

DCORP Transcripts

Name: Group 6, Phoenix, AZ
Company: --
Group Specs: Hispanic (non-Cuban) Men, 30-50, income \$50K+, college grads, likely voters, half Bush and half Kerry 04 voters
Date: 5/23/06
Time: 8:00 p.m

I'm Alberto and I'm originally from Chicago. I've been here ten years.

I'm Bernardo and I've been in the military, so I'm from everywhere and nowhere. That's pretty much it. I'm half Greek, half Puerto Rican. I never fit in anywhere.

I'm Carlos and I'm from Los Cruces, New Mexico. I've been here for about twelve years. I like golf.

I'm Diego and I'm from Phoenix, Arizona, all my life, three generations in the Valley. And a whole bunch of generations in Mexico in the same desert, so I'm really rooted here as far as the desert goes.

I'm Eduardo and I've been here about nine years. I'm from Cobble Creek, New Mexico, originally.

I'm Francisco and I'm from California, born in Mexico. Been here about twelve or thirteen years.

I'm Geraldo and my father is Mexican and my mother is Swedish, so kind of a funny mix. And I grew up in Littleton, Colorado, and I graduated from Columbine High School. Almost everyone in the world knows the high school that I graduated from.

MODERATOR—SO THINKING GENERALLY ABOUT THE COUNTRY, ARE THINGS MOVING THE RIGHT DIRECTION OR IN THE WRONG DIRECTION?

Do we go in order or....

MODERATOR—WHOEVER JUMPS IN FIRST.

In 2000 I was worried that we were going in the wrong direction. I saw the deficit growing again. I saw our position in the world...I saw a lot of danger. And it exceeded my worst expectations. I didn't think the deficit would be this big, but I knew it was going to happen. It's like a slow train wreck. It's definitely in the wrong direction.

I agree. I think we are heading in the wrong direction. I think Iraq, we are spending a lot of money for something that...I think there are a lot of causes in the United States that we can be spending money on, on our own people. And running up a huge deficit. If you look at the news, George Bush's polls, his positive status is going down. We are not going in the right direction.

I think it's a dichotomy, almost like a double-edged sword. I agree with them. We are heading in the wrong direction, but I do think that that's drawing attention from the opposite direction. And I think that's what helps kind of stabilize things again as far as what we hear in the news and what's really happening. How they are giving us information that we want to hear, but not what's really happening.

(moderator leaves room)

MODERATOR—OKAY, WE'VE GOT ONE MORE PARTICIPANT. SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOU, GO AHEAD.

Sometimes the wrong direction helps stabilize things, I think. And hopefully if enough people notice, then it will. But we are heading in the wrong direction.

I think we are heading in the correct direction. After 9/11 everything changed. When we are attacked, we have to do something. And as far as being in Iraq, there were what, seventeen or nineteen resolutions?

I think this country is just losing control. We need somebody to take the reins and guide us. What everybody is saying is true. I believe we are heading in the wrong direction. Everything is working out for a reason, but what is being done now? Nothing. What happened in the past, what did we do about it? Nothing. What did Homeland Security do for us? Nothing. Do you see where we are going with this? Nowhere. We lost control. We need somebody to take control of this country again. That's the way it is.

I'm kind of neutral right now. I do see a lot of negative stuff, but I'm hoping...it's fairly simple to point fingers, but I think we all have to take some responsibility. We have to do in our backyard and start controlling the situation here. We have a lot of issues here in our own country that we need to address first. I think there also has to be kind of a big brother too keep ourselves in check before we get another bully coming in and taking over.

On what issue?

MODERATOR—IN GENERAL, THE COUNTRY. IS IT GOING IN THE RIGHT OR THE WRONG DIRECTION?

On specific things, I could go either way. But in general I'd say that it's going in the right direction. Unemployment is incredibly low. It's been low for twenty years. Inflation has been low for twenty years. It's incredibly rare that you ever have low inflation and low unemployment. The economy is very strong. Gas prices are killing us all, but I don't know...in spite of that, things are going well. But if you pick one particular issue, I'd say gas prices. Something needs to be done. And I wouldn't say that's going good at all. But I'd say in general, things are going good.

MODERATOR—SO YOU MENTIONED THE ECONOMY. WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE ECONOMY?

The economy, if you compare it to the great depression, we are doing very good. It just depends what you compare it to. Just like he was saying, there are issues everywhere. You talk about gas prices, you talk about crime. You could talk about many things that may not be going good. But economically in Phoenix, I think the economy is doing pretty well.

I have a thought. I take my credit cards out. My neighbors see me with a new TV, new car, new clothes, new everything, but I'm in trouble because there is going to be a day when those credit cards have to be paid. And this is a false economy. The deficit is huge. You have tax cuts and spending and huge deficits. It's not a matter of my ideology. I'm very pragmatic. I see what it is and call it what it is. I don't kid myself.

I was just going to say about debt and all that, that's a personal choice. If you choose to...

I mean the nation is in debt.

I use that as an analogy. I'm using that as a metaphor.

But I mean it's not the first time. It's been like that throughout history. If you look at the deficit, the deficit has been...I think it has always been there. I mean it was cured there for awhile.....when you have a war especially, you are always going to run into a deficit.

I agree with his analogy. You look at the government, you can break that down to your state, you can break that down to your business, you can break that down to your own family. And what he said about credit card debt, that's our deficit, our spending. We talk about unemployment being good, the rate being good. But you know what? When you have a lot of debt, you are going to keep that job and you are going to take almost any job you can. I don't think the unemployment rate being down is a really big kudos to say because if you look at how many wives that would like to stay home with their kids and they are making \$2 an hour after they pay for gas and childcare, you can say yeah, they've got a job. But the economy is dictating that they need to work. Any businessman would not want to take over the business of our government's economy right now. It's a dying business. There is no profit. It's bad.

MODERATOR—YOU MENTIONED INCOMES, OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT SALARIES IN THIS ECONOMY?

Say more. I'm not sure I understand the question.

MODERATOR—DO YOU THINK THAT INCOMES ARE KEEPING UP WITH THE COST OF LIVING?

I think for certain professions. My wife used to be a teacher before she got pregnant and now we have a little baby girl. So she is fortunate enough to be able to stay home to raise the baby. But I think her income is not on par with what responsibility she has. It's a great thing for our kids and we pay teachers really low wages. Maybe for my position,

I'm keeping up with the times, but for her position, she was not making money as far as...at least this state. The state of Arizona is really poor as far as paying teachers.

And not just teachers, but everybody else. If you really look at it, this whole state is really behind the times on getting you cost of living raises that we are supposed to get. Some companies even did away with them. So, how are we supposed to keep up with the Joneses if we can't even keep up with ourselves.

MODERATOR—OTHER THOUGHTS ON THAT? HOW ABOUT GAS PRICES?

You don't want to go there.

In September of this last year, the congress and the White House signed a bill to give these....there's nothing wrong with making profits, but they got a tax cut.

Right.

They got a tax cut. If it's a duck, it's a duck. I'm not so stupid to realize...they give these oil companies...we need oil companies. They provide energy for the country, but do they need a tax cut to be subsidized? But who is kidding who? I know why they got a tax cut because they got the money. They go to congress and they get a bill that they get a tax cut.

I think we kill ourselves just by raising the gas prices. We have enough oil in our country. We don't want to tap our reserves. And we go and put our own kids on the other side of the world and put their lives in danger just because we are trying to fight for whatever reason they want to call it, but we all know it's for oil purposes. And knowing that, we are still increasing the oil prices in every state. And we can't have raises to accommodate the cost of living. And yet, we see every time that there is like a hole down on the corner and automatically the gas goes up another ten or fifteen cents. It's a game.

MODERATOR—YOU MENTIONED THE WAR IN IRAQ, WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT OUR CONTINUOUS INVOLVEMENT?

They don't belong there.

I support my troops, but I've got to separate the politics from the troops. If I don't, I won't even give them a second thought. I've been there, I've seen it. When you are sitting there fighting in somebody else's country, it comes through every human person the question of, am I going to see my kids? Are my kids going to see their father and what am I doing this for? It's a natural question you ask yourself. And really, yeah, we are sorry, we are going to send apologies to the parents for the kids that died. But that's just the government. They are going to be out of office in four years or eight years. Do you think that sorry is going to carry them for the rest of their lives? No, it's not. And that goes with the gas prices. Before the war, if you said gas was \$3 a gallon, they would have shot you, you would have never made the presidency. Gas deals with commerce. That's how we get products and services. That's why the economy is getting good because we are buying all these consumer products. But gas is what gets these things to us. And why did we go to Iraq? Some people say it's because we want the oil and we want the money. The other reason is because Iraq had oil and was able to get

money to be able to do what they wanted to do. They don't like our way of life, so now they've got oil and they can make money and they can say they don't like our way of life. But it's all about gas, it really is. It's about fueling the economy. And I think we made a mistake there. Instead of fueling our economy, we are hurting and other people are going to get Geraldo.

