and manipulate certain situations and therefore, when it comes to political discourse, the right choice of words and expressions, plays a significant role in the decision-making process of whether the politician who carries the speech is trustworthy and whether he or she addresses issues that truly matter. The representation of values in a political discourse is crucial since they are the building blocks of the society in general and government in particular.

Today's world has changed tremendously. It has become more global and transparent, where the dreadful events of the past are no longer a fundamental issue, the focus has shifted, and it is now concentrated on making the world a better, safer and more equal place for everyone. However, despite the fact that humanity has come a long way and that globalization has taken a major role in shaping the world, there is a growing wish to reverse the process of opening borders and creating a world that is shared by everyone. To put it differently, the world is seeing a resurgence of nationalism, protectionism and populism. Politicians across the globe are calling for change in the current policies, a change that on various levels will result in segregation. In addition, these claims for transformation are backed by the notion that the ordinary citizens of a specific country, are the ones who should be prioritized and that those people represent the social layers that should be seen and heard.

As it was briefly mentioned, the political scene is becoming unstable across the world. While some politicians promote global inclusion, others urge to focus on domestic issues and finding solutions through the limitation of external governance and forces. That is the reason why it is important to spot and understand certain tendencies that are centered on reversing the work that has been done in order to promote a more peaceful, safe and equal world. When it comes to social justice in relation to those achievements, it is important to look at it as a reference point to how society should be constructed. Social justice is not simply a measurement scale that indicates whether one nation functions properly or not; it is the base of how every person should be treated regardless of their background. The aim of social justice is to promote a world where everyone lives in dignity and where one's rights are respected and protected.

As the Western world becomes more progressive, it does not mean that everyone gets to enjoy this progress. When looking at the situation in the U.S. today, there is a growing number of people who are struggling when it comes to affordable housing, education, healthcare, having the option to have a disposable income – not just for leisure but for emergency situations as well. Additionally, many are facing discrimination and inequality on a daily basis. These difficulties and hardships raise the question how these issues are being presented and addressed on a governmental level? The way politicians choose to respond to these issues, especially issues related to various types of inequalities and discriminations, is highly important. Politicians have an immense power to stir the political narrative from benevolent to malicious, from a narrative which promotes unity and a joint effort in finding logical solutions, to the one that focuses on “us against them” and vice versa. Moreover, it raises the point on the level of politicians’ awareness of what is actually happening in relation to societal issues, and in the case of the present thesis, how attuned the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates are? Is it enough to adhere to their political positions and ignore the actual situation? The answer to these questions might be found during the elections, since it is during this time that potential presidential candidates attempt to provide as much information as possible on their future plans for the nation, especially when it comes to pressing issues.

Social justice has been chosen as the broad object of this thesis. The reason for that choice lies in the fact that issues concerning social justice are here to stay, they are complex and ever changing. These issues deepen and become more ubiquitous as the world becomes more connected. In today’s world, social justice can be divided into two types, the first type aims to improve basic needs and eliminate severe poverty and hardship while the second type focuses greatly on social aspects, as well as the reduction of the issues related to social injustice, such as various forms of discrimination and economic inequality. The main object of this thesis is the expressions of social justice that were used by the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates and therefore, it is important to note that in this context, the second principal of social justice, according to John Rawls (1971) was used during the analysis.

The aim of the present thesis is to identify and analyze the expressions of social justice in the political discourse of the Democratic and Republican parties during the presidential elections.

The Objectives:

- To classify the expressions of social justice into themes and sub-themes
- To analyze the expressions of social justice used by the Democratic Party
- To analyze the expressions of social justice used by the Republican Party

The Method

Systematic analysis of the speeches was performed in order to establish the themes and sub-themes for the purpose of creating a clearer representation of the findings. In the next step, critical discourse analysis was employed to analyze the chosen segments in order to gain a broader understanding how the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates present and address issues concerning social justice.

Work Overview

The research begins with a theoretical background, covering the following topics: the role of values in political discourse; the expressions of social justice; the political positions of the Democratic and Republican Parties; and the importance of language in politics, for the purpose of gaining a better understanding and knowledge on what social justice is and how issues concerning social justice are being presented and addressed by the presidential candidates in their speeches. The theoretical background is followed by the analysis, which consists of methodology and the analyzed results. Finally, the thesis revealed that the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates tended to adhere to their parties' political positions when addressing issues related to social justice. In addition, the research showed that the Democratic Party demonstrated more awareness of issues concerning social justice throughout the four presidential campaigns in comparison to the Republican Party, while also covering a greater number of social justice issues in the analyzed speeches.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. The Role of Values in Political Discourse

Values are an inseparable part of a healthy and highly functioning society, they serve as a moral and ethical backbone and guide to what is right, wrong and to what we should aspire for, as individuals and as a society, in order to maintain and shape a wholesome nation (and consequently a world) of conscious and more empathic individuals. When talking about values that transcend personal importance, or in other words - universal values, Isaiah Berlin provides the following definition, “These are values that a great many human beings in the vast majority of places and situations, at almost all times, do in fact hold in common, whether consciously and explicitly or as expressed in their behaviour, gestures, actions” (Berlin and Jahanbegloo, 1991: 37). Values are broad motivational goals that transcend specific situations, serve as guides to behaviour and as criteria for judging people and events (Sortheix and Schwartz 2017: The Schwartz Theory of Basic Individual Values). Schwarz listed ten basic values, which are “self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and universalism” (Schwartz 2005: Basic Human Values: An Overview). It is clear that each of us has a different set of values, where each value is rated according to its importance and meaning. This values scale is influenced by our social class, upbringing, social norms and cultural background. In his book, *The Nature of Human Values*, Milton Rokeach argued that values guide our actions, as well as our way of thinking, seeing and judging certain situations and people, however his research revealed that “a relatively small number of human values can be conceptualized as the core cognitive components underlying the thousands of attitudes that people hold, and the countless socially relevant behaviours they engage in [...]” (Stephenson, G. M. 1974: p. 612).

When looking at values in the context of government, it becomes clear that values are crucial in promoting and upholding rights, in the legislation process and in the social life at large (among other things). That is, if the government values women’s right to decide what to do with her own body, the government will push towards laws that preserve or promote these rights and practices. The given example demonstrates the strong connection between values and society, and how values are subjected to the ebbs and flows states of societal issues. As it was previously stated, the importance of values varies for each person, nevertheless one of the most important tasks for politicians is the design of a society in which the dominant values lead to beneficial outcomes,

which encourage people to live in harmony with one another and keep on progressing together through mutual support. In politics, particularly in political discourse, the usage of values within an appropriate context plays a major role in the ability to ignite the things that are important for the listener and consequently the audience, or in other words, “values are a powerful tool in political discourse used for persuasion [...]” (Sowińska 2013). The emphasis on values rises the politician's chances to gain trust and inevitability support (for example, a vote during the election). In addition, discussing social matters shows that the speaker is not oblivious to the wishes and concerns of the audience. In other words, it symbolizes that the politician is attuned to its supporters. Paul Chilton (2004: p. 23) stated that “political discourse involves, among other things, the promotion of representations, and a pervasive feature of representation is the evident need for political speakers to imbue their utterances with evidence, authority and truth, a process that refers to in broad terms, in the context of political discourse, as ‘legitimation’.” Rozina and Karapetjana (2009: p. 114) argued that “the features of political discourse vary, as do its purposes. Providing politicians interact with society in general, their purposes may be to persuade voters to be a party loyal and to turn up to vote, to move a floating voters’ party loyalty, to make people adopt general political or social attitudes in order to attract support for a present policy.” John Wilson (2008: p. 399) claimed that the study of political discourse emerged together with politics. Moreover, one has to mention the Greeks and their role in politics in general and political discourse in particular since rhetoric was the core of their focus. Cicero and Aristotle were focusing on methods which could be implemented in social and political practices in order to fulfil certain purposes. “While Aristotle gave a more formal twist to these overall aims, the general principle of articulating information on policies and actions for the public good remained constant. This general approach is continued today.” (Ibid. Wilson).

From Ancient Greece to the present moment, the resurgence of fake news carries the potential to distort the very foundation of political discourse, especially in the age of social media, where news reaches unprecedented numbers of people and politicians have a “direct” contact with their audiences (a good example of that would be the way Donald J. Trump uses Twitter). Furthermore, it is important to highlight the fact that the political information found on social media is arguably difficult to verify due to the fast, ubiquitous and ever-changing nature of these platforms, which has the potential to increase ideological polarization and tribalism (Spohr 2017). The relationship between fake news and political discourse is quite complex: nowadays, people get their news on

politics or politicians predominantly through mediated sources, meaning the vast majority of people do not physically attend press conferences, political debates, public speeches or any other public appearances - they do not get first-hand, direct information (Ibid. Spohr). As a result, “research shows that political elites’ use of the term “fake news” negatively affects individuals’ trust in news media.” (Farhall, Carson, Wright, Gibbons and Lukamto 2019: p. 4354). As an additional side-effect, publicly questioning and discrediting trusted and reliable sources, distorts political discourse - making it difficult to trust the government or the messenger, which further creates instability and ideological polarization (“us against them”). According to a survey *Public Highly Critical of State of Political Discourse in the U.S.* conducted by Pew Research Center in 2019, 78% of the participants said that “heated or aggressive” language directed by elected officials against certain people or groups makes violence against them more likely.” Fake news and hate speech are both a great source of concern when it comes to political discourse. When politicians weaponize these tools to appeal for potential audiences, facts are left out of the picture - what people value gains more importance. A good example of that can be seen in the case of Donald J. Trump and the rise of white supremacy in the U.S.: In numerous instances, Donald Trump refused to condemn far right groups (Gabbatt 2020) despite the fact that these groups spread conspiracy theories that are hateful and potentially hurtful, and most importantly completely void of truth and facts.

2.2. The Expressions of Social Justice

The idea of justice in relation to society has been around from the ancient times. It is a dominant subject in various spheres of life: ethics, politics, law, economy and philosophy. Social justice has been discussed in different forms and in diverse contexts by numerous philosophers and notorious figures such as Plato, Aristotle and Kant. However, the United Nations, the organization that actively promotes and protects human rights, does not see these philosophers and scholars as solid contributors and evident advocates of social justice, as one would understand it in the modern society. The United Nations insists on a difference sequence of events when looking at the history of social justice:

“...the notion of social justice is relatively new. None of history’s great philosophers—not Plato or Aristotle, or Confucius or Averroes, or even Rousseau or Kant—saw the need to consider justice or the redress of injustices from a social perspective. The concept first surfaced in Western thought and political language in the wake of the industrial revolution

and the parallel development of the socialist doctrine. It emerged as an expression of protest against what was perceived as the capitalist exploitation of labour and as a focal point for the development of measures to improve the human condition. It was born as a revolutionary slogan embodying the ideals of progress and fraternity. Following the revolutions that shook Europe in the mid-1800s, social justice became a rallying cry for progressive thinkers and political activists [...] By the mid-twentieth century, the concept of social justice had become central to the ideologies and programmes of virtually all the leftist and centrist political parties around the world [...].” (2006: p. 11-12)

The above statement explains the reason why, before the mid-1800 social justice was not a solidified call for a social change that focuses on equality and fair distribution of wealth. It was rather an account of abstract ideas that did not come into practice and were not considered as inherently essential for a health society. Before the European revolutions and the age of Enlightenment, social stratification was well-defined and the idea that all members of society should have equal rights and adhere to a certain living standard was not considered as an option that can be implemented. An example of early shift, can be seen in the book *Utilitarianism* by John Stuart Mill, who was an English philosopher, economist and civil servant:

“...we should treat all equally well (when no higher duty forbids) who have deserved equally well of us, and that society should treat all equally well who have deserved equally well of it, that is, who have deserved equally well absolutely. This is the highest abstract standard of social and distributive justice; towards which all institutions, and the efforts of all virtuous citizens, should be made in the utmost possible degree to converge.” (1863: chapter 5)

The belief that every member of society should receive an equal treatment has been discussed before and it remains a relevant topic to this day. Even though tremendous progress has been achieved since the beginning of the 1900s, especially in the Western World, a great inequality still persists around the world and it is projected to deepen as the world becomes more technologically advanced (Noah Harari 2018, p. 74-75). According to the United Nations, social justice is defined “as the fair and compassionate distribution of the fruits of economic growth” (UN 2006: p.7). The given definition implies that social justice revolves around the fair and just distribution of wealth, which consequently reaches aspects such as employment, health, education and personal security, since social justice is based on cause-and-effect relations and does not impact only once aspect in a bigger picture (Noah Harari 2018: p. 224). In the book, *Social Justice in the Global Age* (2009: p. 3), the definition of the term social justice refers to “the relative distribution of rights, opportunities and resources within a given society, and whether it deserves to be regarded as fair

and just.” (Cramme and Patrick). “After decades of exclusion from meaningful social and political discourse, themes of social justice are making a serious comeback” (Jost 2012: p. 162). As it was mentioned previously, the reality in relation to social justice has changed profoundly but not entirely for everyone. According to the report from the World Bank Group (2014), “...by 2010, global extreme poverty had declined to 17.7 percent, leaving still more than 1.2 billion people confined to live on less than \$1.25 a day.” This is where the division between the developed and developing countries takes over. One might distinguish between two major types of social justice: the one which predominantly exists in the developing countries (e.g., ensuring that people have access to clean water in water scarce areas) and the second type that has emerged in a more advanced world (e.g., equal pay between men and women). Although it is crucial to note that the two forms exist in both the developed and developing countries, the difference lies in prioritizing various social and economic issues within a particular country. Nancy Fraser unfolded those two realities in the following way:

“In today’s world, claims for social justice seem increasingly to divide into two types. First, and most familiar, are redistributive claims, which seek a more just distribution of resources and goods. [...] Today, however, one increasingly encounters a second type of social-justice claim in the “politics of recognition”. Here the goal, in its most plausible form, is a difference-friendly world, where assimilation to majority or dominant cultural norms no longer the price of equal respect. [...]” (Fraser 2004: p. 227)

To put it simply, the focus is steadily shifting from the traditional understanding of social justice related solely to resources distribution (e.g. solving extreme poverty), to social and political aspects (e.g. LGBT rights). However, it is pivotal to expand social justice in relation to issues that are more complex when it comes to social justice. Some of these issues have been around for a considerable amount of time while others are still gaining more recognition:

1. Social Inequality - “Social inequality usually implies the lack of equality of outcome but may alternatively be conceptualized in terms of the lack of equality of access to opportunity” (W. Caves 2005: p. 418). The two major “components” of social inequality are one’s “starting point” or condition and the access to opportunities based on this condition. A person born in North Korea has a completely different starting point than a person born in the U.S. Somebody who was born into a wealthy family lives a completely different life than somebody who barely makes ends meet, working several jobs while both live in the same country. (Miller 2015) Those two examples might seem too radical,

nevertheless they illustrate the point on condition and how one does not have control over where and to which family they were born. This where access to opportunity comes into play and one good example would be Affirmative Action (U.S.). Affirmative Action “depicts a set of laws, policies, guidelines, and government-mandated and government-sanctioned administrative practices, including those of private institutions, intended to end and correct the effects of a specific form of discrimination.” (Feinberg 2005). Affirmative Action has its flaws, it is not a perfect program, nevertheless it gives a sense of what the government can do in order to step in and “correct” social inequalities: “In order to achieve greater efficiency and equity, one may follow a policy which has the effect of stressing skill and effort in the payment of wages, leaving the precept of need to be handled in some other fashion, perhaps by welfare transfers.” (Revised Edition: Rawls 1999: p. 32)

2. Economic Justice - The issue of economic inequality might seem obvious, since social justice is strongly linked to income and wealth distribution. However, it is a paramount issue given the fact that the gap in the distribution of income and wealth deepens rapidly (Krugman 2002). Economic inequality can have a variety of negative impacts on society: Income inequalities have been associated with worse health. (Pickett and Wilkinson 2015). In addition, it hinders social mobility, or, in other words, if somebody is poor, they might never be able to break the circle of poverty. Furthermore, economic inequality exacerbates social exclusion and marginalization: “social exclusion can be thought of as a possible consequence of long-term unemployment, especially in countries that provide weak welfare safety nets, where disconnection and poverty can lead to disempowerment” (Furlong 2012: p. 31).
3. Climate Justice - Ecological and environmental changes have a tremendous impact on socially vulnerable groups. “Social vulnerability and equity in the context of climate change are important because some populations may have less capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related hazards and effects. Such populations may be disproportionately affected by climate change.” (Lynn, MacKendrick and M. Donoghue 2011: p. 1). The Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative (2009) defines climate justice as “the fair treatment of all people and freedom from discrimination with

the creation of policies and projects that address climate change and the systems that create climate change and perpetuate discrimination”.