The way I see it is just one bully against another. That's all I see.

I was told there were weapons of mass destruction. There wasn't. I was told we were being treated like liberators. We weren't. Somebody in the White House didn't figure out that we are called national (inaudible). Iraq has had people for 6,000 years. Writing started there, so they have very strong nationalistic feelings. If I saw Cuban troops walking the streets, they'll shoot back. And they are going to car bomb us forever because they are not going nowhere. I was told by Dick Cheney that we are like in the last throws of the insurgency. It's growing. They lost credibility. Everything they tell, it doesn't seem to come out. They just go down the checklist and lie to me.

It's frustrating also...Bush says that we are bringing freedom to the area. And if you look at the way that the people lived with Saddam, although he was a dictator, their lives were pretty okay. And I'm sure some people suffered at his hands, but since then, we can't secure anything. I would assume that electricity is far less reliable today. I'm sure getting fuel, going through their normal daily life is worse now than it was before we came in. And to say we are bringing freedom to better their lives, I just don't see it.

A year ago, FOX was saying...Condoleezza Rice was saying, aren't they the Iraqi people better off today? And they stopped saying that. Everybody knows, no. There were 28 people bombed yesterday. Even when FOX News stopped saying that, the sound bites, they can't say that with an honest face. Can you say the Iraqi people are better off today than they were the day before the invasion? I don't know who can say yes.

I have mixed feelings about it, but I agree with some people in here. When we first went in there, there was a lot of speculation that they had weapons of mass destruction and all these things that we were told of. And there's probably a lot more things that we are not aware of that the government hasn't told us. But like this gentleman was saying, when it hits close to home and you've got a family member that's in the armed services or maybe close relative gets killed out there, that's a different issue altogether. I respect and truly admire people that are in those portions....that have sacrificed their lives for our country. I believe that we probably stayed there too long. I'm not sure if we should have went in the first place. I thought that it was probably a good thing. But now it's probably overdue.

MODERATOR—SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

With the war?

MODERATOR—IN IRAQ, YEAH.

You are asking for people's opinions. I respectfully disagree. I admire you for having gone over there and I didn't go over there. I have four cousins who have been there. I have one that's still there. I have a brother who wasn't there, he's in the armed services.

And I have a son who is planning on going into ROTC and be an officer in the Marines. So it's a scary thing. And I didn't raise a son to come home in a body bag. But I think we did the right thing. And I think that unfortunately it's not a good situation. And there's not a quick solution. But I think we did the right thing. And I think staying there and making that ...as that country is becoming more democratic and everybody at this table is absolutely right when they say, you've got to look and say are things better right now? And certainly that's not an easy call. You could easily say they are not. But I'm personally convinced that going in and changing things there sends a strong message to all those other countries that we are not going to tolerate you training terrorists so they can come over here and put a plane into the World Trade Center again.

This is the way I feel. Osama, Osama, Osama, let's go get Saddam. First off, I feel suckered. I feel duped. It's like my neighbor. He has more money and he's training his kids not to like Puerto Ricans or Greeks. And I'm his neighbor. He does stuff in my yard. He goes in my yard or something like that. I can't go in and beat the shit out of him, excuse my French. I've got to go and take it up with the law or the homeowner's association. I've got to follow protocol. So, if I don't have the right to do that as an individual, which this is a country that is representing the individuals, not what they want to do, it's representing us, what gives them the right to go into a country? Granted they may have things, they may not like us, okay? Yeah, they get democracy, but look at Israel. Israel supposedly got democracy. They are the best military, best intelligence service in the world. When their so-called democracy prevails in Iraq, which they will never have, they have too many factions in 6,000 years of history. They've had factions in 6,000 where they didn't even get along with each other. Muslim against Muslim. When they have a perceived peace, how easy is it going to get on a bus with a bomb and blow up innocent civilians with this perceived peace? And when we pull out, then we are going to go back and waste money? No. It's going to turn out even worse. That's the first thing that's going to happen, it's going to get worse. And then we put democracy in Iraq, there's got to be another reason. After Iraq, there has to be another reason. You don't get into the Middle East with American military forces and create a point of no return in the Middle East without continuing on in the process. It's a point of no return. Us securing Iraq is not exactly everything we want to accomplish. We can't just go into Iraq and say here we are. There's got to be more to it.

MODERATOR—SO WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO BEFORE WE CAN PULL OUT?

No bullshit. Just go out and take care of business, like he said. Go in there, if we lose face, we lose face. So what? I'm a soldier. We are saving lives. It's not about politics. Just pull out and create good relations economically. Show the world that we are not the big bully. Big bully eventually has about four or five people that want to get his butt later.

I grew up in 1961 and I remember ...I thought the American philosophy was if we are ever going to go to war again, we are going to go all the way or we are not going at all. Even a low grade fever will kill you eventually. And the generals want 400,000 troops. Rumsfeld wanted 65,000. President Bush split the middle. So he put the military in a situation where they couldn't win, but they were not going to lose. And every day I watch PBS and at the end off the show they show the faces. My opinion is, if we are going to stay (someone coughing). If we are not going to do that, get out. Pulitzer Prize winning photograph, a picture, was a Humvee bright and shiny and it had a sticker that said the portrait troops. And then next to it was an American GI who was ironing task metal onto their jeeps. And the Geraldo guy said thank you Bush for the tax cut. Where do you

think that money went? The tax cut ...they pulled it out of the marines and gave it to those guys who get around in Humvees. A tax cut during a war? That's crazy.

Actually I think this is a new kind of war that we never really fought before. This is a war where it's in the shadows. There's not a distinct type enemy. Really our military does not go out there to kill civilians. If they would, they would just go in there and wipe them out. And they won't do that.

Actually this is not a war. This is more a retaliation. This is not actually a war.

Back in the Gulf War, when that started, there was a treaty there. Saddam already went through seventeen or eighteen resolutions where he's changed things. He didn't follow the laws set before him. After 9/11, Bush finally said, we are going to...you are either with us or against us. He was not following what he was supposed to do and that was his own fault.

How many Iraqis were in the 9/11 attack? Last time I counted it was zero. There were fifteen Saudi Arabians, two Egyptians and a Jordanian and a couple from the United Arab....

(many talking at once)

But the resolutions were totally different though. This is way back from the Kuwait.

MODERATOR—HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF HISPANIC CASUALTIES IN THE WAR IN IRAQ?

I've heard it's the Marines. I know the native Americans and ethnic people, they disproportionately joined the Marines, but I haven't heard it's specifically Hispanic.

I haven't either.

I've heard that.

MODERATOR—ANY OPINIONS ABOUT THAT?

It's not true. The military does not send a race to certain missions. The Marines have the worst of it.

And even if you are prejudiced, you are not going to be prejudiced on the battlefield. Everybody finds God in the foxhole.

Everybody becomes a brother on the front.

Exactly. There's no such a thing as okay you guys are Mexicans. The Latinos, the Puerto Ricans and the Mexicans, they stick with other people, just like in any sub culture or in any group at work. But that doesn't mean they are in the same squad. It comes down to the squad.

It could be a disproportionate amount of Latinos of poorer families. And as a way to do something with their life, they go into the military and so there might be more Latinos in the Army or the Armed Forces than...

And then they qualify for jobs that are more combative rather than support elements. But there's no overt way of....

I wouldn't think so either.

MODERATOR—SO MANY OF YOU SAID THE COUNTRY IS HEADING THE WRONG DIRECTION. WHAT KIND OF CHANGE ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

Where you spend...what we all do. We are going to stop at \$100 or we are going to hit the credit card. And congress is...the republican congress and the democratic president and it was good. They spent as they went along. I just go back to fiscal responsibility.

I want a president that is who he is. And is not what other people tell him to be or other people tell him to say. If he believes in something, if he believes in the war personally, I want it from his voice. I don't want to hear that practiced speech that sounds so perfect. But when you catch them offside and you ask them a question, he can't even speak correct grammar. That's what I like about him. I like his down-to-earthness when you catch him off camera.

I don't like the rhetoric he gives when he has to give a national security briefing or something or a State of the Union because that's somebody else talking.

MODERATOR—WE ARE GOING TO TALK MORE ABOUT BUSH A LITTLE BIT LATER, BUT THINKING ABOUT WHAT CHANGES...

Transparency.

I get tired of....I think there are ideas that people have that we just refuse to try. And why not pilot it? Why not just try it somewhere. We don't have to do it across the whole country. For example, school vouchers. I don't know if that's a good idea or a bad idea, but why not try it somewhere? Why not try someplace and see if it works over some period of time and then go, you know what? We are not going to do that because we tried it. And so much just gets caught in the politics of the democrats and republicans. And so they don't try ideas. We wouldn't run a company that way. We'd go try it somewhere and say, okay, it seems like a good idea, let's try it. We are not going to try it everywhere because what if it doesn't work?