In relation to politics, Simon Caney (2011: p. 3) argued that when it comes to social justice, society sees the government as the main source and distributor of justice. “There are many citizens and political philosophers arguing about what principles of justice should apply among fellow citizens. The debates frequently focus on what distributive principle is appropriate (distribution according to need, or desert, or equality, or as the market distributes) but the scope of justice is often taken as obvious.” In *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls identified and defined the two primary principles of social justice which apply to the basic structure of society:

“First: Principle: Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.

Second Principle: Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both:
(a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle,
and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.”

(Revised Edition: Rawls 1999: p. 266)

John Rawls claimed that these principles “provide a way of assigning rights and duties in the basic institutions of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation” (p. 4). As opposed to Rawls’s principles of social justice, Cramme and Diamond (2009: p. 8) suggest that “as a concept, social justice cannot be defined as a set of principles that apply in all situations and contexts”. David Miller argued that “when people stand in a certain relationship to one another, they become subject to principles of justice whose scope is limited to those within the relationship” (2017). In other words, social justice highly depends on scope and content. It is tricky to measure the right “amount” of social justice and by all means an incredibly arduous task to achieve in the first place, merely because perfection does not exist and it does not exist in society as well, yet it does not mean that thriving for a better world should not be pursued. It may not be ideal and completely equal and fair for everyone, but it is possible to aspire for a world where people live in dignity.

2.3. The Political Positions of the Democratic and Republican Parties

The Democratic and Republican Parties are the two major contemporary political parties in the United States. The Democratic Party is predominantly based on American liberalism while the Republican Party is centered on conservatism. The two terms, American liberalism and conservatism might seem the complete opposite of each other, however “ideologically, all US parties are liberal and always have been. Essentially, they espouse classical liberalism, that is a form of democratized Whig constitutionalism plus the free market. The point of difference comes with the influence of social liberalism” (Adams 2001: p. 32). Historically, the Democratic party leaned towards “a generous welfare and a greater measure of social and economic equality” (E. Sullivan 2009: p. 291) and that practice persists today, through the support of agendas such as “affordable and high-quality health care”, which implies universal health care as well as advocating for economic equality and raising the minimum wage. When it comes to the Republican Party, limiting the power of the government is a key to understanding the party’s belief system. In other words, focusing on free markets (Capitalism) and strongly denouncing communism and practices which resemble it (E. Gottfried 2007: p. 9). In addition, promoting American traditions as well as Christian and family values, which implies opposing same-sex marriage (Stanford 2013: p. 101) and abortion (among other things).

“Liberals favor government economic intervention to encourage equality and labor interests; policies that advantage ethnic, religious, sexual, and racial minorities and disadvantaged groups; women’s rights; a multilateral and often less militaristic foreign policy; and a collection of many other positions. Conservatives favor free markets, business interests, a color-blind approach to race and ethnic issues, traditional religious and sexual norms, a foreign policy informed by American exceptionalism, and a number of other positions.” (Noel 2016)

It is clear that the Democratic and Republican parties are different from one another when it comes to the general belief system, agendas, policies and the ways in which these are being communicated to the public, nevertheless it is crucial to look deeper into the actual differences, especially when it comes to their stand on economic and social issues since those are deeply connected and highly important due to their immediate impact on the day-to-day life of ordinary citizens. As it has been already stated, the Democratic Party is largely pro socio-economic equality and promoting programs that promote this goal, which includes the following aspects:

- Progressive tax system, which taxes the richer population of the nation while protecting those with low to middle income. A recent example of that would be Joe Biden's tax plan "that would raise taxes on individuals with income above \$400,000 [...]" (Watson, Li. LaJoice 2020: p. 1), a move which pledges to protect and strengthen the middle class; however, this plan has the potential to "leaving in place the fundamental inequity of the system" (Waldman 2020). In addition to a progressive tax system, the Democratic Party favors raising the minimum wage and advocating for a fair wage. According to a survey from 2014 by Pew Research Center, 90% of Democrats versus 53% of Republicans were in favor of increasing the minimum wage from 7.25\$ to 10.10\$ an hour, which demonstrates, once again, the Democratic Party's strong stand on increasing minimum wage. The same survey showed that 67% of Democrats versus 27% of Republicans agree that "the government should do a lot to reduce poverty", which highlights the Democratic Party's position on government's responsibility to help individuals who are in need. These findings reinforce the Democrats' firm view of governmental responsibility to help those who are vulnerable and face hardships both financial and social, as it is an established fact that poverty does not involve only economic consequences, it engulfs a wide variety of adversities.

- As it was previously mentioned, Democrats strongly endorse public spending on health care and it is a common belief that in order to ensure liberty, it is necessary to secure access to health care that will be available for all (E.Sullivan 2009: p. 291), in other words, "affordable and quality health care", which implies moving towards a universal healthcare system. During the Presidency of Barack Obama, the president signed into law the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare, which was seen as a steppingstone for universal healthcare. According to The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report published in 2016, "This report estimates that 20.0 million uninsured adults have gained health insurance coverage because of the Affordable Care Act as of early 2016."

- When it comes to education, the Democratic Party is in favor of strengthening public schools as well as raising the quality of education and doing so largely through additional governmental funding. An example of that can be seen in the 2016 election, the Democratic Presidential candidate, Hilary Clinton stated in the America policy proposal on K-12

education that she “believes that every child, no matter his or her background, should be guaranteed a high-quality education.”

- The Democratic Party holds a strong position on environmental issues, specifically on climate change. In the Democratic Platform for America from 2004, the Party pledged to “make our air cleaner and our water purer. [...] We will work with our allies to achieve these goals and to protect the global environment, for this generation and future generations. We reject the false choice between a healthy economy and a healthy environment. We know instead that farming, fishing, tourism, and other industries require a healthy environment. [...] We know a cleaner environment means a stronger economy.” (p. 33). In the 2020 Presidential Election, “Democrats released their strongest climate platform in history” (Waldman 2020), but despite that “The Democrats’ 2020 platform doesn’t include a goal of eliminating fossil fuel subsidies, even though the 2016 version did.” (Ibid. Waldman).
- “The Democratic Party has become increasingly associated with a liberal philosophy that incorporates support for activist government, civil rights for women and minorities, and a preference for diplomatic over military solutions to international disputes” (M. Stonecash 2010: p. 131). The Democratic Party believes in equal opportunity for all Americans and social equality: “Democrats will always fight to end discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.” (Democratic Party Platform). In addition, “We are committed to protecting voting rights, freedom of religion, women’s right to make their own health care decisions, and equal federal rights for LGBT couples. We must also strive for criminal justice reform, as well as common sense approaches to reduce and prevent gun violence.” (Democratic Party Platform).

When it comes to the Republican Party, the main focus lies in promoting the Capitalism, reserving American values and traditions, emphasizing personal freedom and limiting the power of government:

- Republicans tend to favor “flat tax” system, which means that the tax rate should not be adjusted to income and that further implies that the wealthier population should not burden a greater tax rate. In addition, for several decades, especially during Ronald Reagan’s

presidency, the Republican Party has been associated with the encouragement of tax cuts as a way to stimulate economic growth. A good example to illustrate that can be seen in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which was signed into law by President Donald Trump in 2017. According to the Tax Policy Center, “the bill would reduce taxes on average for all income groups in both 2018 and 2025.” The pursuit of tax cuts raises various questions regarding the degree of fairness when discussing these initiatives. According to a study from 2019 by Pew Research Center, 64% of Republicans versus 32% of Democrats say that “the present federal tax system is very/moderately fair”. Furthermore, most members of the Republican Party do not support the increase minimum wages (Campbell 2019) and often employ the argument that people have to be the ones who set these wages or going further, and stating that these policies resemble a socialist state, as it was suggested by the Republican Representative Virginia Foxx, during the House vote on a bill to raise minimum wage, “In socialist regimes, all decision are made by a small group of people at a central government. That is not the American way.” (Stolberg and Smialek 2019)

- The Republican Party strongly believes that governmental power should be limited, “less government intervention in the economy, a smaller bureaucracy and fewer regulations.” (Karaagac 2000: p. 113) That in turn, suppose to encourage personal freedom and puts emphasize on individual rights and liberties. This political position, leads to opposing universal healthcare coverage, can be especially evident in the pursuit of repealing and replacing Obamacare. According to the Republican Party’s platform, Obamacare “was the high-water mark of an outdated liberalism, the latest attempt to impose upon Americans a euro-style bureaucracy to manage all aspects of their lives.” (2012). Moreover, the Republican Party states that universal health coverage provided by the government leads to inefficiencies and private companies can provide patients with a higher-quality healthcare and more options from individuals to choose from, which consequently will reduce the cost of health services. (Republican Party’s platform). In addition to limited governmental intervention in issues related to healthcare, the Republican Party supports school choice and insists that public schools receiving federal funding should be subjected to a greater accountability.

- When it comes to social issues, the Republican Party encourages conservatism and strives to adhere to traditional American values. When looking at issues related to the LGBT community, the Republican Party largely opposes to same-sex marriage, one example can be seen during Donald Trump’s presidency when “The Trump administration opposed interpreting the Civil Rights Act to encompass LGBTQ workers.” (Phillips 2020). However, it is important to mention the groups and organizations such as the Log Cabin Republican, Young Conservatives for the Freedom of Marry, and College Republicans that work within the Republican Party to advocate equal rights for LGBT Americans. In addition, when it comes to women’s rights, the Republican Party has a divided view on the topic of abortion, according to a survey done in 2020 by the Pew Research Center, “roughly one-third of Americans who identify as Republican or as Republican-leaning independents do not agree with their party on abortion (35%), including 12% who say they agree with the Democratic Party on abortion and 23% who say they do not agree with either party.”
- When it comes to environmental issues, until the 1980s, the Republican Party supported environmental protection. “The situation began to change in the early 1980s, as the Regan administration labeled environmental regulation a burden on the economy and tried to weaken them and reduce their enforcement.” (Dunlap and McCright 2008: p. 26). During the 2008 presidential election, John McCain demonstrated a strong stand on climate change, “The administration of the first President George Bush successfully deployed the first national cap-and-trade system in 1990 to lower emissions of the pollutants that cause acid rain. Mr. McCain pushed a cap-and-trade proposal to fight climate change.” (Davenport and Lipton 2017). These trends did not last long in the Republican Party. In a survey by non-profit Center for American Progress, published in 2014 on Scientist American, “58 percent of Republicans in the U.S. Congress still “refuse to accept climate change.” Meanwhile, still others acknowledge the existence of global warming but cling to the scientifically debunked notion that the cause is natural forces, not greenhouse gas pollution by humans.” Under the Trump administration the situation got increasingly worse with the announcement that the U.S. intended to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, coupled the narrative that climate change is essentially a hoax. (Davenport and Lipton 2017).

According to Alan I. Abramowitz, “The Democratic and Republican Parties today, although they remain broad-based coalitions, have much clearer ideological identities than in the past” (2010: p. 158), and that is especially evident in the 2020 presidential election, with the effects of the global pandemic and a looming financial crisis, the two candidates - Donald J. Trump and Joseph Biden demonstrated their positions on dealing with the growing issues in the country; one candidate focused predominantly on the economy and urged time and again to open businesses despite a surging pandemic and a constant rise in case numbers (Kiran Stacey 2020) while the latter candidate emphasized that public safety should be a priority and has to be fought with science and medicine, as well as supporting the protesters of the Black Lives Matter movement (Fabiola Cineas 2020, Tyler Pager 2020). With a well differentiated ideology comes the question, who is on the receiving end? Who are the Democrats and Republicans voters? According to a survey from the 2020 presidential election conducted by the Pew Research Center, “Republicans hold wide advantages in party identification among several groups of voters, including white men without a college degree, people living in rural communities in the South and those who frequently attend religious services. Democrats hold formidable advantages among a contrasting set of voters, such as black women, residents of urban communities in the Northeast and people with no religious affiliation.” These findings further demonstrate how increasingly different these parties become. These differences demonstrate a situation of a deep political, cultural and social polarization that can be clearly observed during the 2020 presidential election. (David French 2020)

2.4. The Importance of Language in Politics

“Political language — and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists — is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.”

- *George Orwell*, Politics and the English Language

Communication is the currency of politics. Language stands at the heart of politics; this is the main tool that is used for persuasion, constructing political ideologies and conveying the desired message for the broader audience. James Farr depicted the relationship between language and politics as the following:

“Politics, as we know it, would not only be indescribable without language, it would be impossible. Emerging nations could not declare independence, leaders instruct partisans, citizens protest war, or courts sentence criminals. Neither could we criticize, plead, promise, argue, exhort, demand, negotiate, bargain, compromise, counsel, brief, debrief, advise nor consent. To imagine politics without these actions would be to imagine no recognizable politics at all.” (Farr 1989: p. 48).

As Gregory Shafer (2013) wrote in his article “we live in a world saturated with divisive political language – a world of metaphors and adjectives conjure up archetypal images of good and evil, of impending war and celestial conquest”. In other words, every politician is puts forward his or her own agenda, point of view or message through a uniquely constructed narrative. Politicians trade in discourse and argument, public statements and speeches, pamphlets and manifestos. The way they express themselves determines who they are and whether or not they will succeed in their profession (Neil Corlett 2013). Communication is the product of language. Chilton (1998, p. 688) argued that language is “the universal capacity of humans in all societies to communicate”, while “politics is the art of governance”. Successful politicians are the ones who have achieved success by using rhetoric skillfully and aiming at persuading their audience of the validity of their views (Katsara 2016: p. 4). Otherwise stated, the qualities that make a successful politician include the ability to lead others by articulating clear and inspiring vision of a better future (Joseph 2006: p.13). When talking about how language operates in relation to politics, one can draw a distinction between its influential and instrumental relationship with power. According to Gunta Rozina and Indra Karapetjana, influential power does not imply obligation. It seeks to influence in a passive manner (e.g., advertising), which means that there will be no circumstances if one does not respond to the influential power, while instrumental power is associated with authority (e.g., education), which implies that one carries the responsibility to act in accordance with the instrumental power, otherwise there is a possibility to face certain consequences. The relationship between language and those two types of power is explained in the following way:

“[...] they (politicians) seek to influence us to endorse their policies, or they call for the eventual voters’ political loyalty, thus imposing their influential power. They may wish to influence us to use our collective power to return them to governmental institutions, where they will use their executive power to direct or influence some important aspects of our lives. [...] Thus, it is axiomatic that language plays an essential part in politics because its main function in different political situations is to enable politicians to form structurally stable social relationships” (Rozina and Karapetjana 2009: p. 113-114).

One cannot separate language from politics; it is a living and breathing organism that holds the political puzzle together. Just like language, which constantly changes, adapts and evolves, politics

is never standing still and in order to be heard and understood as a politician, one must “speak” the same language as the target listeners. Ralph Emerson (Bosco and Myerson 2012: p. 253) stated that “we infer the spirit of the nation in great measure from the language, which is a sort of monument, to which each forcible individual in a course of many hundred years has contributed a stone.”

The theoretical background helps to unpack the two main parts of the research, social justice and the political positions of the Democratic and Republican Parties. The theoretical background assists in understanding the general stand of the Democratic and Republican Parties in relation to socio-economic issues. In the following section, the research attempts to answer the question whether or not the presidential candidates from the two major contemporary political parties in the U.S., view issues concerning social justice through their political party’s belief system.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1. Methodology

The research looked at the speeches of American presidential candidates from the Democratic and Republican parties during the election campaigns. The present research focused on the 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020 election campaigns. The speeches were selected in a timely manner – aiming to stick to a simultaneous delivery of the speeches between the Democratic presidential candidate and the Republican presidential candidate. 63 speeches were analyzed in total.

The themes and sub-themes in the research were constructed through reading and analyzing the data, as well as, using the theoretical background as guidance in generating relevant information, which corresponds to the topic and aim of the research.

Analyzing the speeches

The first phase consisted of reading the selected speeches from each presidential election term in attempt to get familiar with the information. The second phase, consisted of identifying relevant data in a form of meaning units, which correspond to the research question. As it was stated, this stage was based on the research question, as well as, on the theoretical background on the expressions of social justice. The third phase focused on generating potential themes through the

collection of the data from the speeches. In the fourth phase, the aim was to review and re-analyze the collected meaning units from the third phase in order to sort out and remove the parts which did not correspond to the research question. In the fifth phase, the process of naming and defining the main themes was taking place – understanding what these themes consist of and how they can further expand. The sixth phase defined the sub-themes in order to provide a more detailed analysis on the established themes.

The choice of the main themes and sub-themes was guided predominantly by the second principal of justice based on the work of John Rawls, *The Theory of Justice* (1971) as it is presented in the theoretical part.

Analyzing the segments

Large amount of data was analyzed in order to establish the theme and sub-themes. The latter stage included a smaller segment of data: the most relevant segments that were chosen for a further critical discourse analysis.

It is important to note that due to the large quantity of data, only the selected examples and segments appeared in the final results part. The rest of the data can be found in the annexes section.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis “specifically considers how language works within institutional and political discourses (e.g. in education, organizations, media, government), as well as specific discourses (around gender and class), in order to uncover overt or more often, covert inequalities in social relationships.” (Baxter 2010: p. 13). In other words, “Critical Discourse Analysis [...] is a special approach in discourse analysis which focuses on the discursive conditions, components and consequences of power abuse by dominant (elite) groups and institutions” (Van Dijk 1995: p. 24). According to Wodak (2004: pg. 185-186), Critical Discourse Analysis emerged in the early 1990s and was “characterized by the common interests in demystifying ideologies and power through the systematic investigation of semiotic data, be they written, spoken or visual.” Fairclough and Wodak portrayed Critical Discourse Analysis in the following way:

“Critical discourse analysis sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of ‘social practice’. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and

social structure(s), which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. [...]" (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: p. 258)

Critical Discourse Analysis focuses on language as it is used by real people with real intentions, emotions, and purposes. People are members of the society and their speech is a reflection of a set of experiential, relational, and expressive values (Fairclough, 1992: p. 110). That is, Critical Discourse Analysis looks at discourses between individuals versus institutions, society versus power. From its inception, Critical Discourse Analysis was a discipline designed to question the status quo, by detecting, analyzing, and also resisting and counteracting enactments of power abuse as transmitted in private and public discourses (Tenorio 2011: p. 187). Teun A. van Dijk (1993: p. 250) argued that the analysis of power and the different ways of its expression attracts great attention given that there is a connection between discourse and the production of power. Teun A. van Dijk put it the following way, "we may assume that directive speech acts such as commands or orders may be used to enact power, and hence also to exercise and to reproduce dominance." However, power does not manifest itself solely in one explicit way; "social inequality, at the societal level, is not simply or always reproduced by individual (speech) acts such as commands." (Ibid. van Dijk) To put it differently, not every form of command is negative, considering that it entirely depends on the situation and the participants; there are instances when giving commands is an appropriate practice and that can be seen in parent-child relationships. "Hence, special social conditions must be satisfied for such discourse properties to contribute to the reproduction of dominance." (Ibid. van Dijk)

Critical Discourse Analysis seeks to expose the manipulative nature of discursive practices, and improve communication and well-being by removing the barriers of assumed beliefs legitimized through discourse. (Ibid. Tenorio). As it was mentioned previously, commands do not necessarily equal power or dominance, in order for it to be so, certain conditions have to be established within certain contexts. For instance, when a president carries a speech and he or she puts an emphasis on securing the national borders while using a phrase such as "I will make sure that the wrongdoers will be punished and sent back to their countries", one can immediately sense the strong impact that this statement carries, since it points towards a specific problem that will be followed by strict measures. This is where the term *critical* in Critical Discourse Analysis becomes relevant. Critical linguistics seeks to study language in the light of social and historical context while taking into consideration the fact that any linguistic structure can carry ideological significance (Fowler 1991,

p. 67). Wodak and Meyer (2009: p. 7) argued that “critical theories, thus also Critical Discourse Analysis, want to produce and convey critical knowledge that enables human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection. Thus, they are aimed at producing “enlightenment and emancipation”. [...] to root out a particular kind of delusion.” Critical Discourse Analysis aims to find what is “underneath” the surface. Otherwise stated, it looks for the real meaning behind the given message; “what does the speaker actually mean?” but in this case, the speaker is a powerful figure and therefore, there is the urge and necessity to question and critically perceive the information. Teun A. van Dijk (1995: p. 22) stated that “powerful speakers may control at least some parts of the minds of recipients. Critical Discourse Analysis studies the ways in which such influence and control of the mind is socially or morally illegitimate.”

Theme 1: The Expressions of Social Justice in relation to Education

The theme of Education is highly linked to social justice, since it is a part of equal access to opportunity, which further encourages social or class mobility and personal growth. The analysis of the speeches revealed the sub-themes: governmental contribution to education; the quality of education; and the importance of education. The first sub-theme demonstrates the position of the Republican and Democratic Parties on the amount of governmental involvement in education, specifically financial investment into educational institutions and programs: How much does the government have to intervene in education? How does the government contribute to the education system? The second sub-theme is concerned with the quality of education: How the presidential candidates of the two political parties intend to improve and elevate the quality of the educational system in order for it to become more accessible for all students? What are their suggestions? Do they even consider it necessary to improve the quality of education? Who has access to high-quality education? The third sub-theme shows the overall attitude of the presidential candidates towards education: How important is education? What is the candidate’s personal view on education?

Sub-Theme 1.1: Governmental Contribution to Education (Table 1.1)

<p align="center">Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)</p>	<p align="center">Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)</p>	<p align="center">Sub - Theme</p>	<p align="center">Theme</p>
<p>(1) “[...] educating our children to prepare them for the new economic realities by giving parents choices about their children's education they do not have now.” (John McCain, 2008, speech 5)</p> <p>(2) “Second, we’ve got to give our fellow citizens the skills they need for the jobs of today, and we’ve got to give our kids the education they need for the careers of tomorrow. There are too many of our kids trapped in failing schools. As president, I’ll ensure that every child from every background receives a quality education. I’ll empower the parents of our low-income and special needs students to choose where their child goes to school.” (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 4)</p> <p>(3) “This proposal begins with a \$20 billion block grant from the federal government for states to pursue school choice programs. [...] If we do this, that would mean \$12,000 in school choice funds for every disadvantaged student in America. What a difference this is going to make. The money will follow the student to the public, private or religious school that is best for them and their family. In so many ways, you’re going to have choice.” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. Speech 5)</p>	<p>(1) “And maybe if he [John McCain] spent some time in the schools of South Carolina or St. Paul or where he spoke tonight in New Orleans, he’d understand that we can’t afford to leave the money behind for No Child Left Behind; that we owe it to our children to invest in early childhood education; to recruit an army of new teachers and give them better pay and more support; to finally decide that in this global economy, the chance to get a college education should not be a privilege for the wealthy few, but the birthright of every American. That’s the change we need in America. That’s why I’m running for President.” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</p> <p>(2) “My opponent thinks that it makes sense for us to gut our investment in education in order to give a tax break to the wealthy. I disagree. I think what the United States of America means is that no child should be deprived of a good education. It means that no family should have to set aside a college acceptance letter just because they don’t have the money. And no employer should have to look for workers with the right skills in China instead of the United States of America. I want us to focus on education. That’s what we’ve been doing. That’s what we’re going to keep on doing in a second term when I’m President of the</p>	<p align="center">Governmental Contribution to Education</p>	<p align="center">Education</p>

	<p><i>United States.” (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</i></p> <p><i>(3) “I know we can make our education system work for every one of our children, especially those who come with disadvantages. I know we can make college affordable and get student debt off the backs of young people.” (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 3)</i></p> <p><i>(4) “We’ll also invest in education beyond high school. We’ll make four years of public colleges and universities tuition-free for families making less than \$125,000 a year. And we’ll make community colleges free.” (Joseph Biden, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</i></p>		
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Under the sub-theme governmental contribution to education, the Republican Party’s presidential candidates predominantly focus on the variety of choices when it comes to education. Meaning, the parents should have the option to choose the schools in which their children will study. These examples reinforce the general stand of the Republican Party on the degree of governmental intervention with the public’s decisions: this intervention should be limited. In the context of social justice, the focus is centered on the individual. That they should have the freedom to choose for themselves. In the first example, the Presidential candidate, Mitt Romney chooses several times the pronouns “we” and “our”, in an attempt to create closeness with his audience and to show a sign of sympathy and willingness to help while inducing urgency through reiteration: “[...] we’ve got to give our fellow citizens the skills they need for the jobs of today, and we’ve got to give our kids the education they need for the careers of tomorrow. There are too many of our kids trapped in failing schools”. (Speech 5, Table 1.1) Moreover, Mitt Romney uses the phrases “I’ll ensure that every child from every background receives a quality education. “and “I’ll empower the parents of our low- income and special needs students [...]” (Speech 5, Table 1.1). These phrases highlight inclusivity and signal that everyone is being seen, even those who are often overlooked or left behind. In addition, in these phrases, the presidential candidate portrays himself as a strong figure that has the power to -empower others. In the next example, John McCain stresses the importance of options in relation

to having a good education: “[...] by giving parents choices about their children's education they do not have now.” (Speech 5, Table 1.1) It hints towards personal autonomy and freedom of choice. In the last example, Donald Trump uses the phrase, “every disadvantaged student in America.” (Speech 5, Table 1.1) Implying that “no one will be left behind” and giving priority to those who need support.

The Democratic Party’s presidential candidates provide a more elaborative look on education. In other words, the presidential candidates tend to go more into detail on what has to be done in order to ensure more equality and justice when it comes to issues concerning education. In the first example from the Democratic Party, the presidential candidate Barack Obama, emphasizes that the Republican Candidate, John McCain is oblivious to the poor situation of the education system across the U.S.: “*And maybe if he [John McCain] spent some time in the schools of South Carolina or St. Paul or where he spoke tonight in New Orleans, he'd understand that we can't afford to leave the money behind for No Child Left Behind; that we owe it to our children to invest in early childhood education; to recruit an army of new teachers and give them better pay and more support; to finally decide that in this global economy, the chance to get a college education should not be a privilege for the wealthy few, but the birthright of every American.*” (Speech 5, Table 1.1) In this example, Barack Obama negatively represents the rival candidate while listing the actions that the government should take in order to improve the current state of education, which ultimately resolves in positive self-representation. Moreover, in the given example the presidential candidate underlines that collage education should not be reserved only for those who have the means to afford it, but for “every American” (Speech 5, Table 1.1), emphasizing fairness and equality. In the next example, the same positive self-representation and negative other-representation can be observed “*My opponent thinks that it makes sense for us to gut our investment in education in order to give a tax break to the wealthy. I disagree.*” (Speech 4, Table 1.1). This segment clearly shows antithesis in which the Democratic presidential candidate attempts to convey the idea that the Republican candidate favors supporting the wealthy instead of focusing on investing in education. In the same phrase, Barack Obama uses reiteration to clarify and accentuate his stand on education: that it should be available and affordable for everyone. “*[...] I think what the United States of America means is that no child should be deprived of a good education. It means that no family should have to set aside a college acceptance letter just because they don't have the money. And no employer should have to look for workers with the right skills in China instead of the United States of America. [...]*” (Speech 4, Table 1.1). In

another segment, Barack Obama underscores the same idea of *education for every child*. The Democratic presidential candidate renders the value component – “*our moral obligation*” in making sure that everyone has access to a “*world class education*”. With this powerful statement, the presidential candidate attempts to draw the attention of the audience to the fact that being able to provide everyone with education is a step towards creating a fairer and more just society:

“And now is the time to finally meet our moral obligation to provide every child a world-class education, because it will take nothing less to compete in the global economy. I’ll recruit an army of new teachers, and pay them higher salaries and give them more support. But in exchange, I will ask for higher standards and more accountability.” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 7: Annexes)

Furthermore, Barack Obama gives the stage for teachers, whose work is often underappreciated. By mentioning them, he signals that they are a vital part of making successful changes in the education system. Those changes would be impossible without their work and input. The last two examples from the Democratic presidential candidates (3) and (4), are centered on the affordability of education and that the government has to be the one who makes education affordable. The presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton accentuates the idea that it is possible to give everyone a good education: “*I know we can make our education system work for every one of our children, especially those who come with disadvantages.*” (Speech 3, Table 1.1) while displaying sympathy - “*I know*” and closeness - “*our children*”. Joseph Biden strengthens this argument in the following presidential election while using the phrases “*we’ll make*” and “*we’ll invest*” (Speech 5, Table 1.1) repetitively to demonstrate clear goals.