So, I would stand up and cheer for a leader that said you know what? There's enough merit here, we are going to try it here and see what happens.

I think we have a lot of issues here in this country to take care of like health insurance. That's a huge issue that we need to get our arms around and try to fix, if it can be fixed. That's a pretty major thing, medical, so that everybody has the ability to get medical care. Now I totally disagree...there's no one man. A president is just a figurehead in my eyes. A president is not going tohe's just there and he does what the congressmen and the senators vote. I think he's just a figurehead. I think this country needs peopleit all starts in the family. If you've got...a single president is not going to change the way that this world is or the way that this country is. I think it starts from each and every one of us. And a president, you go back and you say Clinton, he could sit there in his

office and not do a darned thing. And then all of these things have been planned for years with the attacks and all that. And he sat in his office and did nothing. So you go from one president to another, all of them are screwed up. And all of them are just....they can't do anything on their own. They are just a figurehead.

MODERATOR—I WANT TO SWITCH TO A SHORT EXERCISE. I'M GOING TO READ YOU SOME NAMES OR ORGANIZATIONS AND I WANT YOU TO TELL ME THE FIRST WORD OR PHRASE THAT COMES TO YOUR MIND. THE FIRST ONE IS ANTONIO BANDERAS.

Actor.

Actor.

Zorro.

His wife, Melanie Griffith.

(many talking at once)

Singer, I can't remember though.

What was the other movie like Zorro?

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT ALBERTO GONZALEZ?

The attorney general? Puppet.

I don't even know him.

Don't know him.

Hard as hard, hard knocks.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT HILLARY CLINTON?

Pragmatic.

Loser.

Bitch.

Democrat.

That could be a good thing too.

No trust.

Two-faced.

MODERATOR—JIM PEDERSON?

I've got a mixed opinion based on what his son...the negative news is what stays in my mind about him.

Who is he?

He's the guy whose son got arrested for drugs or something.

I think it was drugs.

The word I would say would be ironic.

The negative stuff stands out, the negative image.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT JOHN KYLE?

Oh my God.

Puppet.

Crony.

Wealthy.

I don't read the newspaper.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Complex.

Hurting.

Under fire.

Hypocrite.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT TOM DELAY?

Hypocrite.

I don't care about him. If I see him, I'll turn it.

Not sure.

Caught.

Or accused.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT THE CONGRESS?

Do nothing.

Unaccountable.

Ineffective.

I think they are confused. I don't say that sarcastically. I think right now they are scrambling to find out where they can situate themselves. I think they are in a bad situation.

Confused.

Lack of leadership.

MODERATOR—DO YOU THINK THE CURRENT CONGRESS IS WORSE THAN IN THE PAST IN TERMS OF CORRUPTION OR IS IT JUST POLITICS AS USUAL?

I think it's worse.

Worse.

Way worse.

MODERATOR—WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S WORSE?

Because when you have one side controlling one house, they watch each other. (door keeps opening and closing – very noisy) They have no idea what they are doing.

I think a lot of them had to compromise themselves because of this war. I think they had to compromise themselves whether they were for it or against it. And they had to take a side. They were forced. You are with us or you are not. And I think that hurts them.

Who is the new guyRobinson ...the new congressman who looks like he was taking bribes?

Jefferson.

Oh, Jefferson. Yeah, so I don't know, maybe worse.

I don't think they know how to work together.

That's true.

Not in the best interests of the country.

MODERATOR—DO YOU THINK ONE PARTY IS MORE CORRUPT THAN THE OTHER ONE?

It's hard to say.

I think they are equally corrupt.

As we said, Jefferson is a democrat.

People who are in power...whoever is in power has the key, and so they can open up the vault and

Whoever has more family in politics has more power.

I think it's whoever is the key keeper at the time.

Power corrupts absolutely.

MODERATOR—ALBERTO, YOU WERE SAYING THAT THE DIFFERENT PARTIES ARE CORRUPT IN DIFFERENT WAYS?

Sure. It's hard to say, but the republicans are doing their thing the way they feel that they should be doing it. And then you've got the democrats saying it shouldn't be done that way, it should be done this way. So they are doing it their way. Nobody is meeting anybody halfway here.

I think the corruption goes deeper than the overt stuff. I think the corruption is compromising. I hear C-Span sometimes where they interviewed the NSA guy and an FBI guy and an Air Force Colonel. And they are asking them questions about the whistleblowers. And these guys are coming out with the phone tapping issues. They are coming out with all the lies and this and that. And I think the corruption is not just screwing around or taking bribes or anything like that, I think the corruption is in the system itself. Here they are getting information and they say you can't talk about that. You've got to talk about that in a private senate hearing. And the guy said, yeah, your phones are being tapped. So I think the corruption is even more insidious, deeper.

MODERATOR—AND HOW DOES CORRUPTION AFFECT EACH OF YOU PERSONALLY?

I'm frustrated. It just seems like there are wealthy people back in Washington DC that represent us. And they really don't represent the people that are out in the real world. It seems like they are all wealthy people, that they can afford to be politicians. They don't have to make big bucks because they already have family money or something that was successful in their past and it's like they are playing. It's like Monopoly or something. I don't see that they are truly representative of us.

Right.

It's frustrating.

So I agree with everything everybody is saying. I just want to temper that with in the end, I think it's the best system in the world. And I think if...at the end of the day, probably none of us are going I've had it, I'm moving to Germany. Or I'm moving to wherever. But yet, all those countries have people who say the exact opposite. So we all want things to get better and at the same time, myself, I temper that with I do believe it's the best system in the world. Except for the November elections. We are all going to wake up the day after the elections. And if there is a poll in the House and the Senate ...I'm worried that it doesn't change and then I'm really worried because this can't go on,

in my opinion. We'll have to wait another three years for it to happen again, another election. Elections have a way of opening the windows, letting the light in, sweeping up. It's a cleansing thing. It's the only system we've got.

But at the same time, I don't think we can just say this is the best system that exists in the world. Not because it's the best, it's not perfect. I think that's why we have people, intelligent people, that can sit down and say, you know what? Yeah, we have a bad system, but it's still crap. It could be better and we need to fix it.

It's just not as good if it's....when you start knowing...the system is the infrastructure that you can look at. If you know how to manipulate that, then it's not a system anymore.

Other countries don't have the education to understand politics.

I feel it's a farce, to tell you the truth. This whole senate thing is a farce because if you face facts, during the elections, all these guys running for office, they all become your buddy. And this is my wife and these are my kids and vote for me. After you vote for them, you don't hear from them until they either get in trouble or a family member gets in trouble or it's election time again.

MODERATOR—OKAY, WE ARE GOING TO GO BACK TO THE ELECTIONS IN A LITTLE WHILE. I HAVE ONE MORE ASSOCIATION FOR YOU. JANET NAPOLITANO.

Winner.

Vote her out.

Democrat.

Don't trust her.

Neutral.

Who is running against her? Nobody knows.

I've got to actually say that she's consistent. I wouldn't vote for her. She's not shown support to the military and that's a personal bias on my part. But at least she's consistent in what she's always said. And she does adhere to that. That one thing I give her credit for.

I'm kind of neutral on her.

(many talking at once)

She doesn't compromise on anything.

MODERATOR—NOW WE ARE GOING TO DO AN EXERCISE. (HANDOUTS PASSED OUT) ON HANDOUT #1, WRITE ALL THE GOOD THINGS THAT COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT BUSH. AND ON THE HANDOUT #2, WRITE WHAT

DOUBTS YOU HAVE ABOUT HIM AND WHAT WORRIES YOU ABOUT HIM. WHAT ARE THE GOOD THINGS YOU WROTE DOWN?

I've got one. I think in my opinion, I always give people credit if they are pragmatic. It's the biggest word I have. I think his position on the immigration right now is realistic. I've worked in hotels for twelve years, Americans just don't apply. 70% of our food is being picked by undocumented workers. You can round them up and kick them out, but you've got to know who they are.

MODERATOR—WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IMMIGRATION LATER, JUST ABOUT BUSH.

I'm just saying that on this issue, he seems to be very pragmatic. He seems to be actually thinking.

I think he's good at heart. I think he believes in what he says honestly. His views may differ with mine and some things that he worries about, I don't. Some things I do, he doesn't. But I think he's good at heart.

I don't always think he's made the right decisions, but I think he's a courageous leader and I think he's a man of integrity.

I think so too. He's got good moral standards. And even though a lot of the country doesn't agree with his decisions that he's made, I think he sticks to them. And he doesn't waver like Kerry. He stays the course.

I have to agree with what they are saying. Not to agree with everything, but he does seem to be a good man that's really working hard.

None.

MODERATOR—WHAT DOUBTS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT HIM?

I doubt that (inaudible) with the Mexican president.

I think he's too influenced by Cheney and his cabinet appointees. I think a lot of what he says is not his own thoughts, it's the speech writers and consultants that are telling him this is the course that they want to take.

You can be strong to the course, but you shouldn't go over the cliff. It takes a strong man to say stop. There's a cliff and I was wrong, turn around. That's a true man.

I agree with him. I think he's not going to rebound very easily unless he gets Cheney and Rumsfeld and Condoleezza to take their blames. He needs to show the world that he's not the smartest person, but I do acknowledge it. He never apologized for anything, he never said he was wrong. And that's because they are not letting him. I think if they let him, he would. There are a lot of things, he's goodhearted, he's good natured, he does have integrity. And you can see when he's having a hard time with his integrity and what he is supposed to put out. And that's what bothers me about him.

When I wake up everyday, I'm just glad I'm not in his shoes. I wouldn't want to be in his shoes for what he has to face. And I really admire him though for what he has to go through. And we haven't been attacked since 9/11.

(many talking at once)

Aren't these supposed to be doubts?

Oh I'm sorry, I was on the wrong paper. I just couldn't really think of any doubts. I just would not want to be in his shoes.

I agree with what this gentleman is saying. He lets others influence him. And I think that if he did what should do and what he probably really wants to do, I think he would make better decisions instead of letting other people...I think it would come across better. I think that's....and I think he has stayed in Iraq too long.

He's also a guy that's been wealthy all his life. His family has wealth and it's hard for me to consider that he can really relate to us. I see him out there chugging a log or whatever on his palatial ranch in Texas, but I can't see him really relating to the Joe on the street. It's just hard for me to imagine that.

MODERATOR—WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IMMIGRATION NOW. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CURRENT DEBATE ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION?

I don't think it's a debate. I think it's incredibly one-sided. We are scapegoating these people. We winked and looked the other way when they came across the border. How come the minutemen aren't out there looking for them out in the fields? Why don't they boycott....hey, let's stop eating vegetables and fruit and chicken because all those jobs are illegal immigrants. Let's stop staying in hotels. Let's boycott all those industries. And so I'm for a strong border. I think we need to secure the border. If a fence is the right solution, I'm not opposed to that but we are scapegoating them and they are an easy target. To single them out....what is interesting and then I'll stop and let somebody else talk. They marched and the whole march was because they were offended that they were being viewed as felons and criminals. That's why they marched. But that's not communicated. What is communicated is, they are marching because they want amnesty. How day they carry a Mexican flag? Well what do you see on St. Patrick's Day? You see all these Irish flags and the shamrock and how about all these European....the cars with the "F" for France and the "G" for Germany, are they un-American? So, that's probably the most emotional issue for me. I'm going to vote them all out. Napolitano is not getting my vote. Anybody who is talking, they are not getting my vote, republican or democrat. Kick them out.

I really feel that we do have to do something. I really believe that the borders need to be secure. It's just like a water leak, you've got to stop the water from leaking. I'm not against immigration here at all, it's just illegal. That, I believe, is the problem. If you are here, let it be legal. Just do it the right way. There are a lot of people that have spent a lot of time trying to become citizens, spending money and time. And then all of a sudden, since you are illegal, you get citizenship. I don't think that's fair for the people that are trying to do it the right way. But then the right way, they make it so hard to do it the right way. So people are going to pick the easy way. But it does need to be controlled. We need to know who is here.

And it's not against Hispanics or anybody. It's just everybody, all the borders need to be controlled better than what they are right now.

If you study this, this is something that happens in American history. It's like a 20-year peak. When I was in college I read a newspaper and the paper went, "they" don't want to learn a language, "they" live in clusters, "they" have different food, "they" have a different religion. And it was talking about the Germans in 1890. First generation struggled with the language, second generation is bi-lingual, third generation loses the language. History doesn't repeat itself, it rhymes. It's happening here. They were saying that about the Italians, the Poles, the Germans. And it makes me a little frustrated when somebody who I knew could not talk to his great, great grandfather because he spoke German is acting like, my grandfather came from Germany and spoke English on the way over. He struggled. That's why he lived in Old Germany, that's why he lived in Little Italy, that's why he lived in Little Poland in Wisconsin. His kid is bilingual and you don't know the language because you are the third generation.

I'm going to tell everybody a short story, I promise. I think whether you are for the border or not, or immigration or not, I think this might put a little perspective. I do recruit for the National Guard. And one of the gentlemen that I spoke to went to high school, he was a junior, and wanted to serve his country. He was an A student, senior high school next year. Ready to do it. Alright, get me your birth certificate, get me your Social Security card. You can see where this is going, right? Okay, I'll get my mom and find out. I go where were you born? He said, San Diego. He calls me back, hey man, guess what? I don't have a Social Security card. I wasn't born in the states. I go, I thought you said you were born in San Diego. He goes, I thought I was until tonight. I just found out that my parents brought me here illegally and we are here illegally. The kid is an A student. Went through the whole program. Right now, what's he going to do? What's he thinking? Am I going to be over on Chowa (sp?) Boulevard looking for a job everyday because now he knows he doesn't have a Social Security number. So that brings me to the point of this. We need to give amnesty to everybody that's here now. We do. It doesn't matter if you agree with it or not. It's what we've got to do. The reason we've got to do it is this. If we don't, we are going to create friction with Mexico. You can't just take people out...once they are here, they are here. But account for people that are here. Secure the borders, make it look tight. If we have to build a freaking wall, we can build a wall. What we are doing is, we are giving amnesty, but we are putting up a wall, too, at the same time. And what that will do is, it will keep the people that are here legally, whether it goes to the Germans or the Greeks or the Italians or the Russians, whatever you are that are here, that can't get in as easily as you can from Mexico, it will give them the same chance to come in. But the people that we do have in, don't have to take those menial jobs. A lot of them will still take it. They will take it if they have better benefits and all that. They'll still take it. Not because that's their nature, but because they like hard work. A lot of people like hard work. They are here for a dream. So I think that kid puts it all into perspective. You can't kick him out. It's not his fault. How do you...if he would have known in sixth grade that he was illegal, how do you think he would have went through high school? Do you think he would have still been an A student? Do you think he would have cared? If I graduate I can't get a job anyway, so...

MODERATOR—SO WHAT OTHER THINGS CAN WE DO ABOUT THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION?

If you want to take the road to just give them all amnesty, I think that would make it a little bit easier for them to become citizens. The ones that are here. And it would bring more revenue to this country too because let's face it, a lot of the illegals, they don't pay taxes. And if you made them citizens, then they would. They would have to.

(end of side)

And I went through high school and everything and stuff like that until I hit the brick wall and I didn't go to college. And I've been working in the agricultural field before and all this. So I've been through all this and having to apply and get citizenship and try to do everything the legal way. And it's a twelve-year process just to kind of get somewhere.

It's too hard.

It's horrible.

That's commendable though.

You go and get it and try to get this service and they'll tell you, no, you don't qualify so you need to reapply. Anyhow, I think you need to....if we can offer amnesty to all the people that are here, at least you can somehow show that you can prove that you've been here "x" amount of time....say okay, you qualify for this. If you haven't, you get a temporary Visa for this much and you have to report back during that time. There has to be some sort of control. If we start saying we are going to kick everybody out, it's going to create friction. We can break them down. Well, we'll find other ways to get in. Simple as the Canadian border. The border control there in Canada is only a little shack with a camera. I mean nobody even cares. You go to the camera and say, yeah I'm Joe Smith from wherever. It's true. This is in Minnesota. Over on this side, we are building the China wall. And on the other side we have a taco stand.

MODERATOR—SO, HOW ABOUT THE DEMONSTRATIONS? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?

In my opinion, they took a page out of the 50's with Martin Luther King and Gandhi. What Gandhi really did was, first you've got to show them that we are here. We all grew up with that little program, we are here, we are here, we are here. And all you've got to do is say, we are here. We are no longer going to bethey demonstrated the face. Once you put a face...you are a face....people say....they put a face to it and once you put a face, now you've got to deal with people, not illegal aliens. They are human beings. And that was the first step, to put a face to it.

I think even some businesses like meat packing plants in the Midwest, they supported the demonstrations saying, hey you guys got to do what you've got to do because those plants can't function if they don't have undocumented workers. That's the only guys that are going to take the jobs. You don't see a lot of white guys out there cutting up carcasses and making it into steaks. It's just not the way.

One thing I really took notice was a lot of people that were demonstrating, didn't know why they were demonstrating. And they'd get interviewed and they'd say, well we are just here because of....they didn't know. I wish they would have when they did the

demonstration, they would have actually told the people why you are really out there to demonstrate. That came across a lot. They were just there. They are just supporting the Hispanic people.