Sub-Theme 1.2: The Quality of Education

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
<p><i>(1) “Number three is making sure that our workers have the skills they need for the jobs of today with the right kind of training programs. And we’ve got to fix our schools. Look, our kids can’t have a great future unless our schools are competitive. It’s time for us to put the kids — the kids and the parents and the teachers first and the</i></p>	<p><i>(1) “If we can’t give our kids a world-class education, then our economy is going to fall behind.” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</i></p> <p><i>(2) “And now you have a choice. We can gut education, or we can decide that in the United States of America, no child should have her dreams deferred because of a</i></p>	<p>The Quality of Education</p>	<p>Education</p>

<p><i>teachers union behind” (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 3)</i></p> <p><i>(2) “We will rescue kids from failing schools by helping their parents send them to a safe school of their choice.” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. Speech 4)</i></p>	<p><i>crowded classroom or a crumbling school.” (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 1)</i></p> <p><i>(3) “Let’s say yes to good education from preschool all the way through college and university. I want every kid to be able to attend this great university to do well. And for a lot of kids, they’re not prepared when they get to kindergarten and first grade. There’s an achievement gap already. There’s also a digital gap; we have five million homes, mostly poor homes, without access to the internet, so they’re behind. I want this to be a true meritocracy. I’m tired of inequality. I want people to feel like they can get ahead if they work for it.” (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 6)</i></p>		
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The sub-theme, quality of education, might seem ambiguous since it is closely related to the previous sub-theme, governmental contribution to education. Nevertheless, the present sub-theme attempts to deliver a more in depth picture of the presidential candidates’ attitudes towards the quality of the education system and how they intended to tackle existing issues. The Democratic Party’s presidential candidates, raise this theme more in comparison to the Republican Party. In the first segment (1) from the Democratic Party, Barack Obama emphasizes the connection between a high-quality education and a thriving economy. Barack Obama makes this connection purposefully, since it demonstrated the cause-and-effect relationship between these two key processes and that a high-quality education carries consequences for the society at large. In other words, Barack Obama wants to convey the message that in order for the U.S. to be successful and prosperous, there is a paramount need to provide a high-quality education for students. In the following example, Barack Obama uses the phrase “*And now you have a choice.*” (Speech 1, Table 1.2) which attempts to provoke the audience’s sense of responsibility and offers two options: one which is negative (associated with the rival candidate) or the positive one (associated with him). The options which Barack Obama puts forward indicate inclusivity, “*We can gut education, or we can decide that in the United States of America, no child should have her dreams deferred because of a crowded classroom or a crumbling school.*” (Speech 4) It suggested that the choice should be obvious

– one should support investing in education so every child can succeed, because that is the right and fair thing to do. In the last example from the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton raises the issue of inequality between richer and poorer children, referring to their educational achievements – “*There's an achievement gap already.*” (Speech 6, Table 1.2) and their access to technology – “*There's also a digital gap; we have five million homes, mostly poor homes, without access to the internet, so they're behind.*” (Speech 6, Table 1.2). Hillary Clinton specifies the number of homes that do not have access to the internet and by doing so, it becomes tangible for the audience and proves that it is a serious problem that must be addressed.

The Republican Party’s presidential candidates focus on increasing choice and competition as a solution for raising the quality of education in schools. Mitt Romney wants the listeners to understand that in order for children to have a better future, schools have to be more competitive and that the priority should be parents, children and teachers – as individuals – and not organizations: “*Look, our kids can't have a great future unless our schools are competitive. It's time for us to put the kids — the kids and the parents and the teachers first and the teachers union behind*” (Speech 3, Table 1.2). Donald Trump goes further and uses the phrase “*we will rescue kids from failing schools*” (Speech 4, Table 1.2), attempting to create an impression of a saviour for the listener.

Sub-Theme 1.3: The Importance of Education (Table 1.3)

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
(1) “ <i>I want to put every American child on the ladder of success: a great education, and a high-paying job.</i> ” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. Speech 6)	(1) “ <i>In the face of that young student who sleeps just three hours before working the night shift, I think about my mom, who raised my sister and me on her own while she worked and earned her degree; who once turned to food stamps but was still able to send us to the best schools in the country.</i> ” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 7) (2) “ <i>You can choose a future where more Americans have the chance to gain the skills they need to compete, no matter how old they are or how much money they have.</i> ”	The Importance of Education	Education

	<p><i>Education was the gateway to opportunity for me. It was the gateway for Michelle. It was -- It was the gateway for most of you. And now more than ever it is the gateway to a middle-class life.</i>” (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 1)</p> <p>(3) <i>“And I want you to remember this, because to me, this is absolutely the most-compelling argument why we should do this. Research tells us how much early learning in the first five years of life can impact lifelong success. In fact, 80 percent of the brain is developed by age three. One thing I’ve learned is that talent is universal — you can find it anywhere — but opportunity is not. Too many of our kids never have the chance to learn and thrive as they should and as we need them to.”</i> (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 1)</p>		
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In the last sub-theme, the importance of education, the Democratic Party’s presidential candidate, Barack Obama, shares his story to show that he understands the need for a good education and how important that is on a very personal level, *“I think about my mom, who raised my sister and me on her own while she worked and earned her degree; who once turned to food stamps but was still able to send us to the best schools in the country.”* (Speech 7, Table 1.3) This segment shows that Barack Obama’s mother pursued her degree despite having children and working - this is how important it was for her. Moreover, even though his mother had to turn to food stamps, she was fighting to send her children to the best schools in the U.S. In another example, Barack Obama clearly says that if it was not for education, neither him nor his wife would be able to achieve the things that they did, *“Education was the gateway to opportunity for me. It was the gateway for Michelle. It was -- It was the gateway for most of you. And now more than ever it is the gateway to a middle-class life.”* (Speech 1, Table 1.3) These examples aim to prove to the listener that education is essential, and that without it, one cannot unlock his or her full potential. It makes the case for supporting the idea of providing and ensuring that a high-quality education is available and accessible for everyone. Hillary Clinton argues that even research shows that education has a tremendous impact on one’s life, *“Research tells us how much early learning in the first five years of life can impact lifelong success.*

In fact, 80 percent of the brain is developed by age three.” (Speech 1, Table 1.3) She goes further and claims that while talent can be found virtually anywhere, opportunity to learn and develop is scarce and this is something that has to change and “we” have the power to make that change, “*One thing I’ve learned is that talent is universal — you can find it anywhere — but opportunity is not. Too many of our kids never have the chance to learn and thrive as they should and as we need them to.*” (Speech 1, Table 1.3)

Only one example was found from the Republican Party. Donald Trump (1) says that he wants “*every American child*” to succeed and that includes “*a great education*” (Speech 6, Table 1.3). The fact that Donald Trump emphasizes the word “*American*” can be seen as spatialization. He wants to create a sense of collectivism and demonstrate that he prioritizes the success of every American.

Theme 2: The Expressions of Social Justice in relation to Social Equality

The theme of social equality covers the issues concerning social groups that experience and continue to experience oppression and inequality. The following theme presents the main difficulties which were addressed by the presidential candidates and helps to draw a more elaborated picture of the most paramount matters according to the provided speeches. The analysis of the speeches uncovered the following three sub-themes: ethnic and religious groups; gender equality and women's empowerment; and sexual minorities. This theme seeks to understand the general attitudes from the Republican and Democratic parties towards minorities or groups that are dealing with social injustices and how are they being represented and addressed by the presidential candidates during their election campaigns. The first sub-theme focused on how the presidential candidates from the two political parties address issues related to ethnic and religious groups and whether or not they raise these issues in the first place. The second sub-theme looked at the issue of gender inequality and whether or not the presidential candidates from the Democratic and Republican Parties discuss them and how they present these issues in their speeches. The last sub-theme is concerned with whether or not the presidential candidates touch upon issues related to sexual minorities. Do they discuss issues related to LGBT community? How these issues are being presented? What are the presidential candidates’ stands on these issues?

Sub-Theme 2.1: Ethnic and Religious Groups (Table 2.1)

<p align="center">Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)</p>	<p align="center">Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)</p>	<p align="center">Sub - Theme</p>	<p align="center">Theme</p>
<p>(1) <i>“America today is a world away from the cruel and frightful bigotry of that time. There is no better evidence of this than the election of an African-American to the presidency of the United States.” (John McCain, 2008, speech 8)</i></p> <p>(2) <i>“No one is exempt from the pain of this economy, of course, but the Hispanic community has been particularly hard-hit. While national unemployment is at 8.1 percent, Hispanic unemployment, as you know, is over 10 percent. Over 2 million more Hispanics are living in poverty today than the day President Obama took office. In 2008 candidate Obama promised us a world of limitless hope. What we got instead is a world where hope has painful limits, limits that make it harder to start a business, to grow a business or to find a job.” (Employment) * (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 4)</i></p> <p>(3) <i>“To those African-Americans suffering in our country I say: What do you have to lose? Vote For Donald Trump. I will fix it. I am also going to fight to help millions of Latinos trapped in poverty, and to help their children grow up in safety and peace.” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. speech 6)</i></p> <p>(4) <i>“We believe in equal opportunity, equal justice, and equal treatment for citizens of every race, background, religion, and creed. Every child, of every color—born and unborn—is made in the holy image of God.”</i></p>	<p>(1) <i>“Despite what the good Senator from Arizona said tonight, I have seen people of differing views and opinions find common cause many times during my two decades in public life, and I have brought many together myself. I’ve walked arm-in-arm with community leaders on the South Side of Chicago and watched tensions fade as black, white, and Latino fought together for good jobs and good schools.” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</i></p> <p>(2) <i>“And that starts with listening, listening to each other, trying as best we can to walk in each other’s shoes. So let’s put ourselves in the shoes of young black and Latino men and women who face the effects of systemic racism and are made to feel like their lives are disposable!” (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</i></p> <p>(3) <i>“Fulfilling this basic obligation to all Americans [to breathe clean air and drink clean water] — especially Black, Brown, and Native American communities, who too often don’t have clean air and clean water — is not going to be easy.” (Joseph Biden, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</i></p>	<p align="center">Ethnic and Religious Groups</p>	<p align="center">Social Equality</p>

(Donald J. Trump, 2020 Presidential Elections. speech 3)			
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*Applies to other relevant sub-themes.

Under the first sub-theme, ethnic and religious group, the Republican Party’s presidential candidates predominantly point out the hardships and inequalities faced by the African-American and Hispanic and Latino communities in the U.S. The first example from John McCain hints towards a distressing past, referring to slavery and in the given example the Republican presidential candidates attempts to demonstrate that the fact the U.S. is now going to have its first African-American president, symbolizes the beginning of a new and better era for the African-American community in this country, “*There is no better evidence of this than the election of an African-American to the presidency of the United States.*” (Speech 8, Table 2.1). However, the first part of the segment, “*America today is a world away from the cruel and frightful bigotry of that time*”. (Speech 8, Table 2.1) might seem problematic since it has the potential to be misinterpreted as though the hardships and oppressions that are faced by the African-American community are a matter of the past. In the next segment, Mitt Romney addresses the issues faced by the Hispanic community in relation to unemployment. In this example, the Republican presidential candidate attempts to prove that during the Barack Obama’s presidency, the situation of the Hispanic community got much worse than it was before Barack Obama took office, “*Over 2 million more Hispanics are living in poverty today than the day President Obama took office.*” (Speech 4, Table 2.1) Mitt Romney uses the negative other-representation and positive self-representation method to convince the listener that to vote for Barack Obama for the second time would be a mistake. He specifically targets the Hispanic voter with his message. He goes further and alludes that during the 2008 presidential election, Barack Obama made grand promises, but instead, he failed to deliver them, “*In 2008 candidate Obama promised us a world of limitless hope. What we got instead is a world where hope has painful limits, limits that make it harder to start a business, to grow a business or to find a job.*” (Speech 4, Table 2.1). Mitt Romney applies the contrasting and exaggerating adjectives “*limitless hope*” and “*painful limits*” to further emphasize the disparity between what Barack Obama said and what he actually did. In the next example from the Republican Party, Donald Trump makes a direct appeal to the African-American community, “*What do you have to lose? Vote for Donald Trump*” (Speech 6, Table 2.1) In other words, Donald Trump poses a question which suggests that the Democratic Party did not help this community, therefore they should reconsider voting for a

Democratic presidential candidate, and instead vote for him since they have nothing to lose and he might be the solution to their problems, *“I will fix it”*. On the same note, Donald Trump addresses the Hispanic voters and by doing so he attempts to convey the message that his focus does not only lie in the African-American community, *“I am also going to fight to help millions of Latinos trapped in poverty, and to help their children grow up in safety and peace.”* (Speech 6, Table 2.1) He uses the phrase, *“I am going to fight”*, to portray himself as a warrior; implying that he will do whatever it takes to help this community. In another segment from the same speech, Donald Trump applies the negative other-representation and positive self-representation method to show that the Democratic candidate is not capable of helping neither the Hispanic community nor the African-American community, and what is more is that Hillary Clinton only made matters worse, *“At home, Hillary Clinton failed Latinos and African-Americans, producing only more poverty in the inner cities.”* (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. Speech 6: Annexes). During the next presidential campaign, Donald Trump employs several times the adjective *“equal”* to underscore for the listeners the idea that he believes that everyone is equal and deserve to be treated that way, *“We believe in equal opportunity, equal justice, and equal treatment for citizens of every race, background, religion, and creed.”* (Speech 3, Table 2.1).

In the first example from the Democratic Party, Barack Obama says that despite differences and disagreements, it is possible to find common ground in a form of a collective purpose, *“I’ve walked arm-in-arm with community leaders on the South Side of Chicago and watched tensions fade as black, white, and Latino fought together for good jobs and good schools.”* (Speech 5, Table 2.1) He uses the metaphors *“I’ve walked arm-in-arm”*, *“watched tensions fade”* and *“fought together”* to create a feeling of a first-hand experience and to convince the listener that “when we are united everything is possible”. In the following example, Hillary Clinton urges the listener to understand the issues and hardships that the African-American and Hispanic communities have to deal with and how profound and paramount these issues are, *“So let’s put ourselves in the shoes of young black and Latino men and women who face the effects of systemic racism and are made to feel like their lives are disposable!”* (Speech 5, Table 2.1) She employs the metaphor, *“let’s put ourselves in the shoes of [...]”* to make the listeners stop for a moment and think how they would feel in a similar situation that these communities experience on a daily basis, and consequently to prove that these issues should not be ignored. In another example from Hillary Clinton, the Democratic presidential candidate calls Donald Trump out on his narrative towards immigrants, *“And by the way, Mr. Trump – every time you*

insult American Muslims or Mexican immigrants, remember that plenty of Muslims and immigrants serve and fight in our armed forces.” (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 4: Annexes) Hillary Clinton points towards Donald Trump’s perplexing stand on immigration and attempts to prove to the listeners that this is a far more complex and sensitive issue than the Republican candidate wants to portray. Meaning, she contends that generalizations are dangerous and misleading. She mentions the U.S. armed forces on purpose to posit that the people who the Republican presidential candidate condemns, are the ones who protect the American people, including himself. In the last example from the Democratic Party, Joseph Biden points towards the issue of clean air and water. He argues that while every American must have access to these resources, this is a particularly pressing issue for the ethnic minorities, *“Especially Black, Brown, and Native American communities, who too often don't have clean air and clean water”* (Speech 4, Table 2.1)

Sub-Theme 2.2: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (Table 2.2)

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
	<p>(1) <i>“Year after year, he [Joe Biden] has been at the forefront of the fight for [...] equal pay for women [...]”</i>(Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 6)</p> <p>(2) <i>“Let me tell you something, Virginia: I don't think your boss should control the care you get. I don't think insurance companies should control the care you get. I definitely don't think politicians on Capitol Hill should control the care you get. We've seen some of their attitudes. We've read about those. I think there's one person who gets to make decisions about your health care: That's you.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</p> <p>(3) <i>“I am for a woman's right—a woman's right to make her own health decisions, and</i></p>	<p>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</p>	<p>Social Equality</p>

	<p><i>I am against defunding Planned Parenthood.” (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 2)</i></p> <p><i>(4) “And the professional caregivers out there — home health workers, child care workers, who are more often women, women of color, and immigrants — are too often underpaid, unseen, and undervalued. That’s why my Build Back better plan will elevate the compensation, benefits, and dignity of caregiving workers and early childhood educators.” (Joseph Biden, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</i></p>		
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The second sub-theme revealed that the Republican Party’s presidential candidates did provide any insights on issues related to gender inequalities and how these issues should be addressed.