Overwhelmingly the people that they interviewed on the news, they weren't illegal aliens. They didn't come over here. So we didn't ask them. They demonstrated because they were just so offended that we were calling them criminals and felons. And then you had splinter groups that showed up and that's the people that got interviewed on the news. That's who these people were and they weren't.

MODERATOR—HAS ANYBODY HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT BUSH'S PROPOSAL ON IMMIGRATION?

(inaudible – someone coughing)

I think we all kind of agree that we need to secure our borders and find ways to make this country secure....we've got to protect our homeland, if you want to call it that. Or our second home, whatever you want to call it.

Our existing home.

We have already troops on the border, right? At least we are trying to show that we are kind of going in the right direction. We are going to try to secure the border and now we have our troops out there to show you that we are.

I think for a republican, he's being moderate about it. I think he's offending a lot of his party who want to take a harder stance and say, kick all their asses out, put a wall that's 20 feet high and don't let anybody in. And he's being realistic because he grew up in Texas. Life is real there.

His nanny was Mexican.

His brother married a Mexican.

Yeah.

MODERATOR—SO, DO YOU THINK BUSH'S PROPOSAL IS GOING TO WORK?

Piggybacking on what he said and your question right now, I don't know if it's going to work. And the only reason I say that is because he's taken this moderate view on it. And I think he's doing that for politics purposes. Right now his own party is having a debate about it. And they are on both sides of the fence on that issue. So, I think his referendum for it is to kind of balance it out so he doesn't lose too much republican support. And that's why I don't know if it's going to be effective. That's what I'm afraid of. The democrats are obviously not going to support it. There are actually some democrats that support it, but a lot of them aren't.

Could it be that he's finally doing what he really wants to do instead of listening to his party and his cabinet?

That could be possible.

I truly think that he does want to do this the way that he did it. And I give him the benefit of the doubt and say that he did something good.

I was in Texas when he ran for governor and I didn't vote for him. But when he got in, I was so impressed with what he did, I did vote for him. And then I voted for him for president. I think he is pragmatic.

MODERATOR—NOW WE ARE GOING TO DO ANOTHER EXERCISE. TURN TO HANDOUT #3. THIS IS A LIST OF IMMIGRATION PROPOSALS THAT ARE BEING DISCUSSED BY THE CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT BUSH. READ THE LIST AND PUT AN "X" NEXT TO THE TWO PROPOSALS THAT CONCERN YOU THE MOST. AND THEN PUT A STAR NEXT TO THE TWO PROPOSALS THAT YOU LIKE THE MOST. PROVIDE MORE FUNDING FOR STATE AND LOCAL BORDER PATROL, HOW MANY STARRED IT? 0. HOW MANY "X"? 0. BUILD A 700-MILE LONG FENCE ALONG THE US MEXICAN BORDER, HOW MANY STARS? 0. HOW MANY "X"? 4. REQUIRE IMMIGRANTS TO LEARN ENGLISH AND BASICS, HOW MANY STARS? 1. HOW MANY "X"? 0. ESTABLISH A GUEST WORKER PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS, HOW MANY STARS? 4. HOW MANY "X"? 2. ESTABLISH A GUEST WORKER PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS IMMIGRANTS TO WORK IN THE US FOR A SET PERIOD OF TIME, HOW MANY STARS? 3. HOW MANY "X"? 2. IMPOSE MAJOR FINANCIAL PENALTIES ON EMPLOYERS WHO HIRE ILLEGAL, HOW MANY STARS? 1. HOW MANY "X"? 0. DEPORT ALL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND ALLOW, HOW MANY STARS? 0. HOW MANY "X"? 4. MAKE IT A CRIME FOR SOCIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS, REFUGE AGENCIES, HOW MANY STARS? 0. HOW MANY "X"? 4. REFUSE DRIVER'S LICENSES TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, HOW MANY STARS? 0. HOW MANY "X"? 1. SEND 6,000 NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS, HOW MANY STARS? 1. HOW MANY "X"? 0. CREATE A NEW IDENTIFICATION CARD FOR ILLEGAL FOREIGN WORKERS, HOW MANY STARS? 4. HOW MANY "X"? 0. EXPAND THE SIZE OF DETENTION FACILITIES, HOW MANY STARS? 0. HOW MANY "X"? 0.

How many stars do you get?

MODERATOR—TWO.

Okay, you can add one.

MODERATOR—WHERE DO YOU WANT ME TO ADD THE OTHER ONE?

To the establish a guest worker program, D.

MODERATOR—LET'S START WITH THAT ONE, ESTABLISH A GUEST WORKER PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS IMMIGRANTS TO WORK IN THE US AND OFFERS THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP IF THEY PAY FINES AND BACK TAXES. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THAT?

I like the first part. The second part isthey have to pay fines, well they are going to pay their fees to apply and all that stuff. But to charge them back taxes and all the other stuff, I know we argue that illegal aliens don't pay taxes.

They pay FICA.

They pay taxes. For my check, I was taken out for Social Security, which I didn't have and Medicare and all that stuff. So I was paying for all that stuff that I didn't get. Also I pay taxes on stuff I buy. If I go out and purchase a phone, I'm paying taxes. So I am paying taxes, just not to the level that the others do, income tax and all that stuff. I like the first part, second part, not so.

I think the second part, yeah, it's going to be hard to go back and pay it. But I think if they are smart about it, they won't say, okay you owe us \$20,000. You've got two years to pay it back. I think it allows people to have the opportunity to feel proud that they are actually doing it the right way. And I think that helps people. I hate that term, but hey, I pay taxes. I get the rights. And the right to vote. So it kind of gives them some kind of integrity.

The federal government issues you a tax ID number. The federal government makes it really easy for you to pay taxes. And they know that if you are here five, ten years and you are working, you start paying that federal ID tax number....I know people that do their taxes every year and they don't have a Social Security number, but they have a tax ID number. When it comes time for the application, they've been doing it by the book since the...it looks good. Hey I'm trying.

Plus it will help the economy a lot.

I think that the federal government makes it easy for the illegals to pay.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT THIS OTHER ONE YOU LIKED, CREATE A NEW IDENTIFICATION CARD FOR EVERY ILLEGAL FOREIGN WORKER SO THAT EMPLOYERS CAN VERIFY THE STATUS OF THE WORKERS THEY HIRE. THIS CARD WILL INCLUDE DIGITAL FINGERPRINTS TO MAKE IT TAMPER PROOF. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THIS ONE?

You've got to have some waylet's say we have some way for earned amnesty or amnesty, whichever way it goes. Then you've got to have some way to deal with moving forward and this would be a way to move forward. And then what's missing here that I wanted to do is there ought to be a huge fine on companies.

It's on number....

Oh.

I liked that because in general you have to kind of control our borders, whoever comes in, regardless. If you are here for school purposes, if you are here to work, if you are here for another reason, we need to make sure that we control those who come in.

It shows people that there's a legal way without being a citizen. There is something to look forward to.

Right.

I like it because when you go apply for a job and you say your name is Joe Gonzalez, then the next person behind you is not going to use the same thing as Joe Gonzalez because they are using their cousin's identification. So, it would be just one Gonzalez person coming in with the same thing. So make it right.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT THE ONES YOU DIDN'T LIKE? LET'S TALK ABOUT DEPORT ALL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND ALLOW THEM TO RETURN AS GUEST WORKERS.

I'll tell you something about that one that really sticks in my craw, as they say. People say, they broke the law, they've got to be sent back. People say that. They don't fudge on their taxes. They don't take oxycontin illegally. I mean it's like a trump card. Well, they broke the law. Everything (inaudible) was legal just because it's the law doesn't make it right.

That was so silly.

It just affects so many families. It's just ridiculous. What's Tyson Farms going to do...what are those companies going to do? We are going to not eat chicken for the 180 days as they go through the process?

Yeah.

Even the cost on our end to have to go get all those people and deport them. Look at all the manpower for doing that.

It ain't going to happen.

It's just realistic.

No, it's not.

(many talking at once)

Now it's going to become a main...

Yeah, but you know what? The only way this could happen actually is once they get caught and they give you a guest card to come back. That's the only way it's going to work.

But then you are back in the same thing.

Yes.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT BUILDING A 700-MILE LONG FENCE ALONG THE US/MEXICAN BORDER?

Who is going to build it?

And how can they ever decide to get it built?

You know what's funny about that? In the news, they were showing that they were starting to build the wall and guess who was building it?

All Hispanics.

I'm looking at that saying, don't you think they are going to know where the weaknesses of the wall is?

(inaudible) he said, have the Hispanics build it and how do you get rid of them? Have them go on the other side and miter the wall.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT THIS ONE, SENDING 6,000 NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS TO ASSIST THE BORDER PATROL?

It's done.

I think it's a good idea.

I think so.

It can't hurt.

It sends a statement. The Guard troops aren't going to go shoot anybody. But when you look at the news in the desert and people are scrambling and people are dying. Yeah, it's also for protection too. And it's also showing the world, hey don't screw with us. If we have to put our National Guard, we've got the assets to do it. If they are going to debate about well, we don't know if we have the assets to do it and we are fighting the war and we don't think it's a good idea, well that's sending the wrong message overseas. If they attack us right now, we are ready for them.

They've got to follow up though. Send in the Guard, something else has to happen. When they built that fence in San Diego, they never thought that these guys would cross Morgan Pike National Park in the summer. And these people used to go back and forth. They would work for six months and then go back. Now it's so hard to get in, they went and got their families and brought them over. And they actually created unintended circumstances. The people weren't going back and forth no more. They were coming over and grabbing their children and families.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT EXPANDING THE SIZE OF DETENTION FACILITIES AT THE BORDER AND EXPEDITE THE PROCESS OF SENDING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS BACK TO THEIR COUNTRY?

It's not going to work because when they send illegals back, where do they send them? Mexico. They don't send them back to the country. You've got El Salvadorians, Dominican Republics, you've got all different kinds of nationalities. But where do they send them? Mexico. Yeah, they will come right back.

That's the problem. They are not all Mexicans.

They think they are.

And also by doing this, you are admitting that you are not going to be able to control it. You know what? They are going to be walking in, so you need to make this facility bigger.

And you know what? Just across the border man, there are three square meals a day.

That's true.

MODERATOR—SO WHICH POLITICAL PARTY DO YOU THINK DOES A BETTER JOB OF HANDLING THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION ISSUE?

Democrats.

MODERATOR—WHY?

I think they are much more reasonable. I think...and I voted....I have swayed more and more republican, but this issue brought me back. They are much more pragmatic about it. There's just a hate and a uncivil tone coming from part of the republican party. You've got people like Bush, because I don't think he feels that way, and others like him, McCain, who aren't that way. But then you've got this J.D. Hayworth, that guy is gone. I will do whatever I can to vote him out.

Right now, I think the reason why republicans are so much hate is because there are two things that you can offer people, hope and fear. And right now they are a wounded animal. If you look at the polls, they are going for the worst instincts.

I think it's a unfortunate that you have to ask that question. It shouldn't be about which party, it should be about our country taking care of business.

See I don't think either party is involved. You don't see democrats or republicans guarding the wall. You see people guarding the wall. It's not politics guarding the wall, it's us guarding the wall. I don't think politics has anything to do with this part.

MODERATOR—AND HAS THE IMMIGRATION DEBATE AFFECTED YOUR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE DEMOCRATS?

Yes, positively.

MODERATOR—WHY?

Again, I just think that it's....we are scapegoating the illegal immigrants. I'm not saying it's okay. I'm for a secure border. But we are scapegoating them. And the language that's coming out of some of the republicans is just a hateful, unkind, uncivil dialogue.

MODERATOR—OTHER THOUGHTS?

I noticed that a little bit. Their solutions seem to be more discussable.

MODERATOR—AND HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE REPUBLICANS?

Yeah.

In some cases. But not across the board because I think it's...for the most part, yeah, the republicans have taken a stronger, harsher way about it. But, no, I think there are still republicans that do things right.

It affects me because the democrats are more united on that topic than the republicans are. It shows me that they are not on line.

It just reinforces some of the biggest fears I have. They are xenophobic. It's all about hope or fear. They push the fear button.

MODERATOR—AND IS THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE GOING TO AFFECT HOW YOU VOTE FOR CONGRESS?

Yes.

It has to.

Because of the Arizona borders.

I believe ...there weren't enough people voting last time. They are going to need a lot more this time. I think they've probably pushed the wrong buttons. And people show that, you know what? I think we can make something happen.

37% of Hispanics voted for Bush. That number is going to drop dramatically for republicans in '06.

MODERATOR—SO NOW LET'S TALK A LITTLE MORE IN DETAIL ABOUT THE POLITICAL PARTIES, THE REPUBLICANS AND THE DEMOCRATS. WHEN THINKING ABOUT THE DEMOCRATS, WHAT GOOD THINGS COME TO MIND?

What I like about the democrats is the history. They are people. But 100 years back and we look back and we look at the critical moments of our history with the democratic party on the right side of history, civil rights, woman's rights. I think the democrats are not perfect, but when you look back, they were on the right side of history, especially with black and women voting rights, the expansion of middle class.

I think they've been given an opportunity to regroup for the next election. I think watching the republicans, they are able to have the opportunity to regroup and get their platform back on track. I think it's going to help them.

I hope they have a united message though. In the last election, you had such different people and different...

MODERATOR—THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT DEMOCRATS.

It would just be on the immigration issue for me. If we listed all the issues, I would end up being much more on the republican side of things. But that issue is so strong for me, that I'm almost certain to vote democrat.

MODERATOR—AND WHAT DO YOU THINK THE DEMOCRATS GET WRONG?

They take any concept and they are supposedly the ones that accept it all freely. They waver.

Yeah, they waver.

It's a new concept and I'm not saying what my position is, but gay marriage. They'll jump on the bandwagon and go, well we should do it. It's not like they are going to actually sit there as a party and discuss it, do we want to accept this as a political party? They say it's a new thing and they want to show everybody that they are pleasing to everybody. But you know there's got to be a time when you've got to stand firm in some situations.

Just real quick, that's the primary reason that I voted against Kerry. I think a lot of politicians, democratic politicians are like that.

I think on moral issues too. On the sanctity of marriage, on gay rights, on those kind of issues, I think they are on the wrong side. Or at least in terms of how I view things.

I think they are scared to be different. A big problem with a lot of democratic candidates is that they want to show how much they are like the republicans, instead of being an actual opposition party. In other words, if you are...be who you are, stick with it and ...they are trying to get close enough to a position, but instead of standing out themselves in the rain...I think if they stood out in the rain, they would be better off. I think sooner or later, Americans would come around.

I think that's true.

MODERATOR—AND NOW THINKING ABOUT REPUBLICANS ONLY, WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THEM?

They tend to be for the sanctity of marriage. They tend to be pro life. Those are the strong issues that pull me in that direction.

Strong moral values. I think whether we agree with it or not, I think they are for the most part, they have integrity. Like I'm speaking of Bush. He has integrity. Even if you hate everything that he does, I think he's a man of integrity.

They seem to have more family values. Their core values are common sense.

They appeal to the older crowd. I was liberal as can be growing up, being a teenager and being in my twenties. But as you get older, I think people gravitate towards republican because of the conservativeness. Once you have kids and you raise them, you start thinking of protectionism and...

They are tougher on terrorism too.

MODERATOR—WHAT DO REPUBLICANS GET WRONG?

The immigration thing.

I think they are ideology based. They stick to the ideology so strong that facts get in the way.

Right now they are influenced by a fundamentalist right wing religious sect that I don't like that they are having that much of a voice in government, whether it's the right thing for your family or not, I don't think that's the way that the country should be, going down that road.

For example, they talk about the sanctity of marriage. The state intervened between the decision between Terry Schiavo and...and I was a strong republican. There's nothing wrong with saying my party screwed up on this one. But the ideology is stronger than facts. They actually allowed the state to intervene.

I don't think they do a very good job of getting the message out. Even like the war, I think there's a lot of good stuff that's happened that we just don't know about. All we hear is the negative all the time.

Well it's a war. You are supposed to have the camera on the war, not the....

I don't think that's the point at all.

What I'm saying is that they don't seem to do a good job in anything that they do as far as getting the message out.

MODERATOR-I KNOW IT'S A LONG WAY OFF, BUT THERE WILL BE ELECTIONS FOR CONGRESS IN NOVEMBER OF THIS YEAR. FOR YOU PERSONALLY, WHAT IS THIS UPCOMING ELECTION ABOUT?

Immigration.

To me it's accountability. The best thing to have in this country is to have somebody else watching the hen house. Right now we need it big time.

Well somebody that's just going to be a grassroots person. I don't care how much money they have or whatever, I just want them to sit there and be straight.

Leadership.

An honest person.

I want a leader, if he's a republican or if he's a democrat, that can be moderate in his logical views. Just say, hey, I don't care what the rest of my party thinks. I think McCain sometimes does this. He says, the republicans are going this way, but I'm going to be right here. I'm going to be in the middle.

I haven't even given it a thought. There's nothing out there to persuade me. You've got the republicans fighting, you've got your democrats fighting. Who is the better party? You can't decide. It's undecidable.

I think we need a quarterback for a team that's struggling. Someone that....

John Wayne, man.

Someone that's going to make the calls on any things that the call needs to be made. And take the responsibility later. Yeah, I made that call and if I messed up, I'll take responsibility.