Contrary to the Republican Party, the Democratic presidential candidates raise these issues and discuss them. In the first example, when Barack Obama announces Joseph Biden as his running mate, he notes that Joseph Biden was fighting for “*equal pay for women*” (Speech 6, Table 2.2). The fact that Barack Obama mentioned the fight for equal pay as one of the reasons why Joseph Biden would be the right candidate for vice-president, demonstrates to the listener that he believes in equal pay himself and that this issue is important to him. In the following example, Barack Obama makes a clear case for women having full power and control over their health care decisions and choices, “*I don’t think your boss should control the care you get. I don’t think insurance companies should control the care you get. I definitely don’t think politicians on Capitol Hill should control the care you get.*” (Speech 5, Table 2.2) He reiterates the phrase “*I don’t think*” to show his firm stand on this issue and that way, he clearly showcases his strong disagreement with Mitt Romney’s conservative narrative, “*My opponent has called himself “severely conservative,” but let me tell you something, there’s nothing conservative [...] about a government that prevents a woman from making her own health care decisions. Governor Romney talks about freedom, but freedom is the ability to determine the care you need, when you need it.*” (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 5: Annexes) Barack Obama uses Mitt Romney’s statement – “*severely conservative*” – against him to contend that freedom is about one’s ability to make one’s own decisions in regards to health and not being deprived of that by the government. On the same note, Hillary Clinton explicitly says that she is for women’s rights

to make their own healthcare decisions and that she opposes the initiative to block patients who use public health care programs from accessing preventive care at Planned Parenthood, *“I am against defunding Planned Parenthood”* (Speech 2, Table 2.2). In the next segment from Joseph Biden, the Democratic presidential candidate touches upon the situation of professional caregivers and he especially draws attention to the women working in this field, *“who are more often women, women of color, and immigrants — are too often underpaid, unseen, and undervalued.”* (Speech 5, Table 2.2). He uses adjectives from a similar semantic field to showcase his understanding and sympathy, and signal to the listener that he is well aware of the issue. Additionally, he offers a compound solution to the discussed problem. The offered solution does not only include a monetary compensation; it shows gratitude for the work that they are doing, *“That’s why my Build Back better plan will elevate the compensation, benefits, and dignity of caregiving workers and early childhood educators.”* (Speech 5, Table 2.2).

Sub-Theme 2.3: Sexual Minorities (Table 2.3)

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
<p>(1) <i>“Only weeks ago, in Orlando, Florida, 49 wonderful Americans were savagely murdered by an Islamic terrorist. This time, the terrorist targeted LGBTQ community – no good and we’re going to stop it. As your President, I will do everything in my power to protect our LGBTQ citizens from the violence and oppression of a hateful foreign ideology – believe me.”</i> (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. Speech 4)</p>	<p>(1) <i>“We’re divided into Red States and Blue States, and told to always point the finger at somebody else - the other party, or gay people, or immigrants.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 2)</p> <p>(2) <i>“We repealed “don’t ask, don’t tell” so no outstanding soldier is ever kicked out of the military because of who they love.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 6)</p> <p>(3) <i>“I am for marriage equality and against discrimination against the LGBTQ community.”</i> (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 2)</p>	<p>Sexual Minorities</p>	<p>Social Equality</p>

In the last sub-theme, one example was found from the Republican Party. Donald Trump (1) chooses the phrase *“Islamic terrorist”* to strengthen his campaign message that immigrants are a threat to the U.S. and to communicate to his audience that he does not deviate from his firm stand

on immigrants. He uses the phrase “*as your president*” to portray himself as a savior that is going to solve the problem and in this case, he pledges that he will do whatever he can to protect the LGBT community, “*As your President, I will do everything in my power to protect our LGBTQ citizens from the violence and oppression of a hateful foreign ideology – believe me.*” (Speech 4, Table 2.3). In addition, he employs the phrase “hateful foreign ideology”, a narrative of “us” versus “them” which aims to divide and further convince the listener that “they” are a threat and somebody – Donald Trump – has to protect the nation.

More examples were provided from the Democratic Party on the topic of sexual minorities. In the first example, Barack Obama discusses the fact that people grew cynical because they feel as though politics turned into a business instead of focusing on working on behalf of the American people. He mentions that the government is only looking for whom to blame for its own mistakes and failures, “*and told to always point the finger at somebody else - the other party, or gay people, or immigrants.*” (Speech 6, Table 2.3) implying that the current government does not take responsibility for its actions, and that those groups of people are not the ones to blame for its inability to function as it should. In the following segment, Barack Obama states that his administration repealed the policy “don’t ask, don’t tell”, which allows LGBT folks to serve openly in the army (without hiding their sexual orientation), fulfilling the promise that he made during the 2008 presidential campaign. The Democratic presidential candidate uses a powerful phrase, “[...] *so no outstanding soldier is ever kicked out of the military because of who they love.*” (Speech 6, Table 2.3) to make a point that no one should be deprived of their wish to serve in the army, just because of something as simple and natural as love. A message that is easy to sympathize with. In the last example from the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton does not leave any room for doubt when it comes to her opinion on same-sex marriage and discrimination against the LGTB community, “*I am for marriage equality and against discrimination against the LGBT community.*” suggesting that just like the fact that straight couples can get married, same-sex couple must have that right as well. In an addition example, Hilary Clinton addresses the issue of inequality and discrimination towards the LGBT community, offering a clear vision of the goals she wants to achieve:

“There is still no federal law that stops an employer from refusing to hire someone just because he or she is LGBT, or a landlord from refusing to rent an apartment to a transgender tenant, and of course there are still states where you could get married on Saturday, post your Facebook photos on Sunday, and get fired

on Monday just because of who you are and who you love. So here's what I'll do as president. We will call on the Congress to pass the Equality Act. And we will then be able to protect LGBT Americans from discrimination in all aspects of our lives. We'll work together to achieve the AIDS-free generation that is within our reach. And we will take on homelessness, bullying, and violence, particularly youth homelessness, which disproportionately hurts LGBT kids. And we are going to end the harmful practice of so-called conversion therapy. LGBT kids don't need to be cured of anything. They just need to be accepted and embraced and respected." (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 7: Annexes)

In the given segment, Hillary Clinton uses the pronoun “we” to convince the listener that all of the listed goals are achievable if they are pursued in a joint effort. At the beginning of the segment, she mentions that existing discriminations and difficulties that the LGBT community has to deal with on a daily basis, and by that she attempts to show the absurdity of the whole situation: “you can get married to the person that you love and within a day you will lose your job, because there is no law to protect you”. She goes further and debunks the outdated misconceptions that loving someone from the same sex is “a problem that has a cure”, “*LGBT kids don't need to be cured of anything*”, she states that instead of trying to change someone, “we should accept people the way that they are and embrace them”. This powerful segment demonstrated the speaker’s humanity, sympathy, understanding and openness and embracement of change.

Theme 3: The Expressions of Social Justice in relation to Economic Distribution

The theme of economic distribution constitutes of various topics and issues, which aims to uncover the stand of the Democratic and Republican Parties on inequalities between the rich and the poor populations in the U.S. In addition, it seeks to understand how these inequalities are being tackled and how they are presented by the presidential candidates. The analysis of the speeches leads to the following sub-themes: employment; poverty reduction and governmental support; income and taxation. The first-sub theme looks at the current job market especially from the perspective of those who are unemployed and those facing difficulties related to their work place. The sub-theme attempts to understand how the government helps or intends to help those who are in need? How these issues are being presented to the audience? The second sub-theme is centered on poverty and issues concerning low to middle class folks. The sub-theme aims to uncover presidential candidates stand on poverty, how they plan on helping economically disadvantages groups and whether or not they offer applicable solutions. The last sub-theme focuses on issues related to

income and taxation inequalities that low to middle class population deals with. These matters include topics related to wages, bridging the gap between the wealthy and the poor, the everyday struggles of those who do not have financial resources. This sub-theme seeks to understand how the presidential candidates portray these issues? How do they address them? And how do they plan to solve them?

Sub-Theme 3.1: Employment (Table 3.1)

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
<p>(1) <i>“to open new markets to American goods and services, create more and better jobs for the American worker and overhaul unemployment insurance and our redundant and outmoded programs for assisting workers who have lost a job that's not coming back to find a job that won't go away. [...]”</i> (John McCain, 2008, speech 1)</p> <p>(2) <i>“It doesn't feel like forward to 23 million Americans struggling to get a good job. It doesn't feel like forward to the millions of people who don't have as good a job as they had a few years ago. It doesn't feel like forward; it feels like backward. We're going to take back the White House and get this country on the right track, for the American people.”</i> (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 7)</p> <p>(3) <i>“I have visited the laid-off factory workers, and the communities crushed by our horrible and unfair trade deals. These are the forgotten men and women of our country. And they are forgotten, but they're not going to be forgotten long. People who work hard but no longer have a voice. I am your voice!”</i> (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</p>	<p>(1) <i>“Maybe if he [John McCain] went to Pennsylvania and met the man who lost his job but can't even afford the gas to drive around and look for a new one, he'd understand that we can't afford four more years of our addiction to oil from dictators. That man needs us to pass an energy policy that works with automakers to raise fuel standards, and makes corporations pay for their pollution, and oil companies invest their record profits in a clean energy future – an energy policy that will create millions of new jobs that pay well and can't be outsourced. That's the change we need.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</p> <p>(2) <i>“[...] But I do not believe that another round of tax breaks for millionaires is what's going to bring good jobs back to our shores or pay down our deficit. I don't believe firing teachers or kicking students off financial aid is going to grow our economy, not when China is producing more engineers and more scientists and we've got to compete with them.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 3)</p>	<p>Employment</p>	<p>Economic Distribution</p>

	(3) <i>"I believe we should offer paid family leave so no one has to choose between keeping a paycheck and caring for a new baby or a sick relative."</i> (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 1)		
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In the first sub-theme, the Democratic presidential candidates predominantly discuss economic inequalities between the wealthy and the poor with an emphasis on the importance to foster and protect the middle class. Moreover, they draw attention to existing inequalities, highlighting the struggles of working class people. Under the same sub-theme, the Republican presidential candidates focus on a free market which encourages companies to create jobs in the U.S. as the main solution to the unemployment problem while underscoring the issue of staggering unemployment. In addition, they aspire to represent those who are struggling and often times do not have a voice. In the first example from the Democratic Presidential candidate, Barack Obama uses a similar strategy as in the sub-theme, governmental contribution to education, to argue that the Republicans Presidential candidate, John McCain, is disconnected from the difficult reality faced by many Americans as a result of oil dependency from foreign countries, *"Maybe if he [John McCain] went to Pennsylvania and met the man who lost his job but can't even afford the gas to drive around and look for a new one, he'd understand that we can't afford four more years of our addiction to oil from dictators."* (Speech 5, Table 3.1) He uses the phrase *"That man needs us"* referring to the subject which symbolizes urgency: this man – who could be anyone and there are many just like him – does not have a job and cannot even afford gas to look for a new one, needs this to happen now. Barack Obama goes further and claims that this new energy policy *"will create millions of new jobs that pay well and can't be outsourced."* (Speech 5, Table 3.1) The exaggeration attempts to convince the listener that this is a lucrative deal, from which many will benefit, especially *that man who needs this to happen*. In the next excerpt, Barack Obama challenges the supposed position of the Republican presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, *"I do not believe that another round of tax breaks for millionaires is what's going to bring good jobs back to our shores or pay down our deficit."* (Speech 3, table 3.1). Barack Obama argues that this is not the first time the wealthier population receives a tax break, implying that this is what the Republican candidate suggests. He claims further that this practice – tax break for the rich – further exacerbates the unemployment situation in the country. Additionally, he mentions again that he does not believe in reducing the number of

teachers or refusing financial aid for students just to allow a lower tax rate for the rich. Barack Obama aims to show clearly that he does not support helping the wealthy. In the last example from the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton provides the listeners with a familiar and relatable argument for a paid family leave, “*no one has to choose between keeping a paycheck and caring for a new baby or a sick relative.*” (Speech 1, Table 3.1). The segment demonstrates humanity and a down-to-earth attitude and makes it easier for the audience to understand the motive behind this initiative.

The first example from the Republican presidential candidate, talking about expending American export as an option to create more jobs, “*to open new markets to American goods and services, create more and better jobs for the American worker [...]*” (Speech 1, Table 3.1) The phrase “American worker” indicates that the speaker gives the stage to these workers, who are often overlooked, and that he prioritizes creating more jobs for them. In addition, John McCain makes a propelling argument that instead of investing in assisting programs for the unemployed, there should be an alternative which offers long-term and stable jobs, “*overhaul [...] our redundant and outmoded programs for assisting workers who have lost a job that's not coming back to find a job that won't go away.*” (Speech 1, Table 3.1). In the next example from the Republican Party, Mitt Romney repeats the phrase “*it doesn't feel like forward*” referring to Barack Obama's campaign slogan *Forward*. This reiteration is coupled with unprecedented numbers, “*It doesn't feel like forward to 23 million Americans struggling to get a good job. It doesn't feel like forward to the millions of people who don't have as good a job as they had a few years ago.*” (Speech 7, Table 3.1) To put emphasis on the severity of the situation. This contrast between moving forward and the reality portrayed by Mitt Romney, aims to lead the audience to acknowledge that Barack Obama should not be re-elected and that he chooses to run for president “*for the American people*” signaling that this is his priority and that he will be the one to fix the situation. In the last example from the Republican Party, Donald Trump uses the phrase, “*I have visited the laid-off factory workers, and the communities crushed by our horrible and unfair trade deals.*” (Speech 4, Table 3.1) implying that he witnessed the situation with *his own eyes*. He employs the metaphor “*crushed*” and the adjectives “*horrible*” and “*unfair*” to portray a vivid image for the audience and persuade the listener that he is on the side of these workers and communities; he understands their loss. In a similar manner, the Republican presidential candidate presents these workers as the “*forgotten men and women*” and promises that “*they are not going to be forgotten long*” which aims to induce hope and communicate that he will be the one to make sure they will not be forgotten anymore. The segment closes with “I am your voice!” in which

Donald Trump portrays himself as a savior; these working people –who are often unappreciated and overlooked– need a voice and he will be that voice and ultimately, the solution to their problems.