See, I don't want a macho guy. I don't want a John Wayne because he didn't go to war too, he stayed home. I want somebody that's cerebral, somebody that thinks. And not somebody that just acts macho. For all of John Kerry, he went to the war. So who is macho?

MODERATOR—I'M GOING TO READ YOU SOME STATEMENTS ABOUT SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES THAT THE COUNTRY IS FACING. I'M GOING TO READ A DEMOCRATIC AND A REPUBLICAN STATEMENT. AND REGARDLESS OF WHO YOU ARE PLANNING TO VOTE FOR, I WANT YOU TO TELL ME WHICH ONE COMES CLOSER TO YOUR OWN OPINION. TURN TO HANDOUT #4. AND PUT AN "X" NEXT TO THE ONE THAT COMES CLOSER TO YOUR OPINION. THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE SAYS,

WE NEED TO REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL BY DRILLING FOR OIL IN OUR OWN COUNTRY WHILE INVESTING IN NEW ENERGY SOURCES LIKE ETHANOL AND HYDROGEN FUEL CELLS. I SUPPORT PRESIDENT BUSH'S GOAL OF REPLACING MORE THAN 75% OF OUR OIL IMPORTS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST BY 2025. THE SOONER WE CAN ACHIEVE A TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH, THE BETTER OFF OUR COUNTRY WILL BE.

THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE SAYS,

WITH RISING GAS PRICES AND OIL COMPANIES POSTING OBSCENE PROFITS, WE NEED A NEW ENERGY POLICY THAT MOVES AWAY FROM PRESIDENT BUSH'S FAILED POLICIES AND RHETORIC. INSTEAD OF GIVEAWAYS TO BIG OIL, WE SHOULD ESTABLISH A WINDFALL PROFITS TAX ON OIL COMPANIES AND USE THE MONEY TO INVEST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES THAT WILL MAKE US INDEPENDENT FROM FOREIGN OIL.

JUST WRITE AN "X" NEXT TO THE ONE THAT COMES CLOSER TO YOUR OWN VIEW. HOW MANY CHOSE THE REPUBLICAN ONE? 3. HOW MANY FOR THE DEMOCRATIC ONE? 4. WHAT STANDS OUT ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC ONE?

For me, I think we have one percent of the world's reserves in Alaska. Just by increasing the MPG on cars ten miles per gallon, that's a huge decrease in...and we did it. We did it in the 80's and 90's. We can't drill our way out of this. I can't see how we are going to do this.

The first one, I'm glad that we had the democratic one because it says, Bush's failed policies and rhetoric. And that's exactly what I was thinking when you were reading that one out. One, he talks about alternative sources, but he's not funding it. It's all talk. And that's fact. And two, we are talking about drilling oil and we've been talking about it. This is what he's been wanting to do from the get go. And you see that and he's sticking

to that. But he also has a little sidebar, oh ethanol and hydrogen fuel cells so we can not be dependent on foreign...

The democrats want to tax the big companies.

It seems like Bush, because he came from oil, is giving cuts to his own people, his own family and friends. It doesn't seem right.

(many talking at once)

It sucks.

MODERATOR—LET'S GO TO HANDOUT #5. SAME EXERCISE HERE. THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE SAYS,

AMERICA'S CORE VALUES ARE BEING UNDERMINED BY A LIBERAL MEDIA AND A PERMISSIVE CULTURE THAT REJECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY AND THE ROLE OF FAITH IN OUR HISTORY AND OUR PUBLIC LIFE. WE MUST DEFEND THE MORAL FOUNDATIONS THAT MAKE OUR NATIONS STRONG, PROMOTE A CULTURE OF LIFE AND PROTECT THE SANCTITY OF THE FAMILY.

THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE SAYS,

FROM TERRY SCHIAVO TO CREATIONISM IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, GOVERNMENT HAS GONE TOO FAR IN LEGISLATING MORALITY. MY FAITH TEACHES ME THAT FAMILIES AND CHURCHES SHOULD TEACH VALUES AND RELIGION, WHILE GOVERNMENT SHOULD FOCUS ON DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY AND REDUCING OUR INDEPENDENCE ON MIDDLE EAST OIL, LOWERING HEALTHCARE COSTS AND CREATING GOOD JOBS HERE AT HOME.

WHICH OF THE TWO IS CLOSEST TO YOUR OWN VIEW? HOW MANY FOR THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE? 3. HOW MANY FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE? 5. OKAY. WHAT STOOD OUT ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC ONE?

I like the fact that they are asking for...I think education starts at home with the parents. I think parents need to educate kids and focus on that. And we allow government to focus on the issues. I think that's what stands out.

What stands out to me the most is that government should focus on defending our country. The fact that you know what? We have values. Give the people the opportunity to have their values and deal with it. Don't make that your platform for an election.

I agree with it overall. They mentioned Terry Schiavo here. This is again back to the privacy. Remember Bush woke up at two in the morning and flew back to Washington to sign the bill to intervene between a marriage, the sanctity of marriage. If Bill Clinton had done that, I know exactly what the far right would have been saying. But it's their guy, oh it's different. It's bullshit. Excuse my French. If your guy is doing it, hey keep that between a married couple. And that's scary. It's really scary.

MODERATOR—OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SCHIAVO CASE?

It did more damage to marriage than any gay initiative in Massachusetts. The state intervened.

MODERATOR—WHAT DO MORAL VALUES MEAN TO YOU IN THIS CONTEXT?

That's what I'm afraid about the republican statement. What does it mean to them? Right now it might sound good, but....

MODERATOR—BUT FOR YOU PERSONALLY...

What they say in here. What the statement says.

MODERATOR—NO TO YOU. IF I SAY MORAL VALUES, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO YOU?

I think of a standard that is right or wrong and never changes.

Right.

Who determines that?

I think there's a vague when it comes to...a hundred years from now with our science, you know what? We found the gay gene. We crucified people who were programmed that way.

What scares me is I'm not one to throw the rock first. I'm very cautious before I throw the first stone. And a lot of the problems I have is throwing the first stone. There are some things...obviously if a guy is molesting a child you stop him, but some issues...the debates out there, I'm not comfortable throwing the rock.

I think that morality should start at home. And if you are concerned that you see something on television or two people in Boston get married, two gay people, two lesbian women get married, then that's going to affect the way that your kids are raised, then I think you have an issue at home. I can't imagine that you are not strong enough as a family. And whatever your family is, whether you are divorced, whether you are two guys raising some kids or two girls or a man and a woman like I am in my family, if you are worried about something else in another state, I can't imagine that there's not something wrong with your own family.

MODERATOR—AND WHAT PARTY DOES A BETTER JOB ON MORAL VALUES?

Republicans.

The republicans.

Republican party.

MODERATOR—WHY?

I just think that they do. They take the bigger step. Just like I said before, the democrats are wishy washy. They just go with the waves.

I just feel they do a better job. They stand firm. They seem to have more family values in what they do. That democratic statement there where it says separation of church and state and I just look at where we are with our schools today, ever since we started doing that, now we have metal detectors in our schools. We have people shooting up Columbine. That kind of stuff didn't happen before.

Exactly. And our country was founded on that. You go back to Abraham Lincoln. He was a republican and he was a very, very strong Christian man. And it was our forefathers...this country was founded that way.

You went to Columbine right?

Yeah.

They were Fascists, those kids? They were following Hitler, right?

Yeah.

I don't think you can attribute moral values to any party. I think that's an individual thing. It goes to the family.

I'm attributing it to our forefathers, the way that this country began.

Well, that's an individual behavior as well. You can't say which party does it better. What's right and wrong for me is not right and wrong for you.

That's true.

That's what makes this country.

Exactly.

Right. That's why we can talk this way.

But also you can't...you could be an extremist on the other side and say that....you could be....a lot of these people say that Christians are extremists and that they are on the other side. But yet these liberals are extremists from the other side. And they try to dictate that you Christianity can't....that you can't have like a Bible study in school. You could go the other way too. Reverse discrimination.

MODERATOR—LET'S MOVE TO HANDOUT #6. SAME EXERCISE HERE. THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE SAYS,

RATHER THAN MORE GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTHCARE, WE SHOULD PUT CONSUMERS IN CHARGE OF THEIR OWN HEALTHCARE. I SUPPORT PRESIDENT BUSH'S PLAN FOR TAX-FREE HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS, WHICH LOWER COSTS AND INCREASE COMPETITION BY

ALLOWING INDIVIDUALS TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN DOCTORS AND THE TYPE OF CARE THEY WANT.

THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE SAYS,

OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IS BROKEN AND WE NEED TO MAKE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES. WE CAN LOWER COSTS AND PROVIDE BETTER COVERAGE FOR ALL AMERICANS WITHIN THE CURRENT SYSTEM WITHOUT GOVERNMENT TAKING OVER THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM. REAL REFORM MEANS AFFORDABLE COVERAGE FOR ALL AMERICANS, MAINTAINING A CHOICE OF DOCTORS AND PLANS, LOWERING COSTS AND EXPANDING PREVENTIVE CARE.

HOW MANY CHOSE THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE? 3. HOW MANY FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE? 5. OKAY, WHAT STOOD OUT ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE?

You've been asking that and people have been asking in a positive way. Can I say what stands out, but it's not positive?

MODERATOR—YES.

Okay. There's nothing there. It's just rhetoric. Whether you agree or not with what the republicans said, there is something tangible that they are proposing. There's a tax-free health savings account. So there's something there. You know what the idea is. This is just kind of rhetoric.

MODERATOR—AND THOSE WHO LIKED THE DEMOCRATIC STATEMENT?

For me, it's the old adage. When you are digging yourself a hole, stop digging. The system we have right now is messed up. And we've got to get people insured. People are still breaking their legs and going to the hospital and somebody is paying the bill. It's the insured. And so, the system right now is broken and every mile that we keep going there is further loss.

I think it does have to be fixed, but I agree though, this is rhetoric. If someone could come up with a way to actually do it, that would be great. I just don't think it's realistic. I don't think it's doable.

I don't know what it is that they are going to achieve here. There's not something tangible here.

MODERATOR—HOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU, DO YOU THINK IT'S DOABLE, THE DEMOCRATIC PROPOSAL?

Yeah, it's got to be something. I think a tax-free health savings account, not everybody is going to actually say, hey let me save money so I can get better health insurance. The tax freeze will put us in a further deficit. How much tax free is there going to be?

I kind of agree. We are responsible ourselves, but we know we are responsible.

With all the commercials, they are going to force us to use that money.

And then later on, all the people are going to be like, oh we are broke, now we need your help. Wait a minute.

That's a plan to fail.

MODERATOR—MOVE TO HANDOUT #7. SAME EXERCISE HERE. THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE SAYS,

WE HAVE REMOVED SADDAM HUSSEIN FROM POWER, TAKING THE FIGHT TO THE TERRORISTS, AND PLANTED THE SEEDS OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR RESOLVE IN DOING WHATEVER IT TAKES TO COMPLETE THE MISSION AND SUPPORT OUR SOLDIERS. AS IRAQI SOLDIERS ARE TRAINED AND STAND UP, WE WILL BRING MORE TROOPS HOME, BUT WE WILL NOT SET ARBITRARY TIMELINES OR LEAVE BEFORE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES ARE SUFFICIENTLY TRAINED AND RISK IRAQ BECOMING A SAFE HEAVEN FOR TERRORISTS PLANNING ATTACKS AGAINST AMERICA.

THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE SAYS,

WE ARE SPENDING HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS AND LOSING MORE AMERICAN LIVES EVERY WEEK IN IRAQ. IF PRESIDENT BUSH STILL HAS NOT OFFERED A PLAN FOR SUCCESS, NEARLY FOUR MONTHS AFTER THE ELECTIONS, IRAQI LEADERS HAVE STILL NOT FORMED A GOVERNMENT. WE CAN'T CONTINUE ON THIS COURSE. BY SETTING TIME LIMITS FOR THE IRAQIS TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR OWN SECURITY, WE CAN ACHIEVE AN ENDURING VICTORY, BRING OUR TROOPS HOME AND PUT THE FOCUS BACK ON THE CHALLENGES FACING US HERE AT HOME.

HOW MANY CHOSE THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE? 1.

I'm mixed.

I agree with you.

MODERATOR—OKAY, HOLD ON. SO THREE FOR THE REPUBLICAN, HOW MANY FOR THE DEMOCRATIC? 4. PATRICK, YOU CAN'T MAKE UP YOUR MIND?

Yeah.

MODERATOR—OKAY. THOSE WHO LIKED THE DEMOCRATIC STATEMENT, WHAT IS IT THAT STANDS OUT ABOUT IT?

They want to set up criteria, which is exactly what I don't like about the republican one. It gives them too much latitude to come up with some other excuse or some other reason. That's the only thing I don't like.

I agree. I think there needs to be a goal. We've already done so much. It's time for us to cut the umbilical cord and you guys need to ...you already had your elections, you already have your government, now run with it.

Yeah.

(many talking at once)

You need to run this show. It's your country. It is. Take over it and control it.

See the democratic one limits us to what are we going to do next. The republican one doesn't limit us. It says, okay, well now maybe Iraq is getting....

MODERATOR—AND HOW ABOUT THE REPUBLICAN ONE? WHAT IS IT THAT SOME OF YOU LIKED ABOUT THAT ONE?

I think it's pragmatic. I want the troops home as fast as we can. But I think it's a mistake to say we will bring the troops home by this date. I just don't think you ought to say that.

I agree. I think the arbitrary timeframe is just tough to swallow.

I think we went in, regardless of whatever we think, we are there now and I think we have to achieve our goal now. And if we just arbitrarily pull everybody out, they are going to be left with just no democracy, people are going to be being killed all the time. And unfortunately, I think we need to send more troops in to settle things down and get this taken care of.

Which it may end up being anyway. There's not going to be a democracy, but...I don't know.

MODERATOR—WE ARE GOING TO DO THIS LAST EXERCISE BECAUSE WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. HOW MANY OF YOU LISTEN TO RADIO IN SPANISH EVER? OKAY. I'M GOING TO PLAY YOU A SHORT AD IN SPANISH AND HERE'S THE TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH. WE ARE GOING TO LISTEN TO THE AD AND RATE IT ON A SCALE FROM ZERO TO FIVE. ZERO MEANS NOT CONVINCING AT ALL AND FIVE MEANS TOTALLY CONVINCING. SO, TURN TO THE NEXT HANDOUT. (AD RUN) HOW MANY ZEROS? 1. #1? 1. #2? #3? 3. #4? 1. #5? 1. THOSE WHO GAVE IT A #3, #4 OR #5, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU LIKED ABOUT IT?

I was a #3 so what the message said and I guess they could have done it better, but what they are trying to say is (inaudible) and we are not. We are here winning some respect and dignity. We are really not what you think we are. Don't misjudge us. We are not that. You kind of walk the street and do this, pretend that we are not there. Hello, we are here.

It wasn't right that they used the first stone analogy. It's hypocritical. And I think that it just reminds ...it's an insult.

It captures the emotion that I feel. I told you the only reason I came was to talk about that issue. There's an "x" next to every republican response on this exercise we did. But I'm going to vote democrat because of how I feel about that issue. So it captures the emotion, but I don't think it was very effective. I think they could have made the message differently.

I think they could have just spoken...like you said, instead of a little story, it sounded silly to me.

Yeah.

It talked down to people, I think.

It sounded more like it was a grandpa talking to the little kids.

Yeah. Remember a day when we...bullshit. If they would have just said fellow Mexicans, let's make a stand, let's do this, let's do that.

(many talking at once)

That was a warning to the king.

MODERATOR-OKAY, MOVE TO THE NEXT HANDOUT, WHICH IS ANOTHER ONE VERY QUICK. (NEXT AD RUN) HOW MANY ZEROS? 2. #1? 1. #2? 1. #3? 1. #4? 3. #5? OKAY. THOSE WHO GAVE IT A #4, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU LIKED ABOUT IT?

The phone number.

(many talking at once)

It wasn't speaking down to the audience. I don't agree with what they said, but I thought it was an effective ad.

How could you call it effective when it sounded more like haul it down, you get a free gift? Listen to this and call it now. And here's even the phone number to call, you might win something, vote. That's more like advertising a game show type of thing. That is not convincing.

Who is this for? Was this for the Hispanic community?

Yes.

But it doesn't...

That's what I'm saying. You go from grandpa from telling a story to a free giveaway here.

MODERATOR—WHAT IS IT THAT YOU DIDN'T LIKE?

This is like peeing in the wind. This is the wrong people you are saying this too. This doesn't make no sense. Who is going to ...

It sounds too much like an ad. The other one I liked because it didn't sound like an ad. It's almost like a pride thing. A national pride thing.

I'm in the same boat. I just don't understand why you'd be speaking like this to the Latino community. It doesn't make sense.

Order yours today and you might get a free...

I don't know.

MODERATOR—NOW WE ARE GOING TO DO THE ABSOLUTELY LAST EXERCISE. TURN TO HANDOUT #10. IF THE ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY, WOULD YOU VOTE FOR THE DEMOCRAT OR THE REPUBLICAN RUNNING FOR CONGRESS WHERE YOU LIVE? CIRCLE WHAT CANDIDATE YOU THINK YOU WOULD VOTE FOR AND BELOW THAT WRITE THE REASON WHY. THANKS FOR COMING....

(end of session)