Sub-Theme 3.2: Poverty Reduction and Governmental Support (Table 3.2)

<p align="center">Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)</p>	<p align="center">Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)</p>	<p align="center">Sub - Theme</p>	<p align="center">Theme</p>
<p>(1) <i>“I will get the rising cost of food and gas under control.... I will help families keep their home, and help students struggling to pay for college [...]”</i> (John McCain, 2008, speech 7)</p> <p>(2) <i>“During the course of the campaign, I’ve traveled across the country. I’ve seen people who’ve fallen into poverty, people who are living paycheck to paycheck, people who are tired of being tired.”</i> (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 7)</p> <p>(3) <i>“Hillary and the Democratic Party have run the inner cities for years, and only produced more poverty. The time has come for real change – I’m asking you for the honor of your vote so that together we can turn decades of political failure into generations of lasting success.”</i> (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 7)</p> <p>(4) <i>“From day one of my administration, we have made it a top priority to build up distressed communities and revitalize our crumbling inner cities. We fought hard with Senator Tim Scott and many others to create Opportunity Zones, helping to draw a surge of new investment to the places in our country that need it most. We must all work together as a society to</i></p>	<p>(1) <i>“Let’s be the generation that ends poverty in America. Every single person willing to work should be able to get job training that leads to a job, and earn a living wage that can pay the bills, and afford childcare so their kids have a safe place to go when they work. Let’s do this.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 1)</p> <p>(2) <i>“So we’ve made real progress these past 4 years. But, Wisconsin, we know our work’s not done yet. As long as there’s a single American who wants a job, but can’t find one, our work isn’t done. As long as there are families who are working harder, but falling behind, our work isn’t done. As long as there’s a child languishing in poverty, barred from opportunity, anywhere in this country, our work is not yet done.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 7)</p> <p>(3) <i>“If you believe the minimum wage should be a living wage and no one working full time should have to raise their children in poverty, join us!”</i> (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</p> <p>(4) <i>“In her campaign, Kamala often talked about what she referred to as the</i></p>	<p align="center">Poverty Reduction and Governmental Support</p>	<p align="center">Economic Distribution</p>

<p><i>expand opportunity and to create a future of greater dignity and promise for all of our people.” (Donald J. Trump, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 2)</i></p>	<p><i>3am Agenda. About moms and dads awake late at night in their kitchens. Scared, worried, uncertain about how they were going to take care of their families. About how they were going to pay the bills. About how they were going to make it. Growing up in Scranton and Claymont, I saw that struggle with my family. Kamala saw it with her family. And millions of Americans are living that struggle right now. Especially in this moment of crisis. Especially with so many jobs lost. Kamala and I both know that all folks are looking for is a shot. A fair shot at making it. And it will be the work of our administration to make sure they get that shot. Working families need someone on their side in this nation. Because they certainly don't have anyone on their side with this president.” (Joseph Biden, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 2)</i></p>		
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The two political parties demonstrate similar position on issues related to poverty and how to tackle this paramount problem. In the first example from the Republican Party, John McCain promises to control the cost of food and gas while pledging to help families in need and students who are struggling with collage cost (1). He uses the phrase “*I will get it under control*” while repeating “*I will help*” in order to assure the listener that he has the power to deliver on his promises. In the second example, Mitt Romney uses reiteration to intensify his message: poverty is a serious problem and he witnessed it himself, “[...] *I've traveled across the country. I've seen people who've fallen into poverty, people who are living paycheck to paycheck, people who are tired of being tired.*” (Speech 7, Table 3.2). The Republican presidential candidate goes into detail about his experience in order to portray a more vivid image for the listeners, and for the purpose of showing them that he truly understands what people living in poverty have to go through. In the next example from the Republican Party, Donald Trump explicitly accuses the Democratic presidential candidate – Hillary Clinton – of impoverishing the lower-income parts of the U.S., “*Hillary and the Democratic Party have run the inner cities for years, and only produced more poverty.*” (Speech 7, Table 3.2). He

goes further and asks the audience to vote for him, “[...] *so that together we can turn decades of political failure into generations of lasting success.*” (Speech 7, Table 3.2) He uses hyperbole expressions, “*decades of political failure*” and “*generations of lasting success*” to emphasize the message that it is time to make a change and he can be the one to do that. In an additional example from the same election campaign, Donald Trump repeats the idea that inner cities have been living in dire conditions, but he will make sure that *every citizen* will live in a *safe* environment, “*Too many Americans are trapped in fear, violence and poverty. Our inner cities have been left behind, and I am going to fight to make sure every citizen of this country has a safe home, safe school and safe community.*” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 2: Annexes) He uses the phrase “*many American are trapped*” to signal that he will be the one to “rescue them”. In the last example, Donald Trump uses metaphors throughout the following phrase, “*From day one of my administration, we have made it a top priority to build up distressed communities and revitalize our crumbling inner cities.*” (Speech 2, Table 3.2) to demonstrate his dedication to help disadvantaged communities and to prove that he is on the side of vulnerable citizens. The Republican presidential candidate proceeds describing what his administration and “*many other*” have achieved, “*helping to draw a surge of new investment to the places in our country that need it most.*” (Speech 2, Table 3.2), stating that ensure financial flow to the communities in dire help for need. He closes the segment with an emphasize on the importance of providing a better future *for everyone* through more opportunities, “*We must all work together as a society to expand opportunity and to create a future of greater dignity and promise for all of our people.*” (Speech 2, Table 3.2).

In the first excerpt from the Democratic Party, Barack Obama lists the necessary steps that would eradicate poverty in the U.S. The most important part is education, and everything is built on top of that: a well-paid job with a living wage, which helps to move ahead and even afford childcare when it is needed, “*Every single person willing to work should be able to get job training that leads to a job, and earn a living wage that can pay the bills, and afford childcare so their kids have a safe place to go when they work.*” (Speech 1, Table 3.2) This lengthy process is presented in order to convince the audience that without education, it is not possible to end poverty. Everything starts from education whether you are a child in high school or an adult looking to progress in your career, these options should be available for *every single person*. In the following example (2), Barack Obama repeats several times the phrase, “*our work isn’t done*” if somebody is struggling in order to convey the message that nobody is going to be left behind, especially those who need help the most and that

everyone counts, no matter where they are, *“As long as there's a child languishing in poverty, barred from opportunity, anywhere in this country, our work is not yet done.”* (Speech 7, Table 3.2). In the next example from the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton posits a moral message, which attempts to provoke a sense of integrity, *“If you believe the minimum wage should be a living wage and no one working full time should have to raise their children in poverty, join us!”* (Speech 5, Table 3.2). In other words, Hillary Clinton sends a clear message to the listener: if you believe fairness and justice are important, support this campaign and consider voting for this administration. In the last example, similarly to the presidential candidate Barack Obama, Joseph Biden conveys his message in a form of a story to make a solid case for his decision to nominate Kamala Harris as his running mate. The story is about compassion and understanding of those people whose daily life is often hidden from the rest, those who are struggling in silence. He elaborates on the struggles these families face to show that he truly understands what they are going through, in the same way Kamala Harris understands them and that is why she is the perfect choice for this position. Furthermore, he understands that everyone deserves an opportunity to make their life better, *“I saw that struggle with my family. Kamala saw it with her family. And millions of Americans are living that struggle right now. Especially in this moment of crisis. Especially with so many jobs lost. Kamala and I both know that all folks are looking for is a shot. A fair shot at making it. And it will be the work of our administration to make sure they get that shot.”* (Speech 2, Table 3.2) Additionally, Joseph Biden argues that working families need somebody to stand up for them, implying that this is not the case under the current Trump’s administration, *“Working families need someone on their side in this nation. Because they certainly don't have anyone on their side with this president.”* (Speech 2, table 3.2)

Sub-Theme 3.3: Income and Taxation (Table 3.3)

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
<i>(1) “Our tax code is used to game the system for some at the expense of the many instead of encouraging the thrift, investment, innovation and industry of all Americans. It's complexity and waste costs Americans \$140 billion in preparation and</i>	<i>(1) “Everywhere you look, the economic news is troubling. But for so many Americans, it isn't really news at all. 600,000 workers have lost their jobs since January. Home values are falling. Your paycheck doesn't go as far as it used to. It's never been harder to save or retire; to buy gas or groceries; and if you put it on a</i>	Income and Taxation	Economic Distribution

<p><i>compliance costs each year.” (John McCain, 2008, speech 1)</i></p> <p><i>(2) “This is a tough time. And even those people that have jobs, middle-income families are struggling, treading water at best, drowning at worst. You see right now that medium income in America has dropped by \$4,300 a family, \$4,300, even as the cost of health insurance has gone up, food’s more expensive, utilities are more expensive, gasoline is doubled. This recovery hasn’t happened the way it was supposed to. And the reason we’re going to get a new president in November is we’re going to have a president who can get this economy going and put people back to work.” (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 3)</i></p> <p><i>(3) “We are going to renegotiate NAFTA and if we don’t get the deal we want, we will withdraw from NAFTA and start over to get a much better deal for our workers.” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 6)</i></p>	<p><i>credit card, they’ve probably raised your rates. In so many cities and towns across America, it feels as if the dream that so many generations have fought for is slowly slipping away.” Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 6)</i></p> <p><i>(2) “My opponent thinks it’s fair that somebody who makes \$20 million a year like he does pays a lower tax rate than a cop or a teacher who makes \$50,000. I don’t think that’s fair. I don’t think that helps grow our economy.” (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</i></p> <p><i>(3) “The other thing we have to do is to change the tax system so that it is fairer. And I’m the only candidate running on either side who has made this pledge. I will raise your incomes, I will not raise middle-class taxes. I do not think it is right - to be going to people who suffered because of the Republican recession and asking for you to help us make the investments for the future. I want you to take advantage of them, but I want to go where the money is, and the money is at the top, and that’s where we need to be shifting our tax system. So we need to close the loopholes and the special gimmicks that corporations and the wealthy use, like this thing called the “carried interest loophole” that I’ve been against for years.” (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 2)</i></p> <p><i>(4) “Frankly, I’ve dealt with guys like Trump my whole life. [...] Guys who stretch and squeeze and stiff the electricians and the plumbers and the contractors working on their hotels and casinos and golf courses just to put a few more bucks in their pockets. Guys who do</i></p>		
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	<p><i>everything they can to avoid paying what they owe in taxes, because they figure the rest of us – the "little people" – we can pick up the tab for the country.</i>” (Joseph Biden, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</p>		
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Under the last sub-theme, the Democratic presidential candidates predominantly focus on a fairer tax system which gives priority to the poorer population. Moreover, they underscore the importance to protect the middle-class in a form of avoiding adding additional taxes and increasing the current wages. The position which the Republican presidential candidates demonstrate is similar to the Democratic party. The Republicans emphasize the importance to foster the middle-class, fix the tax system and lower prices in order to ensure affordability. In the first segment from the Democratic Party, Barack Obama stresses the fact that many American are struggling financially and while some experience these struggles for the first time as a result of the 2008 financial crisis, for many Americans it’s a daily reality, “*Everywhere you look, the economic news is troubling. But for so many Americans, it isn't really news at all.*” (Speech 6, Table 3.3) He lists the struggles that *so many Americans* experience in order to showcase that he is well aware of the situation, “*Your paycheck doesn't go as far as it used to. It's never been harder to save or retire; to buy gas or groceries; and if you put it on a credit card, they've probably raised your rates.*” (Speech 6, Table 3.3). In addition, he closes the segment with the reference to the *American dream*, “*In so many cities and towns across America, it feels as if the dream that so many generations have fought for is slowly slipping away.*” (Speech 6, Table 3.3) in order to provoke emotions and signal that this is the time for change. In other words, if we do not do something (vote for a new administration), the American dream will cease to exist. In a similar example from the same election campaign, Barack Obama clearly states that the middle-class should enjoy the fruits of its hard work, and that it is unfair to have an economy where only the wealthier population benefits, “*Change is building an economy that rewards not just wealth, but the work and workers who created it. It's understanding that the struggles facing working families can't be solved by spending billions of dollars on more tax breaks for big corporations and wealthy CEOs, but by giving a the middle-class a tax break [...]*” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 5: Annexes) In a subsequent segment, Barack Obama employs the positive self-representation and negative other-representation strategy, “*My opponent thinks it's fair that somebody who makes \$20 million a year like he does pays a lower tax rate than a cop or a teacher who makes \$50,000. I don't think that's fair.*” (Speech 4, Table 3.3) This strategy is used here for the

purpose of communicating that it is absurd and unfair that those who have more than enough money, pay a lower tax rate than people who are working to build and protect the country while struggling to make ends meet. In the next example, similarly to Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton calls for a fairer tax system, *“The other thing we have to do is to change the tax system so that it is fairer.”* (Speech 2, Table 3.3) Additionally, Hillary Clinton makes the promise that she will make sure that the middle-class will not be left out of the picture, *“I will not raise middle-class taxes. I do not think it is right - to be going to people who suffered because of the Republican recession and asking for you to help us make the investments for the future.”* (Speech 2, Table 3.3) She points out that the Republicans are the ones to blame for the current financial state, referring to the 2008 financial crisis, whose consequences are felt by many till this day. She closes the segment with a plan on how to make the necessary change, *“So we need to close the loopholes and the special gimmicks that corporations and the wealthy use, like this thing called the “carried interest loophole” that I’ve been against for years.”* (Speech 2, Table 3.3) while stating that she has been fighting this highly problematic system for years, to communicate to the listener that she was always on the side of the middle-class. In the last example from the Democratic Party, Joseph Biden talks about Donald Trump and “exposes” who he really is, *“Frankly, I’ve dealt with guys like Trump my whole life. [...] Guys who stretch and squeeze and stiff the electricians and the plumbers and the contractors working on their hotels and casinos and golf courses just to put a few more bucks in their pockets.”* (Speech 4, Table 3.3) Joseph Biden argues that Donald Trump is one of those people who will exploit others, and often times those people would be decent workers who do not have enough means to begin with. He goes further and claims that not only that he does not pay his workers what they deserve, he does not pay his taxes despite his wealthy, *“Guys who do everything they can to avoid paying what they owe in taxes, because they figure the rest of us – the “little people” – we can pick up the tab for the country.”* (Speech 4, Table 3.3). This segment attempts to convince the listener that while Donald Trump claims that he is on the side of the working people, it could not be further from the truth.

In the first example from the Republicans Party, John McCain argues that the current tax system is inefficient and that results in wasteful spending instead of progress, *“Our tax code is used to game the system for some at the expense of the many instead of encouraging the thrift, investment, innovation and industry of all Americans.”* (Speech 1, Table 3.3) He employs reiteration to showcase the alternative that could have been achieved if not for the controversial tax system. In the next example, Mitt Romney lists the issues effecting the low to middle class income families in order

to make the case why a new president should be elected, *“This recovery hasn't happened the way it was supposed to. And the reason we're going to get a new president in November is we're going to have a president who can get this economy going and put people back to work.”* (Speech 3, Table 3.3) Mitt Romney implies that the current administration has failed to solve the listed problems, and by that he sends the message to the listener that unlike the present administration, he will be able to make things better. In the last segment from the Republican Party, Donald Trump insists that the workers are always his priority, *“if we don't get the deal we want, we will withdraw from NAFTA and start over to get a much better deal for our workers.”* (Speech 6, Table 3.3). He makes the argument that as long as the deal is not benefiting the American worker, there will be no deal; signaling to the listener that he will not compromise if it not good enough for the American people.

Theme 4: The Expressions of Social Justice in relation to Healthcare

When it comes to the U.S., healthcare remains a major and complex issue that has been debated over the decades without reaching a plausible solution. The analysis of the speeches established the following sub themes: Governmental Involvement in Healthcare; The Quality of Healthcare; and Accessibility and Affordability of Healthcare. The first sub-theme attempts to uncover the level of governmental involvement in ensuring medical coverage for the American people. How do presidential candidates view the current situation with the healthcare system? What sort of solutions do they offer? The second sub-theme looks at the overall quality of medical care, who has access to it and whether or not something has to change in that regard. The last sub-theme goes into detail in relation to the cost of medical care and who can afford it. How issues related to healthcare cost can be tackled according to the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates? How do they present the situation of affordability and accessibility of healthcare for those who are struggling to afford health insurance?

Sub-Theme 4.1: Governmental Involvement in Healthcare (Table 4.1)

Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)	Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)	Sub - Theme	Theme
<i>(1) “For all the grandiose promises made in this campaign, has any candidate spoken honestly to the American people about the government's role and failings about individual responsibilities? Has any candidate told the truth about the future of</i>	<i>(1) “Now is the time to push those boundaries once more. We have come so far in the debate on health care in this country, but now we must finally answer the call issued by Truman, advanced by Johnson, and pushed along by the simple</i>	Governmental Involvement in Healthcare	Healthcare

<p><i>Medicare? Its costs are growing astronomically faster than its financing, and leaving its structural flaws unaddressed will hasten its bankruptcy. Has any candidate warned that we have a personal responsibility to take better care of ourselves and our children? Yet that is the only way to prevent many chronic diseases. Has any candidate insisted that genuine and effective health care reform requires accountability from everyone: drug companies, insurance companies, doctors, hospitals, the government and patients? Yet that is the truth upon which any so-called solution must be based. Democratic presidential candidates are not telling you these truths. They offer their usual default position: if the government would only pay for insurance everything would be fine. They promise universal coverage, whatever its cost, and the massive tax increases, mandates and government regulation that it imposes." (John McCain, 2008, speech 3)</i></p> <p><i>(2) "I want to get rid of "Obamacare" and replace it with something that'll truly reform health care." (Mitt Romney, 2012 Presidential Elections. Speech 3)</i></p> <p><i>(3) "We will repeal and replace disastrous Obamacare. You will be able to choose your own doctor again." (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. Speech 4)</i></p>	<p><i>power of stories like the one told by Amy and Lane. The time has come for affordable, universal health care in America. And I look forward to working with all of you to meet this challenge in the weeks and months to come." (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 3)</i></p> <p><i>(2) "We passed health care reform, also known as Obamacare, because I do care about the American people. So your insurance companies can't jerk you around anymore or tell you that being a woman is somehow a preexisting condition." (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 6)</i></p> <p><i>(3) "I first met Ryan as a 7-year old. He was wearing a full-body brace that must have weighed 40 pounds because I leaned over to lift him up. Children like Ryan kept me going when our plan for universal health care failed and kept me working with leaders of both parties to help create the Children's Health Insurance Program that covers 8 million kids in our country." (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 5)</i></p>		
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In the first sub-theme, the Republican presidential candidates emphasize personal responsibility when it comes to one's health and focus on repealing Obamacare. Additionally, they put forward the idea that more health insurance options will bring down the cost. Meanwhile, The Democratic presidential candidates insist on a universal healthcare as a solution to the decades-long health insurance coverage crisis. In the first segment from the Republican Party, John McCain makes a

lengthy argument about the role of personal responsibility when it comes to one's health, "*Has any candidate warned that we have a personal responsibility to take better care of ourselves and our children? Yet that is the only way to prevent many chronic diseases. Has any candidate insisted that genuine and effective health care reform requires accountability from everyone: drug companies, insurance companies, doctors, hospitals, the government and patients? Yet that is the truth upon which any so-called solution must be based.*" (Speech 3, Table 4.1) The given statement is problematic, since health consists of various variables and factors that in some cases, are not in one's control. To put it simply, personal responsibility is not the main solution to a complex health coverage problem. John McCain goes further and argues against universal healthcare that the Democratic Party offers, "*Democratic presidential candidates are not telling you these truths. They offer their usual default position: if the government would only pay for insurance everything would be fine. They promise universal coverage, whatever its cost, and the massive tax increases, mandates and government regulation that it imposes.*" (Speech 3, Table 4.1) The Republican candidate calls for less governmental intervention in healthcare and argues that it will not solve anything; it will only make things worse and more expensive. In a subsequent example, Mitt Romney announces that if he is elected, he will make sure there will be no more Obamacare, but something much better instead (without elaborating further), "*[...] replace it with something that'll truly reform health care.*" (Speech 3, Table 4.1). In the last example, Donald Trump makes a similar statement to the one made by Mitt Romney, "*We will repeal and replace disastrous Obamacare.*" (Speech 4, Table 4.1) He regards this health coverage with disdain, using a strong adjective "*disastrous*" to describe it. Moreover, he mentions that once they will be able to "*get rid of it*", "*You*", a potential voter, will have the power to make your own decisions regarding not just your health, but who is going to treat you as well.

When it comes to the Democratic Party, in the first example, Barack Obama puts forward the call for an affordable and universal healthcare. He mentions famous presidents for the purpose of supporting his call for a health coverage for everyone, "*We have come so far in the debate on health care in this country, but now we must finally answer the call issued by Truman, advanced by Johnson, and pushed along by the simple power of stories like the one told by Amy and Lane. The time has come for affordable, universal health care in America.*" (Speech 3, Table 4.1) Moreover, he makes the connection between these presidents and ordinary American citizens to demonstrate that this is not a new idea, it is something that has been around for a while now; great and beloved presidents before him wanted to make sure that everyone has access to proper healthcare. In the next segment, Barack Obama (2) declares that his administration has achieved what they were fighting for –

passing the affordable care act or Obamacare. He uses the slang phrase “*can’t jerk you around*” to get closer to the listener and be straightforward. Additionally, he confirms that the absurdity of being a woman equates to a pre-existing condition, is no longer valid. In the last example from the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton tells a moving story about her encounter with a sick child in order to proclaim why she is fighting for children’s health insurance, “*Children like Ryan kept me going when our plan for universal health care failed and kept me working with leaders of both parties to help create the Children's Health Insurance Program that covers 8 million kids in our country.*” (Speech 5, Table 4.1) She mentions the number of kids for the purpose of making it more tangible for the listener and to show that there are many children out there who need medical care.

Sub-Theme 4.2: The Quality of Healthcare (Table 4.2)

<p>Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)</p>	<p>Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)</p>	<p>Sub - Theme</p>	<p>Theme</p>
<p>(1) “<i>The first principal of real reform is that Americans should pay only for quality. Right now, too much of the system is built on getting paid just for providing services, regardless of whether those services are necessary or produce quality care and outcomes. American families should only pay for getting the right care: care that is intended to improve their health.</i>” (John McCain, 2008, speech 3)</p> <p>(2) “<i>But Obamacare kicks in 2016. Really big league. It is going to be amazingly destructive. Doctors are quitting. I have a friend who's a doctor, and he said to me the other day, "Donald, I never saw anything like it. I have more accountants than I have nurses. It's a disaster. My patients are beside themselves. They had a plan that was good. They have no plan now." We have to repeal Obamacare, and it can be — and — and it can be replaced with something much better for everybody. Let it be for everybody. But much better and much less expensive for people and for the</i></p>	<p>(1) “<i>It would be one thing if all this money we spend on premiums and co-payments and deductibles went directly towards making us healthier and improving the quality of our care. But it doesn't. One out of every four dollars we spend on health care is swallowed up by administrative costs - on needless paperwork and antiquated record-keeping that belongs in the last century. This failure to update the way our doctors and hospitals store and share information also leads to costly errors. Each year, 100,000 Americans die due to medical errors and we lose \$100 billion because of prescription drug errors alone.</i>” (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 3)</p>	<p>The Quality of Healthcare</p>	<p>Healthcare</p>

government. And we can do it.” (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections. speech 1)			
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In the second sub-theme on the quality of health care, the most recurring topic among the Republican Party is Obamacare and how ineffective and inefficient it is. Additionally, there is focus on optimizing the healthcare system and making it more efficient in order to ensure high-quality healthcare for Americans. On the same note, the Democratic Party provides one example in which the emphasize is on the bureaucratic side of healthcare which leads to an overall complicated process for the patients and lowers the quality of the healthcare.

In the first excerpt from the Republican Party, John McCain argues that the current healthcare system is inefficient and redundant, “*Right now, too much of the system is built on getting paid just for providing services, regardless of whether those services are necessary or produce quality care and outcomes.*” (Speech 3, Table 4.2) He implies that patients should receive only the services that they need so they do not end up paying for unnecessary procedures. Additionally, he claims that quality care should be a top priority, “*American families should only pay for getting the right care: care that is intended to improve their health.*” (Speech 3, Table 4.2). In the subsequent example, Donald Trump makes a case for repealing Obamacare through retelling the experience of his friend who is a doctor, “*I have a friend who's a doctor, and he said to me the other day, "Donald, I never saw anything like it. I have more accountants than I have nurses. It's a disaster. My patients are beside themselves.*” (Speech 1, Table 4.2) By telling the story, Donald Trump leads the listener to the conclusion that there is a real need to revoke Obamacare, “*We have to repeal Obamacare, and it can be — and — and it can be replaced with something much better for everybody. Let it be for everybody. But much better and much less expensive for people and for the government.*” (Speech 1, Table 4.2). He does not offer any concrete substitute to the current health coverage, but he calls for a much better health coverage for everyone. In addition, he adds that it would be less expensive not just for the patients, but for the government as well, implying that it will be much more cost-effective than it is now.

The Democratic Party provides one example from Barack Obama where he argues that the health coverage is wasteful, outdated and full of bureaucracy, “*One out of every four dollars we spend on health care is swallowed up by administrative costs - on needless paperwork and antiquated record-keeping that belongs in the last century.*” (Speech 3, Table 4.2). He goes further and claims that the current system is not just inconvenient, it leads to dire and deadly mistakes that could otherwise be

avoided, *“Each year, 100,000 Americans die due to medical errors and we lose \$100 billion because of prescription drug errors alone.”* (Speech 3, Table 4.2).

Sub-Theme 4.3: Accessibility and Affordability of Healthcare (Table 4.3)

<p align="center">Meaning Unit 2 (Republican Party)</p>	<p align="center">Meaning Unit 1 (Democratic Party)</p>	<p align="center">Sub - Theme</p>	<p align="center">Theme</p>
<p>(1) <i>“You don't have to be a candidate for President to discover that worries over the availability and cost of health care trouble the waking hours and disturb the sleep of more Americans than any other single domestic issue.”</i> (John McCain, 2008, speech 3)</p> <p>(2) <i>“But to bring back your jobs, we must also immediately repeal and replace Obamacare. It's just been announced that Michigan residents are going to experience crushing double-digit premium hikes. In Minnesota, where the premium increase will be close to 60 percent, the Democratic Governor has said “the Affordable Care Act is no longer affordable.” Hillary Clinton wants to double-down on Obamacare, making it even more expensive – in fact, much more expensive. I'm asking for your vote so we can replace Obamacare and save healthcare for every family in Michigan.”</i> (Donald J. Trump, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 7)</p>	<p>(1) <i>“Let's be the generation that finally tackles our health care crisis. We can control costs by focusing on prevention, by providing better treatment to the chronically ill, and using technology to cut the bureaucracy. Let's be the generation that says right here, right now, that we will have universal health care in America by the end of the next president's first term.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2008 Presidential Elections, speech 1)</p> <p>(2) <i>“And we believe that quality, affordable health care and a dignified retirement aren't just achievable goals, they're a measure of our values as a nation. That's what we believe.”</i> (Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Elections, speech 7)</p> <p>(3) <i>“That you should have the peace of mind that your health care will be there when you need it, without breaking the bank.”</i> (Hillary Clinton, 2016 Presidential Elections, speech 1)</p> <p>- <i>“And we need to make health care affordable for every American. My plan will lower prescription drug costs in this country by 60%. And I will make sure we keep the protections for pre-existing conditions that President Obama and I put into law.”</i> (Joseph Biden, 2020 Presidential Elections, speech 4)</p>	<p align="center">Accessibility and Affordability of Healthcare</p>	<p align="center">Healthcare</p>

In the first example from the Republican Party, John McCain demonstrates sympathy when discussing the issue of health coverage. He states that anyone can understand the worry over healthcare affordability, *“You don't have to be a candidate for President to discover that worries over the availability and cost of health care trouble the waking hours and disturb the sleep of more Americans than any other single domestic issue.”* (Speech 3, Table 4.3) This phrase reveals humanity and “down-to-earth” attitude to persuade the listeners that he understands their worries and concerns. In the next excerpt, Donald Trump argues that Obamacare is going to become more expensive and attempts to prove that even the Democrats themselves are not happy with Obamacare, *“In Minnesota, where the premium increase will be close to 60 percent, the Democratic Governor has said “the Affordable Care Act is no longer affordable.”* (Speech 7, Table 4.3). Moreover, he tries to warn the listener that Hillary Clinton is going to make things worse when it comes to healthcare affordability, *“Hillary Clinton wants to double-down on Obamacare, making it even more expensive – in fact, much more expensive.”* (Speech 7, Table 4.3), which leads to his final conclusion – *“I'm asking for your vote so we can replace Obamacare and save healthcare for every family in Michigan.”* (Speech 7, Table 4.3). Donald Trump uses the word “save” to indicate that this is the last chance to do something before it will be too late, and that something is to vote for him.

In the first example from the Democratic Party, Barack Obama provides a clear timeline for passing universal healthcare bill once he becomes the president, *“Let's be the generation that says right here, right now, that we will have universal health care in America by the end of the next president's first term.”* (Speech 1, Table 4.3) He demonstrates confidence and determination to show the listener that it is achievable, and he can make that happen. He uses the phrases “we can”, “let's be” to signal that together those things are possible. In the next segment, Barack Obama uses a moral message to convey the idea that affordable healthcare is not just about granting access to affordable health coverage, it is about much more; it shows a fight for equality and a more just society, *“[...] quality, affordable health care and a dignified retirement aren't just achievable goals, they're a measure of our values as a nation.”* (speech 7, Table 4.3). In the next example, Hillary Clinton (3) discusses a very common experience that Americans face in relation to health insurance: not going to the doctor because of the high and often unpredictable cost of medical services. She vocalizes and acknowledges that fear and makes a case for affordable and transparent health coverage. In the last segment, Joseph Biden follow a similar narrative to Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, *“And we need to make health care affordable for every American.”* (Speech 4, Table 4.3). Furthermore,

he mentions what he is going to do in order to make healthcare more affordable, “*My plan will lower prescription drug costs in this country by 60%. And I will make sure we keep the protections for pre-existing conditions that President Obama and I put into law.*” (Speech 4, Table 4.3). He mentions the fact that these protections for pre-existing conditions were put in place by him and Barack Obama, to prove that he does not just want to achieve these goals or wishes that things were different, he actually has a record of making things happen.

The analysis revealed that the Democratic and Republican parties tended to adhere to their political positions and values. When presidential candidates were raising issues related to social justice, they were doing so through the narrative of their Party’s belief system.

In the first theme, the Republican presidential candidates argued that the way to ensure high-quality education is through more choice. In other words, to give parents and students more schooling options, so they have the ability to choose what is best for them. Meanwhile, the Democratic Party’s predominant focus was on providing access to high-quality education for everyone; every child should have the opportunity to receive good education and the government should be the one responsible for providing that.

In the second theme, the Democratic Party demonstrated more involvement in issues related to social equality in comparison to the Republican Party. The Republican presidential candidates concentrated on religious and ethnic minorities in their speeches, discussing economic issues that are often associated with these communities. The Republican presidential candidates revealed a certain disconnection when it comes to other aspects in relation to ethnic and religious minorities. On the same note, the Democratic Party showcased more involvement and understanding of the hardships and inequalities faced by religious and ethnic communities. Going more into details and demonstrating broad knowledge on these issues. Furthermore, the Democratic presidential candidates focused greatly on issues concerning gender equality, vocalizing support and call for change when it comes to women’s rights while their opponents, did not address that subject in the analyzed speeches. Lastly, the Democratic Party gave much attention to issues related to the LGBT community, demonstrating full support of same-sex marriage and equality while speaking up against discrimination these communities often face.

In the third theme, both the Republican and the Democratic party displayed great involvement and showed determination to make things better for lower to middle class Americans. The Republican presidential candidate mainly focused on more disadvantaged communities, attempting to prove their strong desire to help those who are in need through the creation of more American jobs, price regulation and a more efficient tax system. The Democratic presidential candidates drew attention to the importance of protecting and fostering the middle-class, providing education to ensure a workplace that pays well, increasing taxes for the wealthier population and raising wages so the middle class does not feel suffocated.

In the last theme, the Republican Party's chief interest was Obamacare and the need to "repeal it and replace it with something better", the presidential candidates did not provide many insights on the alternatives. The Democratic presidential candidates were focusing on universal healthcare, accentuating its importance and provided more information on their future actions. Additionally, discussing the difficulties related to the cost of healthcare and the need to ensure its affordability.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Four dominant themes in relation to social justice emerged during the analysis in combination with the theoretical background on social justice with a special emphasize on the work of John Rawls (1971): education; social equality; economic distribution; and healthcare.

The Democratic and Republican parties tended to adhere to their political positions and values. When presidential candidates were raising issues related to social justice, they were doing so through the narrative of their Party's belief system.

The Republican presidential candidates often used expressions, which symbolize power and portray the speaker as a "saviour", it can be especially observed during the last three presidential elections. In addition, the presidential candidates often employed the positive self-representation and negative other-representation method of persuasion. Furthermore, the presidential candidates predominantly focused on issues under the theme of economic distribution. It is important to note that even when the Republican presidential candidates were discussing issues related to other themes, for example, ethnic and religious minorities, they were primarily covering economic aspects. Moreover, the Republican presidential candidates demonstrated more ambiguous narrative when addressing possible solutions, along with suggesting simple solutions to complex problems, it can be especially observed in the last two presidential campaigns.

The Democratic presidential candidates used more often inclusive language in comparison to the Republican presidential candidates. Additionally, they stressed the importance of opportunity, especially for those who are coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Similar to the Republican Party, Democratic presidential candidates were often employing the positive self-representation and negative other-representation method of persuasion. In comparison the Republican party, Democratic presidential candidates covered a greater number of issues related to social justice and provided more elaborated and clear messages on how to solve these issues. Additionally, the analysis of their speeches pointed towards a frequent usage of personal stories for the purpose of making it more tangible for the listener and in order to demonstrate the candidate's sympathy and understanding towards the discussed issue. On a similar note, Democratic presidential candidates demonstrated more awareness of the issues and used a more up-to-date expressions in their speeches; they did not shy away from expressing bold ideas.

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Appendix: Analyzed Speeches

2008

Barack Obama	John McCain
Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Springfield, Illinois (speech 1)	Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Portsmouth, New Hampshire (speech 1)
Remarks to the California State Democratic Convention in San Diego (speech 2)	Address to the California Republican Party Convention (speech 2)
Remarks on Health Care at the University of Iowa (speech 3)	Remarks on Health Care in Des Moines, Iowa (speech 3)
Remarks in Mt. Vernon, Iowa: "A Call to Serve" (speech 4)	Address at the Presidency IV Forum in Orlando, Florida (speech 4)
Remarks in St. Paul, Minnesota Claiming the Democratic Presidential Nomination Following the Montana and South Dakota Primaries (speech 5)	Remarks Claiming the Republican Presidential Nomination Following the Ohio, Rhode Island, Texas, and Vermont Primaries (speech 5)
Remarks Introducing Senator Joseph Biden as the 2008 Democratic Vice-Presidential Nominee in Springfield, Illinois (speech 6)	Remarks Introducing Governor Sarah Palin as the 2008 Republican Vice Presidential Nominee in Dayton, Ohio (speech 6)
Remarks in Elko, Nevada (speech 7)	Remarks in La Crosse, Wisconsin (speech 7)
Address in Chicago Accepting Election as the 44th President of the United States (speech 8)	Address in Phoenix Conceding the 2008 Presidential Election (speech 8)

Barack Obama

“Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Springfield, Illinois | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-announcing-candidacy-for-president-springfield-illinois>

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“Remarks on Health Care at the University of Iowa | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-health-care-the-university-iowa>

“Remarks to the California State Democratic Convention in San Diego | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-california-state-democratic-convention-san-diego>

John McCain

“Address at the Presidency IV Forum in Orlando, Florida | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-the-presidency-iv-forum-orlando-florida>

“Address in Phoenix Conceding the 2008 Presidential Election | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-phoenix-conceding-the-2008-presidential-election>

“Address to the California Republican Party Convention | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-the-california-republican-party-convention>

“Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Portsmouth, New Hampshire | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-announcing-candidacy-for-president-portsmouth-new-hampshire>

“Remarks Claiming the Republican Presidential Nomination Following the Ohio, Rhode Island, Texas, and Vermont Primaries | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-claiming-the-republican-presidential-nomination-following-the-ohio-rhode-island>

“Remarks in La Crosse, Wisconsin | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-la-crosse-wisconsin-0>

“Remarks Introducing Governor Sarah Palin as the 2008 Republican Vice Presidential Nominee in Dayton, Ohio | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-introducing-governor-sarah-palin-the-2008-republican-vice-presidential-nominee>

“Remarks on Health Care in Des Moines, Iowa | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-health-care-des-moines-iowa>

2012

Barack Obama	Mitt Romney
Second Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech (speech 1)	Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Stratham, New Hampshire (speech 1)
Address Accepting the Vice Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina (speech 2)	Address Accepting the Vice-Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida (speech 2)
Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Portsmouth, New Hampshire (Speech 3)	Remarks at a Campaign Event in Painseville, Ohio (Speech 3)
Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser (speech 4)	Remarks to the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 33rd Annual Convention in Los Angeles, California (speech 4)
Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Fairfax, Virginia (speech 5)	Remarks at a Campaign Event in Denver, Colorado (speech 5)
Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Los Angeles, California (speech 6)	Remarks at the Colorado Conservative Political Action Committee Conference in Denver (speech 6)
Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Green Bay, Wisconsin (speech 7)	Remarks at a Campaign Event in Reno, Nevada (speech 7)
Remarks at an Election Victory Celebration in Chicago, Illinois (speech 8)	Presidential Election Concession Speech in Boston, Massachusetts (speech 8)

Barack Obama

“Address Accepting the Vice Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020.

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-accepting-the-vice-presidential-nomination-the-democratic-national-convention-2>

“American Rhetoric: Barack Obama - Second Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech (Transcript-Audio-Video).” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/convention2012/barackobama2012dnc.htm>

“Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Fairfax, Virginia | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-rally-fairfax-virginia>

“Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Green Bay, Wisconsin | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-rally-green-bay-wisconsin>

“Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Los Angeles, California | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-rally-los-angeles-california>

“Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Portsmouth, New Hampshire | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire>

“Remarks at an Election Victory Celebration in Chicago, Illinois | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-election-victory-celebration-chicago-illinois>.

“Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-obama-victory-fund-2012-fundraiser-5>

Mitt Romney

“Address Accepting the Vice-Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-accepting-the-vice-presidential-nomination-the-republican-national-convention-1>

“Presidential Election Concession Speech in Boston, Massachusetts | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/presidential-election-concession-speech-boston-massachusetts>

“Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Stratham, New Hampshire | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-announcing-candidacy-for-president-stratham-new-hampshire>

“Remarks at a Campaign Event in Denver, Colorado | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-event-denver-colorado>

“Remarks at a Campaign Event in Painseville, Ohio | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-event-painseville-ohio>

“Remarks at a Campaign Event in Reno, Nevada | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-event-reno-nevada>

“Remarks at the Colorado Conservative Political Action Committee Conference in Denver | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-colorado-conservative-political-action-committee-conference-denver>

“Remarks to the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 33rd Annual Convention in Los Angeles, California | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-us-hispanic-chamber-commerce-33rd-annual-convention-los-angeles-california>

2016

Hillary Clinton	Donald J. Trump
Remarks in a Campaign "Kickoff" Speech in New York City (speech 1)	Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in New York City (speech 1)
Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Marshalltown, Iowa (speech 2)	Remarks in Virginia Beach, Virginia (speech 2)
Remarks in Des Moines Following the Iowa Caucus (speech 3)	Remarks Introducing Governor Mike Pence as the 2016 Republican Vice Presidential Nominee in New York City (speech 3)
Remarks in San Diego, California (speech 4)	Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio (speech 4)
Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (speech 5)	Remarks to the 11th Annual Values Voter Summit in Washington, DC Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C. (speech 5)
Remarks at Ohio State University in Columbus (speech 6)	Remarks at Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada (speech 6)

Remarks at the Manor Complex in Wilton Manors, Florida (speech 7)	Remarks at Macomb Community College South Campus in Warren, Michigan (speech 7)
Remarks in New York City Conceding the 2016 Presidential Election (speech 8)	Remarks in New York City Accepting Election as the 45th President of the United States (speech 8)

Hillary Clinton

“Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-accepting-the-presidential-nomination-the-democratic-national-convention>

“Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Marshalltown, Iowa | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-campaign-rally-marshalltown-iowa>

“Remarks at Ohio State University in Columbus | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-ohio-state-university-columbus>

“Remarks at the Manor Complex in Wilton Manors, Florida | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-manor-complex-wilton-manors-florida>

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“Remarks in San Diego, California | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-san-diego-california-0>

Donald J. Trump

“Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-accepting-the-presidential-nomination-the-republican-national-convention-cleveland>

“Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in New York City | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-announcing-candidacy-for-president-new-york-city>

“Remarks at Henderson Pavilion in Henderson, Nevada | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-henderson-pavilion-henderson-nevada>

“Remarks at Macomb Community College South Campus in Warren, Michigan | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-macomb-community-college-south-campus-warren-michigan>

“Remarks in New York City Accepting Election as the 45th President of the United States | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-new-york-city-accepting-election-the-45th-president-the-united-states>

“Remarks in Virginia Beach, Virginia | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-virginia-beach-virginia-0>

“Remarks Introducing Governor Mike Pence as the 2016 Republican Vice Presidential Nominee in New York City | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-introducing-governor-mike-pence-the-2016-republican-vice-presidential-nominee-new>

“Remarks to the 11th Annual Values Voter Summit in Washington, DC Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C. | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-11th-annual-values-voter-summit-washington-dc-omni-shoreham-hotel-washington>

2020

Joseph Biden	Donald J. Trump
"Build Back Better" Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden on Our Clean Energy Future in Wilmington, Delaware (speech 1)	Remarks at the Owens and Minor, Incorporated, Distribution Center in Allentown, Pennsylvania (speech 1)

Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden Introducing Kamala Harris as His Vice Presidential Running Mate in Wilmington, Delaware (speech 2)	Remarks at the John F. Kennedy Space Center on Merritt Island, Florida (speech 2)
Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Wilmington, Delaware on Climate Change (speech 3)	Remarks at an Independence Day Celebration at the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in Keystone, South Dakota (speech 3)
Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Manitowoc, Wisconsin (speech 4)	Remarks on Deregulation (speech 4)
Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Miami, Florida (speech 5)	Remarks on Energy Production in Midland, Texas (speech 5)
Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Las Vegas, Nevada (speech 6)	Remarks to Supporters in Minneapolis, Minnesota (speech 6)
Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Erie, Pennsylvania (speech 7)	Remarks on Signing an Executive Order on the America First Health Care Plan in Charlotte, North Carolina (speech 7)
Address in Wilmington, Delaware Accepting Election as the 46th President of the United States (speech 8)	

Joseph Biden

“Address in Wilmington, Delaware Accepting Election as the 46th President of the United States | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-wilmington-delaware-accepting-election-the-46th-president-the-united-states>

“‘Build Back Better’ Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden on Our Clean Energy Future in Wilmington, Delaware | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/build-back-better-remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-our-clean-energy-future-wilmington>

“Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Erie, Pennsylvania | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-erie-pennsylvania>

“Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Las Vegas, Nevada | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-las-vegas-nevada>

“Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Manitowoc, Wisconsin | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-manitowoc-wisconsin>

“Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Miami, Florida | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-miami-florida>

“Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden in Wilmington, Delaware on Climate Change | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-wilmington-delaware-climate-change>

“Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden Introducing Kamala Harris as His Vice Presidential Running Mate in Wilmington, Delaware | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-introducing-kamala-harris-his-vice-presidential-running>

Donald J. Trump

“Remarks at an Independence Day Celebration at the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in Keystone, South Dakota | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-independence-day-celebration-the-mount-rushmore-national-memorial-keystone-south>

“Remarks at the John F. Kennedy Space Center on Merritt Island, Florida | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-john-f-kennedy-space-center-merritt-island-florida-0>

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“Remarks on Deregulation | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-deregulation>

“Remarks on Energy Production in Midland, Texas | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-energy-production-midland-texas>

“Remarks on Signing an Executive Order on the America First Health Care Plan in Charlotte, North Carolina | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-signing-executive-order-the-america-first-health-care-plan-charlotte-north>

“Remarks to Supporters in Minneapolis, Minnesota | The American Presidency Project.” Accessed November 11, 2020. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-supporters-minneapolis-minnesota>